

Summary of Public Comments, Responses, and Plan Modifications to the Draft 2009 South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Santee Cooper Lakes:

Commenters: David E. Sweat, Philomena A Volpe

Comments:

I along with several others are in agreement with the invasive weeds being sprayed in the Lakes, however we are concerned about several issues that we feel are not being considered. Most of these issues are from anglers and guides! (Sweat)

The time frame for spraying is proposed during the spawning periods for fish, almost all fish in the lakes will be spawning and in the shallow areas to be sprayed. (Sweat)

By spraying the baby leaves, or non-permanent leaves the plant species will not be killed. Thus spending money wastefully and having to repeat the spray. By repeating, the poison levels will be higher causing fish to die. (Sweat)

Certainty of poison's used vs. eco-system damage is not known. How will it effect the shell fish in the lakes? Will rain and rain run-off's dilute the formula used, or will the formula dissipate when subjected to large quantities of water (remember the Lake waters are used for drinking purposes). (Sweat)

Another concern is Grass being engulfed in the turbines, once the spray does the job on the plant, the plant will die off, breaking off and have a larger chance of being engulfed in the turbines, how is this going to be resolved? (Sweat)

Remember if it can travel down stream, it will also travel out the locks into the ocean, so if the toxin used or the plant survives down stream, now the plant is given an opportunity to spread to other areas. (Sweat)

I see no action taken for the Lizzie Creek area. In the last two years, I'm assuming because of the drought we have had a severe problem with invasive weeds in our area. You could not maneuver your boat 50 yds without stopping to get the hydilla off the motor. Due to the water levels both high grass weeds and hydrilla have been out of control since at least March of 2008. The motoring up our canal to the Wyboo area is dangerous as it is with the stumps, the weeds only add to dangers. If you could please consider our Lizzie Creek Area in your controlled plan it would be greatly appreciated. (Volpe)

Response:

The Draft 2009 Aquatic Plant Management Plan proposes a maintenance stocking of sterile grass carp in the Santee Cooper Lakes in 2009. The Aquatic Plant Management Council is committed to maintenance stocking of triploid grass carp in the Santee Cooper Lakes to provide long-term control of hydrilla and to help alleviate the need for extensive herbicide treatments for hydrilla control. Most spawning activities are in the early spring before most herbicide treatments occur. All of the herbicide used in any reservoirs or lakes is labeled for use in South Carolina waters by both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Clemson's Department of Pesticide Regulation only after extensive assessments have been completed. They are applied by licensed professionals with great care not to exceed the limits of the label. EPA registration of pesticides intends to promote the safety and well-being of public health and the ecosystem. More specifically, each year a letter is sent to SCDHEC, Bureau of Water which oversees drinking water supplies in SC outlining the specific use of these herbicides and includes detailed planned treatment precautions even though all treatments are a significant distance away from any potable water intakes.

Most of the shellfish you refer to in the Santee Cooper Lakes is itself an invasive species. *Cobricula fluminea*, Asian clams, have become the dominate freshwater mollusk. We are not sure of the overall ecological impact of these clams in South Carolina waters and most are only affected by significant concentrations of chlorine or bromine in the water column. Aquatic herbicides also are very soluble in water, disperse readily to very low level concentrations, and have a very short lived half life.

Lizzy Creek is not a sub-impoundment but a cove off of Wyboo embayment on Lake Marion. The plant that you are referring to is water primrose not hydrilla. Santee Cooper has it in their plans to treat that area this year as soon as the plant is at the proper growth stage.

Plan Modifications:

None at present.