

APPENDIX H

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

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Santee Cooper Lakes

143 email comments, 51 opposed, 92 supported

Internet petition, 241 opposed

Comments:

Opposed:

Internet petition:

We, the undersigned, support population levels of 25 triploid grass carp per acre of hydrilla as stated in the 2012 DRAFT SOUTH CAROLINA AQUATIC PLANT MANAGEMENT PLAN [hereafter known as 'The Plan'] for the Santee Cooper lakes, Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie. We do not, however, agree with additional stocking of 47,900 triploids to account for the "additional submersed species that are palatable to triploid carp". Allowing for existing populations of 20,400 fish, we only support the release of an additional 60,700 triploid grass carp during calendar year 2012. We make these recommendations based on the following: • Availability of certain aquatic plant species is necessary to provide food and habitat for waterfowl populations wintering on the Santee Cooper System, and • The Santee Cooper system is a multiuse system and, we believe, the interests of waterfowl and waterfowling are under represented in The Plan, and • Winter waterfowl populations utilizing the Santee Cooper system are just starting to show a recovery after the over-release of triploids that occurred during the mid-1990s, and • The Plan lists triploids as control agents only for hydrilla not any other aquatic species, and • The Plan does not consider the reduction of hydrilla coverage as a result of the very low water levels that dewatered thousands of acres on both lakes in late 2011, and • Coverage of 4,790 acres of non-hydrilla vegetation is biologically healthy for a shallow-water system of more than 170,000 acres.

Troy Smart, Lesa Thomas, Mathew Parrott, Curtis S. Dewey, Jamie White, Josh Britt, Dwayne Padgett, Thomas Michael Siwarski Jr., Scott Mcwatty, Paul Taylor, Nick Riley, Brandon Stockman, James Boyd, Christopher Price, Phillip Felkel, Bradley Poston, Ralph Cantey Jr, Zack Thomas, Chris Ard, Drew Fasano, John Ball, Kyle Kirkland, Stuart Kemp Watson, Brigham Watson, Kevin Lusk, Cory Belue, Ralph W. Archer III, Anthony Wade, Jason Lynch, Wes Drummond, Nickles Mirmow, Kevin Gause, Trent Smith, Clark Fons, Christopher Eddy, Murray Padgett, Randy Kinard, Justin Howe, Henry M Hickman, RAY Smith, Jonathan Smith, Greg Mccaskill, Russell Boykin, Will Macinnis, Robbie Nalley, Connor Stone, Keith Campbell, Rusty Bair, Wilson Smith, Michael Austin, Logan Bryan, Andrew Taylor, Jay Orders, Jimmy Lee, Kerry Brewer, Chris Ashley, R. Chilton Stone, Johnny Drew III, Aaron Clossman, Glenn Hearn, Margaret S. Stone, Elliott Mimms, Miles Altman, John F Bryan Jr, Jay, James Vaughan, Sam Tiller, Jimmy Bradham, John Snowden, Greg Hendrick, Megan Kelley, Chris Hewette, Leif Busby, Belinda C. Hrivnak, Bruce G. Strong, Jess Williams, Jonathan Gowdy, Joel Barfield, James Fitzgerald, James M Bradham, William Condon, Billy Ray Goff Jr., David Mccracken, Will Ligon, Jonathan Cameron, Blakely Byrd, Jacob Beach, Mike Joyner, Parker Coulliette, Carl Broadway, Jonathan Dangerfield, Darren Troy Cranford, Rodney L. Scruggs, Michael Watson, Tyler Pearson, Justin Crafton, Angela Livingston, Ben Livingston, Joshua Pifer, R Patten Watson, Brandon, Bryan Frazier, Cleve Hancock, Jeff Mcdaniel, Thomas Madray, Caldwell, Marc Sanders, Anthony Hawkins, John Benjamin Thompson, Greg Allen, Ryan Coyle, Jesse Sheehan, Daniel Sanders, Zachary L. Taylor, Sara Nicole Thompson, Andrew Magee, Francis D Newman Jr, Samuel Thompson, Reed Watts, Samuel C. Thompson, Chris Hickman, Lesa Spencer Mosier, Tammye J. Tidwell, Weston

Simmons, Scott Frye, Parker Miller, David T Hill, William Russell, Michael Coulter, Melanie, Brandon R Wiles, David Ferrell, Cathy Danigel, Adam Murray, Ronald Kyzer, Tonya Morris, Lori Morris, Sophia Morris, Badge Baker, Matthew Mcalister Prendergast, Keith Krell, Dan Smith, Patrick Brailsford, Mark Reich, Michael Rodgers, N. Ivey, J. Hugh Campbell, Matthew Beecher, Marvin Morgan, Jeremy Wills, Mark Price, Chris Carter, Brian Hatch, Kyle Huggins, Douglas Sass, Kevin Van De Steene, Heather C, Fleetwood Hassell, Alexander D Stone, Will Eaddy, Douglas H. Sass Sr., William Southerland, Phillip Lowe, Ryan Reynolds, Richard Pratt, Chris Hooker, Brad Hollon, Blake Johnson, Jon Collins, Cody Harper, Dillard Salmons, Matthew Nichols, Richard Knight Jr, Drew Charles, Jeff Fralick Jr., Jason Giovannone, Christopher Bradham, Sarah Bradham, Rhett Riddle, Brandon Wagner, Chauncey Finch, Ty Bodiford, Andrew, Tee Rowland, John Fuss, Sanders A. Franklin, Greg Zett, James F. Seabrook, Chris Brewer, Hunter Goodson, Cory Hawkins, Adam Shumpert, Phillip Howard, Kevin Lee, William Mclaurin, William, Justin Stroud, Amanda Stroud, Tracy Huggins, Trey Bryan, Joe Stroud, Harleston Towles, Mark Heinzelman, Bren Stone, Robby Elliott, Justin Robinson, Jeff Spires, Kyle Snelgrove, Jae Higgins, Phillip Rizzitello, Michael Weekley, Brandon, R. Broward, Bill Towles, K. A Mattox, Marcus B Sizemore, Hunter Neeley, Charles Kupfer, Rick Mclean, Eryc Riddle, Chris Mccorkle, Mark Montrose, Jack Wolfe, Brandon Steen, Brian E Gainey, Clint Morrison, Chris White, Jon Greider, Benjamin M. Sanders, Ben Kuhn, Kerry Fritz, Mike Crapps, Billy Mcintosh, Inky Davis, James Kirby, Matt Mays, Jonathan Redding, Mark Williams, Tyler Kirby, Michael Blankenship, Cristal Thompson,

I oppose killing all grass. They are about to put 100000 more grass carp in lake when lake is just recovering from last massacre

Harold R. Waynick, Jr.

