

Minutes of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council

1. Call to Order

Steve de Kozlowski called the 96th meeting of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council to order at 10:00 am on January 25, 2008 at the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Board Room, in Columbia, S.C. This meeting was open to the public and ample notice had been provided according to Section 30-4-80 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Attendance:

Council members in attendance were Mr. John Inabinet, S.C. Public Service Authority; Mr. Bob Perry, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries; Ms. Jeannie Eidson, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control; Cam Lay, Clemson University, Department of Pesticide Regulation; Mr. David Tompkins, S.C. Department of Agriculture, Mr. Marc Cribb, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, and Mr. Steven de Kozlowski, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water and Conservation Division.

Visitors in attendance were Chris Page, Michael Hook, Walter Meitzen, and Jennifer Mock; S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water and Conservation Division.

2. Minutes of the November 29, 2007 Council Meeting

The minutes were reviewed and a motion to accept the minutes was made by Eidson and seconded by Lay. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Review of Recommendations of 2008 Santee Cooper/SCDNR Cooperative Meeting

de Kozlowski opens the review by stating that Santee Cooper staff along with SCDNR staff met regarding management for the year 2008 according to the SC Aquatic Plant Management Plan. Recommendations were passed to the SC Aquatic Plant Management Council for consideration. These recommendations were presented by Inabinet. Inabinet

states that numbers from the aerial survey was given. The goal that Santee Cooper and SCDNR set for the lakes was ten percent of coverage with aquatic vegetation. Seventy-Five percent of that vegetation would be beneficial to waterfowl. Inabinet states that the goal of ten percent coverage was reached in the earlier part of the year and that the vast majority of submersed vegetation is now dewatered due to the extraordinary drought. The long term impacts are unknown. Due to so many unknowns Santee Cooper and DNR staff decided that it would not be beneficial to proceed with maintenance stocking of grass carp during the upcoming year until lake elevations returned to somewhat normal levels. Inabinet states that there was some discussion of what would be included in the management plan and a brief write up was provided by Page. Inabinet submitted an alternate version of the write up to Page which is included in the plan. The write up states that maintenance stocking will not be done until the spring, staff will wait until water levels return and then determine what impact the drought will have on a long term basis of aquatic plant growth primarily on hydrilla. Inabinet states that in early 2006 hydrilla was growing along the shoreline in the Elliott's and Packs Landing area. Twenty-six hundred grass carp were stocked according to the maintenance stocking plan that was approved. A large jump in the growth of hydrilla was seen in the spring of 2007 from the Upper Packs Landing to below Jacks Creek. Hydrilla has been sitting dry all summer and was treated extensively in the earlier part of the year. The vegetation and tuber growth has not been seen. Inabinet reiterates that there are too many unknowns. The lakes at this point are about nine feet below according to what the rule curve indicates where they should be. de Kozlowski asked if there was any discussion about habitat enhancement and wildlife management areas. Inabinet responds by stating that a lot of plans for this year were discussed at last year's meeting of the work that would be performed in some of the WMA's primarily Sandy Beach. Inabinet states that this water body has been dry all summer.

Page is given the floor and states that staff is working with Sepro on a product that offers great promises of draw down treatment on hydrilla. Staff is also working with individuals of the WMA's to identify some sites that would need some treatment. Page stated that most of the specific changes made in the meeting are in the plan. SCDNR asked for some specific changes that are in the plan within sections "d" and "e" of Lake Marion. Fragrant

waterlily was also asked to be added to the list within the plan. All changes in the plan revolve around Lake Marion.

Inabinet mentions that there was some discussion on conceptual work that could be done at the hatchery WMA. de Kozlowski asked if there were any other comments about the recommendations. Page stated that Scott Lamprecht from the fisheries section stated that the limited draw down of levels would be good for the system when they come back up given that this helps the habitat for brooding fish. Among the systems that are monitored the Santee Cooper system was the most productive bass fishery in the state. The waterfowl numbers appear to be average, but with a slight change in composition of the waterfowl. Duck hunting had improved possibly due access of the lakes. With no other discussion or recommendations that evolved from this meeting discussion was closed.

4. Final Draft 2008 Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Page was given the floor to discuss final drafts to the Aquatic Plant Management Plan. Page stated that overall prices have increased. The numbers would be significantly lower if Habitat was being used in the equations this year. Most areas with phragmites are getting to a stage that minor treatments can be done. This allows more focus in other areas. A Sonar product is being used for Lake Greenwood instead of a contact herbicide because of continued growth of hydrilla in that system. Page referred to the biggest changes to Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie which were provided in a handout with changes marked in red.

Page states that the changes involved adding fragrant waterlily and crested floating heart to the problem plant species list. Page stated that there was some discussion about certain species being listed and why they were listed. Page stated that they are on the list due to treatments of native plants in high use urban areas around Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie. Fragrant waterlily was specifically asked by SCDNR Biologists to be added to the list. Page refers to item "d." in the Lake Marion management plan. Page states that DNR waterfowl staff would like to see more work done at Hickory Top on giant cutgrass populations. Santee Cooper Wildlife Management Area was added to the plan as a line

item for fragrant waterlily and alligatorweed populations. Inabinet states that quite a bit of work was done this past summer at Hickory Top.

Page moves on to page two item four of the Lake Marion section of the management plan. Page states that the acreage listed is approximated from last year's high numbers on the surveys. Numbers are unknown due to drought conditions. de Kozlowski asked what impacts do lake levels have on sub impoundments. Inabinet responds that sub impoundments have done a good job holding water, which is what they are there for. Page moves on to state that crested floating heart is on the list and remains an expanding problem. Page mentions that SCDNR needs to consider talking with Clemson about getting this species added to the invasive species list for SC. Lay will find out what needs to be done to have crested floating heart added to the invasive species list.

Page refers to page three, number five of the Lake Marion section of the management plan. Page mentions that the verbiage listed is what was agreed upon by the SCDNR/Santee Cooper staffs. de Kozlowski asked that everyone take a moment and read the verbiage listed. Page states that the statement listed does not impact the fact that additional maintenance stocking is being asked for in Goose Creek. Eidson suggests leaving the paragraph below the added statement for triploid grass carp at number five and removing the first sentence. Changing verbiage was discussed for the second paragraph in number five under triploid grass carp. The same language will be added to Lake Moultrie as well. It was agreed to change verbiage under number seven of the Lake Marion management section from "If needed" to "If conditions warrant".

Page closes by stating that everything else that is in the plan was included in last year's plan. De Kozlowski asked if Lake Murray was being added to the plan. Page states that it was included in last year's plan and the only change added to the plan was the herbicide for primrose. Page briefly mentions a report from Cindy Aulbach, a private consultant, for SCE&G on hydrilla, slender pondweed, naiad, and other simple vegetation surveys around Lake Murray which still shows no evidence of hydrilla regrowth. De Kozlowski proposes further questions to the council. A motion to approve the Aquatic Plant

Management Plan as amended for public review and comment was given by Eidson and seconded by Lay. With no further discussion the motion to accept the plan as amended was accepted by the council.

5. Other Business

Discussion of the National Aquatic Plant Management Society Meeting was discussed. Dates for a field trip to the Yawkey Center were discussed. The council agreed to take the field trip during the month of August. Perry will look into making arrangements with the Center.

de Kozlowski gives status on the Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan. de Kozlowski states that comments are in and Page has compiled all comments. The plan has been sent to SCDNR Graphics for touch ups. March is the time frame to have the plan wrapped up. It will go out to all agencies for review and signatures of agreement.

6. Adjournment

Being no further business the Council adjourned at 11:33 p.m.