

**Minutes from the 113th meeting of the
South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Chris Page called the 113th meeting of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council to order at 10:05 am on March 11, 2013. The meeting was held in Board Room of the Dennis Building at 1000 Assembly St. in Columbia, SC. 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. Larry McCord, S.C. Public Service Authority; Mrs. Jeannie Eidson, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control; Mr. Chris Page, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water, and Conservation Division; Stan Hutto, S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism; Mr. David Tompkins, S.C. Department of Agriculture; and Mr. Bob Perry, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division.

Visitors in attendance were Mr. Clark McCrary, Vallisneria Propagation Presentation Speaker; Mr. Alfred Kelly, Goat Island Boat Club; Mrs. Ann Kelly, Goat Island Boat Club; Mrs. Sandy Rolland, Goat Island Boat Club; Mr. Todd Horton, SC Aquatic Plant Management Society; Mr. Eddie Gleaton, Goat Island Boat Club; Mrs. Debra Gleaton, Goat Island Boat Club; Mr. Carl Cagle, Goat Island Boat Club; Mrs. Carolyn Cagle, Goat Island Boat Club; Mrs. Mary Shriner, Santee Cooper Country; Mr. Bill Short, S.C. Ducks Unlimited; Mr. Ross Self, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division; Mrs. Emily Cope, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, S.C. Department of Natural Resources; Mr. Daniel Hood, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water, and Conservation Division and Mr. Michael Hook, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water, and Conservation Division.

2. Review of the 2013 S.C. Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Mr. Page presented the public comments on the 2013 SC Aquatic Plant Management Plan to the Council. He noted that public comments were down from last year with only 39 comments sent in via e-mail. There were also 206 signatures on an internet petition that was submitted as well. Mr. Page then opened the floor for those in attendance to comment on the 2012 Aquatic Plant Management Plan.

A) Public Comments (floor open for comments)

Mr. Carl Cagle, representing the Goat Island Boat Club, thanked the Council for what it has done and they wanted to show support for the proposed plans. They are very interested in the health of whole lake and like to see it protected.

Mr. Alfred Kelly, representing the Goat Island Boat Club, wanted to thank the Council for keeping the lake clean so he can sell real estate and enjoy the lake.

Mr. Clark McCrary, a concerned sportsman, had a couple questions for the Council regarding the proposed draft plan. Mr. McCrary's first question was whether the numbers listed in the plan scheduled for treatment were actual acres or treatment acres. Mr. Page indicated that the acreages listed by the herbicide treatments were the acreages that Santee Cooper intended on treating this year and not the total acreage of the different plant species. Mr. McCrary also wanted clarification on what species the 5,259 acres listed in the sterile grass carp portion of the plan was comprised of. Mr. Page and Mr. McCord indicated that number was the acreages of all native vegetation, except Vallisneria. Some species included in this acreage figure was coon tail, naiad, and pondweeds. Mr. McCrary also wanted details on what could be done to lessen the loss of Vallisneria in the Rocks Pond and Spires Landing Areas all the way to the Canal. Mr. McCord indicated that no areas were off the table for transplants but that spring time would be the time to positively ID whether or not transplants were needed in that area. The spring time is the best time to ID locations because Vallisneria senesces in the winter time and the new Vallisneria growth in the springtime will be the best indicator as to what is needed.

A discussion followed Mr. McCrary's comments detailing the use of different acreage figures within the Aquatic Plant Management Plan. The discussion focused on

the difference between treatment acreage and actual acreage with the majority of the treatment acreages being determined by the availability of funds and not necessarily the abundance of plant populations.

Mr. McCrary also asked one final question, whether or not the aquatic vegetation has reached the 10% coverage on the lake system as agreed upon by Santee Cooper and SCDNR. Mr. McCord indicated that the 10% coverage goal was reached approximately 3 to 4 years ago and has now far surpassed that goal. Mr. Page denoted that submersed vegetation alone almost reaches the 10% goal as it stands now. Hydrilla and Crested Floating Heart is not included in these numbers because they are not considered beneficial.

B) Review of Public Comments

Mr. Page then went into greater detail on the public comments. He noted out of the 39 email comments received, 36 were in support of the plan and 3 were opposed to some aspect of the plan. The supporting comments ranged widely in support, from “we appreciate what you do” to “please come spray my cove”. The three comments opposed to the proposed plan were pretty concise as to what they were wanting.

Mr. Perry made a motion to commend the people who took the time to submit written comments and those people who worked on petitions so that the information could be information could be made available to the council, because it’s important information and we encourage you to continue to do so. Mr. McCord Seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Council continued reviewing the comments. A discussion on continuing education of how decisions are made when developing the yearly plans. Mr. Page noted that overall content of the comments have continually gotten better over the last ten years or so.

C) Modification Considerations

Mr. Page began the discussion with any modifications that may be needed to be made to the 2013 Aquatic Plant Management Plan.

The Santee Cooper Lakes portion of the plan was discussed first. General changes to

the Santee Cooper portion were noted, including adding the 2013 coverage and treatment acreages. Mr. McCord noted that the numbers were correct but there was a good chance that the correct number of grass carp will be hard to obtain due to availability issues from the growers in Arkansas. There were no suggested modifications to be made to the plan. Mr. Perry made the following motion: that based on the best available science at the disposal of the council and the data that has been collected on hydrilla and the other aquatic species in Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie and the ground-truthing that has occurred since that time, that 113, 656 fish in accordance to the plan be stocked in 2013. Mr. McCord seconded the motion. There was no discussion of the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

D) Approval

The remaining portions of the plan were brought to the Council's attention. It was noted that Goose Creek Reservoir, the State Parks, and the SCDNR state lakes were going to be stocked with sterile grass carp as they have been in the past. There were no significant changes to this year's plan aside from the addition of the Lake Monticello Recreation Lake. The Lake Monticello Recreation Lake has a 25 acre infestation of hydrilla and will be treated with 625 sterile grass carp. The grass carp will be paid for by funds that are remaining from the initial stockings on Lake Murray and that are currently being held in a trust fund for SCE&G. Mrs. Eidson made a motion to accept the 2013 Aquatic Plant Management Plan as presented. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. There was no discussion of the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

3. New Business

Mr. Page brought to the Council's attention that Mr. Bill Short, S.C. Ducks Unlimited, had been in attendance earlier in the meeting and wanted to show his support for the native plant re-establishment plan on the Santee Cooper Lakes that Mr. McCrary had mentioned to the Council in the previous meeting.

Mr. McCord indicated that he had been invited to the N.C. Aquatic Weed Council to discuss sterile grass carp stocking information. Specifically they were interested in the

experiences on the Santee Cooper lake system involving the original sterile grass carp stocking, maintenance stocking, lack of maintenance stocking, and re-establishing maintenance stocking. They have a hydrilla issue on Lake Waccamaw and are trying to devise a plan for treatment.

4. Minutes of the 112th Council Meeting

Mr. Page presented the minutes from the 112th meeting of the Aquatic Plant Management Council for review. Minutes were reviewed. Mr. Perry made the motion for the 112th meeting of the Aquatic Plant Management Council minutes to be accepted as written. Mr. McCord seconded the motion. No discussion was needed and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Meeting adjourned

Being no further business a motion was made for the Council to adjourn at 2:00 p.m by Mrs. Eidson. Mr. McCord seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.