The lack of grass has tremendously had an impact on duck hunting and bass fishing. Can we just leave the grass alone? It only seems to maintain migrating waterfowl and protect cover for our bass! I strongly feel the release of grass depleting carp is a terrible idea!!

Thanks,

Kevin Roberson.

I strongly oppose the idea of putting more grass carp in the lake to kill the invasive weeds. The lake is finally getting back to being a good fishery and I feel that this would set it back tremendously.

Ken Rosefield

We understand control but 100k grass carp and spraying all of it is too much.

We want some grass!!!

clay lowder

I , as a avid sc outdoor enthusiast ,wish to oppose the placing the 10,000 grass carp in our lakes.

Scott kinder

I think we have done enough to ruin the lakeside economy. I gave been fishing my whole life (35 now).

Brent Waynick

Many more shorebirds and waterfowl along with a resurgence of bass and panfish. I think we can all agree that the aquatic vegetation growth has played a big role in this new life. I understand the need

to manage weed growth but a large population of grass carp cannot be controlled and could possibly return the lake to its barren state of a few years ago
Bilton, Jeff D

Back in the 90's we had a thriving lake system bringing in Millions of dollars to all the local towns and businesses. Keeping the grass out the turbines could not possibly cost more than destroying the economy for thousands of people. I would like to know exactly why the grass is such a problem? All I know for sure is when the lakes were full of grass we never had a lack of electricity nor did we have a price increase due to grass in the lake. I think placing grass carp in the lake is the solution for being lazy and just some people not wanting to deal with it.
Edward L Cox III

As an avid outdoorsman and wildlife enthusiast, I strongly urge you to reconsider increasing the number of triploid grass carp to 108k fish. The Santee Cooper lakes have witnessed over a decade of hardship and are just beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel. I am well aware of the need to control hydrilla, and other invasive plants, and I am aware of the detrimental effects of grass carp. 108k fish to control 3k acres is well above protocol. Stocking additional fish on the idea that some fish may eat native vegetation over hydrilla is bad science. Please reassess the 2 decade old study that concludes the 32% mortality rate of carp. Certainly this number is high.
Clark McCrary

Not only will it inhibit various waterfowl habitats, but it will also destroy natural ecosystems and feeding habits of many animals. Additionally, there will be a substantial impact on fishing. The amount of money generated on these lakes and rivers from outdoor and sportsman activities would be even more devastating than it already has been past.
Jeff Bowers

I am against the stocking of additional grass carp in the Santee Cooper lakes. This is too costly for the SCDNR to fund and it will hurt non-target plant species. Please consider a more concentrated approach on problem and sensitive areas. Don't ruin the rest of the lake.
Sarah Peake

I believe that introducing this large number of fish in addition to chemical controls will harm the non-target plant species in a greater capacity than the plan suggests. Please reconsider this plan. Our lake system has seen a resurgence of fish quality AND fish populations that hasn't been seen in decades
Chris Bradham

I appreciate the efforts of DNR and Santee Cooper to make the lake system an area that is able to be enjoyed by thousands of sportsmans and the local businesses of the area, but I do question your stance on invasive weeds. But why cant the unwanted areas of the weeds be managed on a more micro level rather than methods such as carp stocking that will destroy the weeds on the entire lake including areas that there presence is vital.
Preston Kight

I would love to see this done away with. The aquatic vegetation in the states lakes (especially Marion and Moultrie) is very important to wintering waterfowl and provides excellent habitat for a number of fish species

Freddy Taylor

I am for a more balanced approach to managing the aquatic vegetation in the Santee Cooper lakes. In recent years we have seen a slight increase in the coverage of vegetation which has improved the habitat for fish and wildlife. However, the coverage of this vegetation does not meet the minimum of ten percent coverage of the lakes. We need to encourage growth on areas of the lakes that are less populated so that the wildlife and fish can flourish once again. By adding more triploid carp, we will only reverse what improvements we have seen over the last few years. There needs to be a sound management plan that will provide a balanced benefit to both wildlife enthusiasts and pleasure boaters.

Davis Lee

Application timing of the chemical controls should consider professional fishing tournaments held on the lake. Spraying during a tournament, especially spraying the participants by helicopter, has already made an impact on the decision making of some professionals on whether or not to participate in the tournaments.

Greg Williams

I am not in favor of the releasing of additional grass carp into the Santee lakes. Grass carp not only consume invasive vegetation, but also native vegetation. The stocking of grass carp has too much collateral damage to other vegetation which degrades the hunting and fishing opportunities in this state. I also feel an effort should be made to disturbed native vegetation in other portions of the lakes.

Wagner, Brandon

I have seen both lakes rebound from near disaster of over stocking these fish in the nineties and would hate to see this trend reversed. Please note that as a voter and tax paying citizen that I would love the money that would be used toward restocking to be used for better equipment our DNR officers to better enforce the laws in force at this time

Thomas A. "Bubba" Johnston III

Please consider sportsman in your 2012 APMC plan. For years, the sportsman has been ignored due to the interest of homeowners and recreational boaters. Aquatic vegetation provides valuable cover for fisheries, and food sources for migrating waterfowl. In the past twenty years, duck hunters have seen the numbers of migrating waterfowl decrease on the Santee Lakes by thousands and thousands to the point where there are almost no ducks on the lakes. This is due to the fact that SCE&G has killed almost all the plant life in the Santee Lakes. It is an embarrassment to squander such a natural resource, and we should all be ashamed for allowing agencies to trash a resource which was once so plentiful.

Wilson Smith

Personally, I do not think that the cost to run this project will be a wise expense for our state's Department of Natural Resources. As a citizen who donates money to the SCDNR through license purchases, taxes AND voluntary donations I oppose this action and hope that the SCDNR will understand that the recreational aspect of these lakes is just as important as any other.

Charles Stuart

With the current state of waterfowl, shore birds, and fish showing an increase directly proportional to the expansion of the vegetation. The 10% rule of acreage that should be maintained by Santee Cooper is not being met.

