

Minutes of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council

1. Call to Order

Steven de Kozlowski called the 93rd meeting of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council to order at 1:09 pm on Feb. 1, 2007 in the conference room of the S.C. Department of Agriculture's Ramage Conference Center, 1001 Bluff Road (Across from Williams-Brice Stadium) 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; Mr. Stan Hutto, S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism; Mr. Marc Cribb, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Mr. David Tompkins, S.C. Department of Agriculture, and Mr. Steven de Kozlowski, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water and Conservation Division.

Visitors in attendance were Mr. Larry McCord, S.C. Public Service Authority; Mr. Chris Page, Michael Hook, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water and Conservation Division.

2. Minutes of the Nov. 16, 2006 Council Meeting

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

3. Santee Cooper aquatic Vegetation Survey Results and Discussion

Larry McCord presented preliminary data from the Remetrix aerial photography project, which maps and provides quantitative data about the status of vegetation in the Santee Cooper lakes. Results of the survey show that vegetation has increased in both Lake

Moultrie and Lake Marion (submersed 108%, emergent 50%, overall 60%) and total coverage is now about 8% for the lake system (9% for Lake Marion and 6% for Lake Moultrie). De Kozlowski noted several important points from the slideshow and clarified the discussion of the 10% goal for the Santee Cooper Lakes. There has been a significant increase from 2005 and the lakes are nearing the 10% coverage goal. Each year a team of DNR and Santee Cooper staff meet and review aquatic vegetation, fish, and waterfowl survey data and make aquatic plant management recommendations to the Council. This year the committee recommends that the Council initiate phase II of the grass carp maintenance stocking plan and treat sub-impoundments (Potato Creek and Stony Bay) to change them from hydrilla based to native species based systems. Phase II of the plan calls for stocking of 2620 sterile grass carp, to be divided into 2100 (3/4) for Lake Marion and 520 (1/4) for Lake Moultrie. Perry asked that the stocking take place as close to existing areas of hydrilla as possible to ensure better control. Eidson concurred that Phase II is correct and we should show in the plan that we are near the 10% mark with indigenous species. Eidson also added that we need to have an educational web page to show the public exactly why and how we came to the decision to stock and that we need to reevaluate the model yearly based on revegetation.

Perry emphasized the opportunity of habitat enhancement with the Hatchery WMA and initiated the idea of having a "Hatchery Summit" and wants to involve others to think outside the box. De Kozlowski and other Council members concurred. It was suggested that maybe Perry and Inabinet head up a subcommittee to address the interest and that there should only be a group of 4-6 other people, which may include Sam Chappelle and Buddy Baker.

Discussion ensued pertaining to the sub-impoundments on Lakes Marion and Moultrie as well as the hatchery area of Moultrie. Additional discussion included ideas to revegetate several areas in the lakes with various species. Discussion about sterility and procedures for testing the grass carp occurred. McCord stated that testing the fish to ensure they are sterile is done as a representative sample. Every fish is not checked.

Inabinet made a motion to accept the changes discussed above for the draft management plan for the Santee Cooper lakes. The motion was seconded by Eidson and carried unanimously.

5. Draft 2007 South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Page discussed Goose Creek issues regarding hydrilla control. Inabinet wanted an explanation of the model numbers. Page replied that unlike the case of stocking in Santee we're two years away from the 2004 target numbers so this year's numbers would be high then drop to 84/year and ideally stocking will be at the upper end of Goose Creek. Inabinet stated that Santee Cooper will probably donate the 185 fish needed. Page mentioned that updates to the plan included State Parks, state lakes and waterfowl management areas and there are price increases on the plan, up 3-4% total. Page said that there were no other changes to the draft plan since the last meeting. De Kozlowski asked if there were any more questions involving any other water bodies then asked for a motion to accept the draft plan as described for public review and comment.

Cribb made the motion to accept the changes and put the plan out for public review and Perry seconded. The motion passed.

6. Other Business

De Kozlowski added that there is an AIS meeting next Thursday and since his promotion the ANS group has moved to Von Snelgrove (along with Conservation Districts, Flood Mitigation and Environmental Review). Cogon grass is also something for all to be aware of since it is becoming more of an issue. De Kozlowski spoke to Miller White yesterday and he sends his greetings. Inabinet stated that Santee Cooper staff found a new nonnative plant, crested floating heart (*Nymphoides cristata*) that may cause problems. It has only been found in Florida so far in the U.S. John Nelson contacted McCord about the plant and said he wanted news coverage of it because Nelson thought it was an intentional release. It was suggested that the Council visit the site as their summer field trip.

7. Adjournment

Being no further business the Council adjourned at 3:06 pm.