D. Gene Gabrielli II

I am a duck hunter and a lifelong resident of the low country and I am disappointed that the managing scientists like yourself find it necessary to raise the triploid grass carp population to 250% of what it currently is. It is my understanding that this is being done to offset the fact that the grass carp are not feeding solely on hydrilla, but rather on our native vegetation and grasses as well. The logic that triploid grass carp may be feeding on other native grasses is absurd. Research has shown that grass carp will feed preferentially on hydrilla before feeding on our native grass species. By increasing the population you will, in essence, force the grass carp population to feed even more on our native grasses once they have eaten all the hydrilla in an area, which a population that size will not certainly do.

Will Klauber

I am writing this email to let you know of my concern of these fish wiping out all native vegetation on our lakes. I agree that the hydrilla is a grass that spreads rapidly and needs to be controlled but I also understand that with the introduction of more carp that they will consume the hydrilla and every other vegetation in the lake

Richard Pratt

Hydrilla, as well as Southern Naiad, among others, has continued to increase on the lakes exponentially. As we know, these SAVs are a beneficial and crucial part of the native fish and migratory birds that come through our area every year. I, along with many others, believe that hydrilla and other native SAVs should be allowed to return to benefit our struggling fish and waterfowl industries. Another concern of mine is where is all this money going to come from? Is there any wonder that the good game wardens of Santee Cooper can't even afford to check people on the lakes? -

Warren Boyd

South Carolina needs grass in our lakes to bring fisherman from other states here to spend money in our state. The eradication of hydrilla has ruined lake murray, and from the way it looks on paper, santee cooper lakes are about to be ruined again just like in the 90's

kpridgen

If you all go thru with this you'll will destroy the ducks habitat and force them to relocate. It is already so hard to hunt because of residents and expansion of neighborhoods and clearing the ducks homes. I hate to say this but if you guys go thru with this it will drop the ducks population and you would have a lot of angry hunters. I support the DNR, but I don't like this move.

josh Whitmore

It is completely detrimental to the now small duck population.

Eric Stone

Over the past few years, aquatic vegetation has been allowed to flourish in the lakes system and the rewards have been great for the citizens of South Carolina. The numbers of both waterfowl and other types of birds using the lakes have improved providing better hunting and bird watching opportunities. The fishing has also begun to return as fish find more food and habitat in the SAV's. Please, for the health of our lakes, reconsider the plan to stock 108,600 carp for a much smaller number that will allow SAV's to flourish (at least in some areas).

Doug Sass

These efforts are not working and are costing not only heavy dollars, but this is done at the expense of the lakes aquatic life and towns that the lakes tourism once supported.

John Fuss

It seems to me that more emphasize should be put on Game Warden hiring and pay, and the maintenance of all the state ramps and facilities.

Allen Mclean

As a frequent boater, fisherman, and hunter on the lakes, I do understand the need for balance when it comes to aquatic vegetation. My feeling is that the additional carp, while controlling some of the hydrilla, will greatly impact the native submergent vegetation we all would like to see in the lakes for habitat and food sources. There just isn't enough real evidence to say they prefer hydrilla, you even mention the need for additional carp do to the fact some will feed on naiad.

Mechanical means to supplement a smaller number of carp will best serve this purpose as well as protect the native submergents we all want to see back in the lakes.

Ben Kuhn

Increasing the number of Grass Carp in the lake is ridiculous, if anything the ones that are already present need to be gotten rid of.

Hunter Felkel

I started duck hunting in the late 80's it was so so, but then in the 90's we got hydrilla! Waterfowling took off. It was great! The bass fishing was extraordinary. Set records for heaviest 5 bass limits. Because of the hydrilla!! Early 2000's no more grass. Duck hunting and fishing got real bad. Because of all the hydrilla being eaten by the carp. Now we have some grass again. The duck hunting and fishing is getting better, not quite like the 90's but getting there.

Brian Martin

A little common sense with weed control could go a long way. Fishermen that come from all over the U.S. expect great things when they come to Santee. Grass in the lakes provides shelter for bait fish and habitat for the game fish - it grows fish. Although home owners may not want any grass at their front door, it may be best to allow grass to grow in other areas of the lake for fish habitat. Grass control may provide the best of both worlds and make everyone happy.

Denny Eaddy

I am opposed to the spraying of grass and release of carp in the Santee Cooper lakes. It has affected the lakes for the habitat of waterfowl and also the decline of fishing. It affects bait fish as well. I have not seen "fresh water shrimp" in the lakes since the spraying was introduced. It has affected the ecosystem drastically. DNR and Santee Cooper need to help put back in the lake systems and reintroduce natural vegetation so it can thrive again as once was.

Ryan Reynolds

I am sure that there is a happy medium between all parties involved in the debate on hydrilla in the Santee lakes. It is very obvious that the number of ducks wintered on our lakes has dramatically declined since the hydrilla has been removed. It has also changed the way we fish the lakes. We have all of the resources, I just hope we can put them to use in a way that would benefit everyone.
Chris Price

Please protect the natural resources we have in this beautiful state we all call home. The grass populations on our local lakes support precious ecosystems that need protecting from carp that destroy them. Recreation is no reason to destroy native populations.
Justin H.

Uncontrolled expansion of hydrilla as we experienced in the past is not a good thing for the lakes, the users, or the homeowners, neither is the eradication which we have also experienced. Control is the key. Of the hydrilla AND the grass carp. The carp will continue to eat and eat and eat and eat until we have a veritable desert under our waters once again. Our lake systems have been decimated twice in the last 2 decades. One was the drought- over which we have no control. The other was the crash of the world class fishing and duck hunting which was man made due to overstocking of grass carp.
Mark Williams

Please consider the negative effect that this plan of releasing more carp into our lakes will have on native species of fish and migratory birds. \$900K is too much to spend on a project that will deplete our natural resources. Please do not cater to out of state retiree's and do what is in the best interest of those of us who are native South Carolinians that grew up with healthy ecosystems.
Drew Postal

I think that the introduction of more carp that will consume native natural vegetation would be a bad idea. Yes, it is a good idea to control the invasive hydrilla, but you can not make those carp eat only hydrilla they will eat everything in their path.
Peyton Stilp

Data shows that Santee-Cooper's goal of keeping a minimum of 10% of the two lakes' total surface acreage covered in vegetation is not being reached. I would like to see that goal met, or even exceeded soon. I understand White Amur consume native vegetation as well as hydrilla, and are therefore not the most efficient method of vegetation control or funding use. Especially when equal damage is done to native plant species that are immensely productive for said wildlife.
Miles A. Altman

I surely hope you folks will not take any steps to diminish the amount of aquatic plants in Lake Marion and Moultrie! These plants are a vital part of such a wonderful ecosystem. They offer food & cover for fish & birds. Please leave the grass alone!
Rob Jackson

I support a balanced approach for home owners and sportsmen alike. Since the napalm approach to the Hydrilla problem, and the resulting fallout to native vegetation the lakes are a far cry from what they were. Now, I see more cormorants than ducks, and DNR is forced to stock the lake with Striped

Bass to maintain any fishable population. Triploid carp, striped bass, and herbicides are costly. Maintaining a resource for the benefit to all, will pay dividends. As I understand the report, I see that the carp released last year was included in the total numbers, however, those who compile the report did not include that they are not yet at a size where they will do any "good". I urge you to please consider what will happen when all the carp that are released. They will reach a size that hydrilla will not sustain their appetites, and they will move to native aquatic vegetation.
Justin Stroud

I oppose the additional stocking of grass carp for management of vegetation. Fishing could be a money generator for this area if the lake returned to it's natural condition.
Mark G. Hopson

Please **do not** restock the lake with grass carp. Santee Cooper was the favorite lake for many years of the pro fishing circuits that generated vast sums of money for the economy. However, since the stocking of grass carp and the eradication of the vegetation that made the lake so great, the pros no longer want to come to this lake.
Richard W. Smith

Over the years I have noticed a decline in the Santee Cooper Lakes starting with the attempts to control vegetation with Carp and Chemicals. I beleive the effort to control hydrilla is slowly killing a great fishery. Fish species that require cover are slowly dying out. During the last 3 years, with the cessation of chemical spraying and the grass carp starting to die out, I have noticed a rebound in the fish species I fish for. This will amount to the destruction of what small amount of habitat is left. I feel we should have a healthy amount of vegetation in the lakes to provide breeding and cover habitat for fish and bird species. The past war on hydrilla in the lakes proves that to try an eradicate it is useless effort. I feel that all aquatic vegetation should be allowed to flourish as long as it doesnt effect the hydroelectric power facilities.
Bruce Baker

We have started to recover from one of the largest Natural Resource Management gaffes of the 20th Century on Santee Cooper when we released several hundred thousand grass carp 10-15 years ago and ended up with an underwater "desert", void of vegetation, including native. There is no "recall" once the grass carp are put in there, and their preference for Southern naiad's and other native vegetation, *presumably* after they eat non natives is concerning. Please consider using other methods, including mechanical and chemical to specifically target the weeds you are after.
Jesse N. Williams III

I understand that there has been a rapid increase in hydrilla coverage on Lake Marion and Moultrie at an alarming rate of 300%. Unfortunately I am adamantly opposed to the grass carp stocking rate proposal by Santee Cooper. I have personally witnessed the beautiful vast Valsineria beds that have established on the lower area of Lake Marion. The rapid increase in NATIVE submergent aquatic vegetation is what is so vital to the health of South Carolina bodies of water, especially Lake Marion and Moultrie. I would like to know if all herbicide application techniques have been exhausted? I would also like to know a 12 month seasonal timeline for herbicide application rates by Santee Cooper and question why there seems to be a heavy application in the Fall just prior to a natural winter dieoff of submergent aquatic vegetation **as well as the arrival of migrating waterfowl who utilize this vegetation!**

Paul Taylor

Our lakes system is inching toward improvement when it comes to native SAV's for our fish and waterfowl to benefit from, and I am not referring to Hydrilla. Santee Cooper is supposed to maintain at least 10% coverage of vegetation, and our lake systems are not even at that number.

Dr. Alex Brammer

I write to you today as someone who has seen Lakes Marion and Moultrie when they were completely overgrown with hydrilla, through the years when herbicides were used in an attempt to control it, when the grass carp were stocked resulting in the creation of a lake bottom that resembled a desert, and now when the lakes are finally recovering from this desertification. Instead of increasing control in small increments until a balance agreeable to all users is reached, Santee Cooper and the SCDNR are going to flood the lake with a fish species that in itself is invasive in order to control another invasive organism. In doing so, ridding or nearly ridding the lake of hydrilla I'm sure will be achieved. Please use a gradual increase in control methods until the desired result is reached instead of over doing it this year and sending the lakes back to desert status.

B.K. Bonge Jr.

I've read the draft AM plan. I've seen the Santee Cooper system slowing coming back to life from the overstocking of grass carp in the mid and late 1990's. Please do not make that mistake again. Also, the effect of the reduction of hydrilla coverage resulting from the September spraying and the extremely low lake levels in late 2011 should be taken into account before considering anything as long-term as an increase in the number of grass carp.

Grass carp can always be released, but it's impossible to un-release them. Please do not do release any additional triplods without first assessing the actual hydrilla situation 2012.

Stephen Thomas,

Approve:

The Santee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) would like to express support for the 2012 South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Plan developed by the SC Aquatic Plant Management Council and SCDNR. The plan is consistent with U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) policy on control and removal of exotic invasive organisms that have harmful impacts on aquatic natural resources and on the human use of these resources. Additionally, the plan is consistent with the Santee NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan goals and objectives. The occurrence and spread of exotic, invasive, and nuisance plant and animal species has been identified by Service staff and intergovernmental partners as one of the priority management issues facing Santee NWR. We support approval of the 2012 SC Aquatic Plant Management Plan to enhance the biological integrity, desirable native vegetation, compatible public uses and control of undesirable, aquatic invasive species on the refuge and contiguous ecosystems.

Marc Epstein

Wildlife Refuge Manager

The Santee Cooper Lakes continue to be a valuable asset to our county and its businesses. Throughout the years many people have come to our lakes for all types of outdoor recreation. This tourism has brought much needed revenue to our local economy and has helped support our community. In recent years the health of our lakes has been questioned, but now this activity is starting to pick back up and our lakes are improving. This is evidenced by an increase in the lakes

grasses that provide good habitat for all types of animals. This habitat is helping us attract the professional tournaments back to our area and is helping to start some economic activity. We do not want to see our lakes return to the condition that they were in and do not want this forward progress to be killed . Santee Cooper has been a good steward of our natural resources and a good neighbor for their surrounding communities. We do understand the problems with nuisance aquatic vegetation, but feel that our local economies depend on a healthy lake with good habitat to support a diverse wildlife population including all types of fish, waterfowl, and other birds. This wildlife population made our lakes into the great tourist attraction that they once were and we would like to see our lakes continue that tradition. The Clarendon County Chamber understands that there are many uses for our lakes, not just wildlife, and know that Santee Cooper can find a good balance for all who enjoy our lakes. Thank you for taking the time to hear our input on this subject.

Dawn Griffith, Executive Director
Clarendon County Chamber of Commerce

This commission is committed to supporting all efforts that prevent this from ever happening again.
(Shriner, M. Santee Cooper Country)

We would like to see the weeds on Lake Marion, Wyboo area controled as our children, grandchildren and ourselves enjoy swimming , boating.and skiing.
Samuel E. and Ann Plowden

The weeds are ruining the quality of the lake for recreational purposes. Since the lake is also a big tourist sell for fishing and recreation, we would think DNR would be committed to controlling weeds and any other problem that would be detrimental to the beauty and usefulness of the lake.
Sincerely,
LeRoy and Mary Lou Carter

We are fully in favor of the 2012 aquatic plant management plan. We appreciate all the hard work that goes into it.
Thank you,
Hugh & Jennifer Miller

We are in favor of DNR's Aquatic Plant Management Plan. These weeds are most harmful to recreation and most fishing on Lake Marion.
Bobby and Judy Campbell

It is imperative that DNR and the Council continue with an aggressive and innovative stance to control invasive plants and weeds in our lakes in South Carolina...Once a problem is out of control, the cost to deal with it is much greater than if it is dealt with on a routine basis...I strongly urge DNR and the Council to take a strong stance towards continued funding and possible increased budget and not make the future costly mistake of allowing problems to become severe before dealing with them.
Julie Rickenbaker

We have a place at Santee and support the Aquatic Weed Control Plan.
Lide Winburn

In 2010 we had the onset of a major weed and invasive plant problem that would have taken over Church Branch. That did not occur due to the outstanding actions in 2011, of Chip Davis and his crew from Analytical and Biological Services of Santee Cooper in Moncks Corner. I strongly urge DNR and the Council to take a strong stance towards continued funding and possible increased budget and not make the future costly mistake that Florida did.

Dwight L. Foster

I definitely support any and all attempts to control the invasive weeds in Lake Marion and Moultrie.
Bob Drastura

This is an written notice from Bobby J. Tillman @ 1197 Haynesworth Mill Circle, Summerton, SC, requesting in favor of proper weed control around lake area (Santee Cooper).

Bobby J. Tillman

I believe the Aquatic Plant Management Division is doing an excellent job of balancing the needs of both fishermen and recreational users.

Hal White

I am very much in support of the efforts to control the invasive weeds and grass in the Wyboo area of Lake Marion. Please make every effort to continue the program. The Potato Creek neck is almost covered and a similar situation in the Wyboo would destroy recreational opportunities. Thanks again to SCDNR and SANTEE COOPER for the work they have done.

Joe Davis

Aside from reduced recreational opportunities, this is an economic issue for those of us who purchased "lakefront property" at a premium, and who are annually confronted with both Santee Cooper drawdowns and aquatic nuisance species hindering both enjoyment and resale values. I know that resources are spread very thin, but hope adjustments will be made, if necessary, to insure the White Oak II area will be treated effectively this season.

Robert P. Sullivan

As a home owner on Lake Marion, I am in favor of spraying the weeds that grow in the water around my dock and beach area. These weeds create a real problem with jet skis. They also create a mud bed over the natural sand that is there. I feel there is plenty of grassy areas around the lake for fishing and would like to see the weed control spraying continued.

Robert A. Armstrong
Brenda M. Armstrong

I am a homeowner on the lake and I whole heartedly support the use of insecticides (aquatic safe of course) to rid our lake of the growth that threatens our habitat. The program should be stepped up.

Paul Moore

Thoroughly agree with the control of invasive species.
Particularly interested in control of Lake Marion in Clarendon county.
Michael A. Lane P.E.

Please accept this a request from our family to not only continue but also strengthen your efforts to combat the invasive weeds that have contaminated Lake Marion...The weeds that appeared in late summer 2011 robbed the lake of much of its recreational value. Thank you for all that you do to maintain this priceless asset, and combat these weeds that have the potential to completely destroy much of the value of the lake.

William and Wanda Johnson

Please include spraying for the control of hydrilla and other invasive water plants in Lake Marion and other lakes in the state as part of the overall Aquatic Plant Management Plan strategies.

Martha Jones

I highly recommend the removal of any non-native plants in our state of SC.

Paul Lowrance

The Mill Creek area and most other creeks off Lake Marion are being overtaken by both Floating Crested Heart and Lyngbia. Santee Cooper treated areas for the Floating Heart in 2011, but it had little or no effect on the plants. I fear they will be worse this year. I also noted that you did not list Lyngbia in your plan. It is a blackish-green algae that is covering the bottom of the lake's creeks. I sincerely hope, DNR will work until these two invasive plants are destroyed.

Harold L. Blitch

We are in favor of aggressive management of the invasive weeds. These obstructive weeds should be removed with whatever means are necessary. These weeds affect recreational activities.

Scott and Niki Garris

This invasive weed is choking off the entire bay rendering docks and boating impossible, devaluating property as it is no longer water front with lake access. In as such, I believe Crested Floating Heart should be given utmost priority until we gain some managable control.

Gerald Dunston

We are totally in favor of continuing the process to eliminate the weeds, especially in these residential areas. They may be good for the fish, but not good for those who have little ones swimming in the lake, as well as skiing and jet skiing.

Sandra Shumway

Our vote is definitely to spray these invaders, before we wish we had done something about them sooner. We have already experienced invasive weeds around our dock.

Raymond and Sue Barb

I am not an expert on the potential for these areas to house and attract snakes, but know that it has been raised as a concern by family and friends, especially those with small children. Additionally, the weeds create a snag for fishing lures that then pose a threat to children and adult swimmers that may step on the lure. While we are very appreciative of the natural beauty and vegetation around the lake, we whole-heartedly support the control and elimination of these nuisance weeds at and around private docks, and public landings to allow for the safe enjoyment of the recreational features offered by the lake.

John Scholz

I am writing this email to encourage you to please continue these efforts this calendar year in the airport slew of Lake Marion in Clarendon County.

Henry Boudreau

Let's continue to clean our lake of this terrible troublesome weed. The lake looks a lot better and I know it will continue to as long as we let it be known that we don't want something that would take over the water if allowed. Thanks DNR.

Katie Hatcher

I support your work with the invasive weeds. If I or the Goat Island Boat Club can be of help with this problem please let us know.

Carl Cagle

I love my lake and do not want weeds that do not belong there growing in the waters. I remember a time when it was hard to get out on Potato Creek for the Hydria growing. I stand on the side of dnr. and will help in any way I can to stop the growth of Hydria.

ktallyho@aol.com

As a waterfront resident of Lake Marion and a member of Goat Island Boat Club I want to express my continued support for 2012 SCDNR and Santee Cooper's efforts to control invasive plants in lakes Moultrie and Marion.

Debra Gleaton

Please do not let the invasive weeds spread into our lakes. We have had problems in the past and were not able to even get out boat away from our pier to enjoy our lakes. The children could not swim and spend time in the summer playing. People would fish near our pier and get their fish hooks caught in the weeds and leave the lines in the water and then the birds would get tangled up in them.

Marlene and Winston Hinds

I certainly want to see DNR put into effect any avenues possible to control the invasive weeds in the Santee Lakes. Thank you DNR for the efforts put forward to control ALL weeds.

Bobby Hodges

I have had to call on a couple of occasions about the weeds in the creek that I live on. I am glad that we can call and have someone spray these otherwise I would not be able to use Lizzie Creek to get out to Wyboo area. I would like to see this continue and to be sure that these weeds stay under control along with any of the others that prevent the recreational activities on the lake.

Kim McClamm

Please DO NOT STOP poisoning the uncontrollable weeds around docks on the Santee Cooper Lake System. Although I realize the fishermen appreciate these weeds for catching their fish, they also harbor snakes, alligators around area where children and adults are swimming and enjoying the water. There has to be a balance between the fishermen and the general public enjoying this recreational facility

Janet Lynam

As a full time resident with waterfront property on Lake Marion, I fully support the proposed plan to control invasive weeds in Lake Marion by use of spraying and carp.

Ted Brownell

I live on Lake Marion and am in favor of spraying for invasive weeds on the lake.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Campbell

I am strongly supportive of efforts to control the weeds in the Wyboo section of Lake Marion... It is amazing how quickly the weeds grow and I am concerned that without a proactive approach and our current warm winter, this summer could be exceptionally bad.

Ronald D. Wilson

I would like to see the invasive weeds gone from the canal areas am a property owner and we bought in the area for the water not weeds.

Gerri White

CURRENTLY, FOUR OF THE SIX PROPERTIES ARE FOR SALE. THE MAIN REASON IS THE WEED PROBLEM AND THE LONG PERIODS OF NO WATER.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THAT THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME RIFT BETWEEN THE RECREATIONAL BOATERS AND THE HUNTER/FISHERMEN OVER THE CONTROL OF THE WEEDS. WHEN YOU CAN'T GET YOUR BOAT OUT OR NAVIGATE THE WATERS WHEN YOU DO, YOU CAN BE NEITHER...

DOES THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY HAVE A CLUE OF THE KINDS OF CHEMICALS THAT ARE BEING DUMPED INTO THE LAKE BY LANDOWNERS WITH THE BEST OF INTENTIONS IN AN EFFORT TO RID THEIR AREAS OF THESE PESKY WEEDS AND LILIE. DO ANY OF US REALLY WANT TO EAT FISH OR WILDLIFE THAT HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO SO MANY UNKNOWN CHEMICALS? IS THERE ANY LIABILITY ON THE STATE BY LETTING THESE PROBLEMS EXIST?

THERE ARE MANY LANDOWNERS WHO DO NOT HAVE THE LUXURY OF USING MANY DIFFERENT LANDINGS TO PUT THEIR BOATS IN THE LAKE. THEY HAVE PAID FOR THE RIGHT TO DOCK THEIR BOATS WHERE THEY OWN HOMES. MANY DO NOT HAVE TRAILERS. COULD THE LANDOWNERS BAND TOGETHER AND STOP PAYING THE LEASES UNTIL THERE WAS A REASON TO PAY THEM? WHAT WOULD SANTEE COOPER DO? IF THE LAKE IS IMPASSABLE, WHAT GOOD IS IT TO ANYONE? THE FAILURE TO CONTROL THESE WEEDS HAS TAKEN UNTOLD ENJOYMENT FROM COUNTLESS NUMBERS OF PEOPLE WHO PAY DEARLY FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF HAVING A PLACE ON THE LAKE.
BOBBY AND JANICE WELCH

I am fully in support of eradicating the aquatic plants. They clog the waterways, prevent residents from using their watercraft, damage boats & jetskis and probably provide a haven for the snakes and alligators.

Annelle Powell

We are in full support of the controlling of the weeds in Lake Marion with chemicals or other methods to maintain clear clean water access. Last year we called and the weeds were sprayed. Thanks.....it helped a lot. Some of it did not die but everywhere they sprayed it did. We will see if it comes back this year. It is a reedy type grass. This past summer we started seeing snakes for the first time. I understand there is a new grass that is very hard to manage that has started

Bill Lynam

The weeds tend to attract snakes and this in return brings on the fear of alligators hiding. We don't feel safe enough to let the children swim around the pier. We watched numerous alligators last year getting very comfortable hanging around the pier and if these weeds are allowed to grow, we certainly can't see them.

Helen Welsh

We are in favor of Santee Cooper Property Management to continue their efforts to control weeds and algae in our lake system. We live on Lake Shore Drive in Manning and the problem became so severe this summer we were unable to use our waterfront after the end of June. I am also a Realtor and show waterfront property for sale. The majority of buyers are looking for a sandy beach with water their children can swim in and enjoy without the constant annoyance of weeds. We must keep the shorelines of property owners weed free or the values will be reduced even more so than they are now because of the economy.

Linda M. Lesemann

I agree with the need to control aquatic weed problem areas in Lake Marion.

William W Huffman II

Please consider this as my strong belief that Santee Cooper needs to aggressively work to fully combat invasive aquatic vegetation in the lakes. The "eel grass" has really become quite a problem in the Wyboo area, and perhaps other areas of Lake Marion as well. I sincerely hope that more aggressive treatment will take place during 2012.

Cliff Goodwin

I own a home in Frierson subdivision on the water and we have been taken over by this alligator grass around our dock and beach where our children and pets play. We have also spotted snakes and alligators this year which has been a problem before this grass appeared. I would be in favor of weed control, especially with the amount of taxes we pay each year for this property.

Chad Dowling

Please keep treating the weeds in the Wyboo area.

Ed Bynum

I am writing to say that as a homeowner in the wyboo area I am in complete support Of weed and grass control for the safety of those of us who love to swim around our dock area.

Charley moss

I support the draft aquatic management plan for 2012...The weeds in the cove are hampering recreational use.

Sandra & Wayne Smith

I do not feel like the suggested number of carp is sufficient to maintain enough SAV's to flourish the Santee Cooper lakes. Years ago, we had 20 times more waterfowl on the Santee Cooper lakes than today...However, it I believe the native submerged aquatic plant vegetation was a primary factor in the waterfowl numbers we used to see. Please make your best effort to increase the number of carp to eliminate hydrilla on the lakes so the natural SAV's can flourish like they need to.

Josh Britt

I support the draft aquatic management plan for 2012. In addition, how can I request aquatic weed control specific to my property.

Eddie Broyles

I support the draft aquatic management plan for 2012.

Ford7t1

You have my complete support to continue aquatic weed control in Lake Marion and especially in the wyboo area. It is a huge nuisance and must be stopped. Thanks for your help.

Paul Gaughf

I AM IN FAVOR OF THE SPRAYING!!

Gary Herlong

I am totally in support of all the weed control that is possible. We have significant problems even getting our boats in and out of our cove. My neighbor cannot even get his boat past my lot to his dock because of the weeds.

John Jackson

The weeds are a nuisance and greatly affect the ability to navigate to and from our property not to mention restricting recreational use. I am also an avid hunter and fisherman and understand the need for some vegetation but not in the recreational areas of the lake. If aggressive action is not taken soon the weeds will once again, as it did several years ago take over the lake.

Charles Bostic

I am in favor and appreciative of the efforts of Santee Cooper SCDNR to control the weeds and grasses in Lake Marion... the long grass grew so fast and consumed our swimming area. My girls swim in this area along the beach, and the grass not only is an irritant but also presents a danger. I believe this is also referred to as "Alligator Grass", and appropriately named, as this is the place the alligators lie in wait

Curt

During the summer of 2011, we experienced a rapid growth of an irritating aquatic weed which I refer to as eel weed. I called last year to Santee Cooper to request to have this weed possibly sprayed... I am an avid fisherman and I do understand the need for some vegetation to exist in our lake. The quantity of places to fish are much greater than there are to swim. I would further guess that the ones who want the weeds do not own property and pay property tax like I do on the lake in Clarendon County.

Please take into account my extreme desire to spray this weed to help eradicate it in our swimming and boating areas

Chris Alderman

We have had alot of lily pads in our slip the past few years and makes in very hard to get in and out. You did spray last year and it helped alot . i was hoping that you will be doing the same this year.

Tom Miller

I am a lakefront property owner on Lake Marion, and I strongly support spraying for the invasive weeds. I live on airport sleugh in Wyboo Plantation.

Ron Fulmer

I am in favor of and support DNR's plan for 2012 to control invasive weeds in our lake. I live on Taw Caw Creek and am so glad we have you to maintain control of these obnoxious weeds.

Corrille DeWitt

Please consider my vote and support to the aquatic plant issue that we are having in our lakes. The different types of weeds seems to be getting worst every year.

Dennis Craven

Homeowners and businesses alike suffer when the weeds choke out access to your property. Boating and fishing revenues go down when people can't enjoy the lakes due to weed infestations. I put my support completely behind the DNR experts and vote for their plan of action for this year.

Dale Cozart

We have a "horrible" problem with Aquatic Weeds. We definitely support this Aquatic Weed Control Bill and request that you absolutely continue this program.

William C. Grant

Need to reduce the aquatic weed at Santee! Please help

Ronnie Grant

In my opinion, it is pointless to have a house on the lake if you cannot enjoy the lake. This past summer was very disappointing because we were very limited to how much we could actually use the water in front of our property. I even cancelled plans with some of my friends and family because of the large quantities of grass in the swimming area. It's a shame that Santee Cooper doesn't think enough of those that have property on the lake to resolve these issues.

While I understand that there may be those that want the grass for fishing, there are many other places to fish on the lake that are not populated. I am sure that the majority of the residents would prefer that all of the grass be removed from around the docks and the swimming areas. If this problem is not resolved, I don't see myself being a home owner there for much longer. My vote -

HAVE ALL OF THE GRASS REMOVED BY WHATEVER MEANS NECESSARY.

John Capps

Please continue to keep lake clean.

Keith Gibbons

As a waterfront property owner on Lake Marion I am in favor of spraying the lake for invasive weeds. I am close to losing my waterfront completely.

Ron Rexroad

We have a "horrible" problem with Aquatic Weeds. Please see attached picture dated May 18, 2011. We definitely support this Aquatic Weed Control Bill and request that you absolutely continue this program.

William J. Grant and Florrie Grant DeWitt

The lake has become overgrown with grassy weeds and algae in the last few years. It has become so bad that we are unable to use it for boating, fishing, swimming or any recreation besides sitting

next to it and enjoying the green algae smell. It may be that the weed problem is exacerbated by the exceptionally low lake levels we have experienced over the last few years.

Warren Wurscher

I agree that they should spray for the weed problem on the lakes

Rudy M Hearne

I am begging you to please continue to spray the weeds in the lake. I live on the first water going down 260 towards the dam. Right now I have a 100' dock and the weeds are all the way to the end of it, plus we have a large amount of gators that live in this water and they use the weeds to hide in. This I see as a very dangerous condition. I was going to walk on my dock one evening and just as I step foot on the wood an 8' gator rolled in the water not 5 feet from where I was standing. We cannot kill the gators but please make it harder for them to hide so close to land. Your help is greatly appreciated!

Jerri Rawls

I have a house on Church Branch / Coffey Street and I am in favor of weed control.

Key Thrasher

I'm in support of spraying the invasive weeds in the finger lake off of Lake Marion as long as it does not affect wildlife and fish stocks

Gayle Croom

I am supportive of your efforts to control the invasion of these non native weeds that are making boating, fishing and being able to dock at our dock without getting the prop wrapped up with weeds.

Michael Palladino

Last year we had lots of issues with our jet ski "clogging" up with weeds. It is imperative that "weed control" be maintained for this year and the many years to come.

Ken and Cathy Sharp

I have been living on the lake since 1981 and have never seen the weeds as bad as they are. The summer months used to be so exciting at my water front property, but now the weeds have taken all over it. Please take any measures to help this or at least control it better.

Kathie R. Ard

I am in favor and support DNR's plan to control invasive weeds. We are so fortunate to have such a beautiful lake in our backyard. As you know, the lake draws a number of visitors each year. Visitors spend money and boost our local economy with every tank of gas and bag of ice they purchase.

Wanda Johnson

I am in favor of DNR's proposed plan on invasive weeds in Lake Marion. The invasive weeds are killing recreation and most fishing, the more there are the less monies we receive in our county (Clarendon).

W, Harold Denny

I wanted to let you know that I am in favor of the DNR's plan on invasive WEEDS in Lake. I remember the Hydrilla problem, *and it almost killed recreation and fishing.*

John Mathis

I am in favor of DNR's proposed plan on invasive weeds in Lake Marion. I want my children to grow up enjoying the lake, but these weeds are everywhere!

Mrs. Miriam Johnson

I am in favor of DNR's proposed plan on invasive weeds in Lake Marion. The invasive weeds are killing recreation and most fishing, the more there are the less monies we receive in our county (Clarendon). DuValle Elliott

I am in very strong support of SC DNR's programs to control invasiv(es) Please do everything possible weeds in the Santee Cooper lakes of Moultrie and Marion.

John Roe

I am in favor of DNR's plan to control invasive weeds. They should definitely not be allowed to continue to multiply and choke our waters.

Jerry Hatcher

I fully support the program stopping the invasion of aquatic weeds! Keep up the good work.

Joe Campbell

I am in favor of DNR's proposed plan on controlling invasive weeds in Lake Marion. The invasive weeds are killing recreation and the quality of the fishing in our lake. The net result is less fishermen and less boaters and less money coming in to Clarendon County.

Tom Privette

I am in favor of DNR's proposed plan on invasive weeds in Lake Marion.

AMY LANE

Please stop the invasive weeds on Lake Marion. They are destroying fish and other aquatic life as well as ruining tourism and lowering home values.

Phyllis Wittschen

I am in favor of DNR's proposed plan on aquatic weeds in lake Marion.

Alfred H. Kelley

I do not know the name of the plant, but we have had EXTREME problems with a slick, slimy plant all along our shore line. It fouls propellers, feels absolutely awful on bare feet, thus discourages entering the water and multiplies very fast. We will appreciate it very much if you can do something to eliminate this problem!

H. B. Sprott, Jr.

Comments and Revisions:

Response:

SCDNR and Santee Cooper continue to agree that we need aquatic vegetation in the Santee Cooper Lakes to have a great natural resource. We also agree that vegetation absolutely needs to be of the

native variety and not hydrilla. Eradication of established hydrilla utilizing current technology is virtually impossible. The goal of aquatic plant management on the Santee Cooper Lakes is to reduce hydrilla acreage while promoting a diverse natural habitat for fisheries, waterfowl and other animals. That goal is set forth in a Memorandum of Understanding between Santee Cooper and the SCDNR. The MOU provides for a minimum of 10% of the surface area of the lakes to be maintained with a diverse assemblage of native aquatic plants which includes a combination of submersed , floating leaf, and emergent plant species that provide habitat and food for game and non-game fish and wildlife species. According to a survey in the fall/winter, 21% of the Santee Cooper system has aquatic vegetation with over 8% of that being submersed native vegetation . These totals are well above the 10% minimum with almost that amount of native submersed vegetation alone.

The hydrilla increase is what is so problematic. Not only has the hydrilla acreage tripled to just over 3200 acres on the main lake system, It is actually replacing some of the native eel grass (*Vallisneria*) in some coves in lower Marion and upper Moultrie.

The consensus of those that disapprove of the plan seems to be in favor somewhat of controlling the invasive weed hydrilla while allowing native species to flourish. Generally the most unified approach by some of the commentators is to allow the 25 fish per vegetated acre for 3,244 acres(to move forward with disapproval towards the extra 47,900 fish directed towards the additional stocking rate of 10 fish per vegetated acre of about 4,790 acres of native pondweeds and naiads. The opinion is the stocking of this extra amount will definitely be detrimental to the ever increasing population of beneficial native vegetation. While those opinions contain merit it does not take into account the SCDNR and Santee Cooper's intent to monitor the progress of the carp's control and the potential negative impacts to native vegetation. The plan is not trying to eliminate the naiad or pond weed, but trying to account for the distraction it creates to hydrilla herbivory. Research is also currently underway by SCDNR fisheries staff to determine the most effective ways to reduce the grass carp population if they are effective on the hydrilla but have too great a negative impact on beneficial native species. Literature searches have come up with examples from Texas's Lake Conroe on efforts which target reduction of stocked carp in that system. This is a concerted effort to shift from a maintenance issue to a more aggressive approach to re-balance the system to reduce hydrilla while still promoting growth of native beneficial vegetation.

In order to enhance native plant growth and habitat, innovative management techniques shall continue to be utilized. Introduction of desirable native plant species, which enhancing wildlife and waterfowl management areas and implementing strategic lake level management measures will be continued in 2012. Those efforts include Santee Cooper and SCDNR staff; along with numerous concerned volunteers spending numerous hours on the lakes in an effort to harvest seed for additional plantings in the spring and summer. Techniques are have been developed for more efficient and effective planting techniques

Also included in the MOU is annual monitoring of the vegetative community and a cooperative effort to monitor the health of the fishery and waterfowl populations. The data derived from annual surveys will be utilized in an annual meeting between SCDNR and Santee Cooper to review the

results of monitoring and treatment programs and to determine the effectiveness of the programs and to develop annual work plans.

Sterile grass carp are utilized so that we may control their numbers in the lakes and eliminate an overabundance. Current research shows that the carp have an approximate mortality rate of 32% per year. Grass carp have been in the system throughout the entire recent period of vegetation expansion. Some \$400,000 was expended to determine the impacts of stocking grass carp in the Santee Cooper lakes, including impacts to fisheries, water quality, and vegetative coverage. Additionally, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers developed and published a detailed Environmental Assessment for the use of grass carp to control hydrilla in South Carolina in both the late 1980's and again in 2005. The EA considered impacts to native fish populations, water quality, aquatic plant populations, as well as tourism and recreation (fishing, hunting and boating). Among other positive findings, the EA states that "sterile grass carp provide a safe, cost effective means of controlling nuisance aquatic vegetation in South Carolina. Once again, DNR and Santee Cooper are committed to protecting and enhancing the native vegetation community. We plan to continue to monitor their status and take corrective action if unnecessary impacts occur.

Plan Modifications:

None at present time.