

Minutes of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council

1. Call to Order

Steve de Kozlowski called the 101st meeting of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council to order at 10:45 am on July 14, 2009. The meeting was held in the restaurant at Hickory Knob State Park, McCormick, 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. Bob Perry, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries; Ms. Jeannie Eidson, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control; Mr. Cam Lay, Clemson University, Department of Pesticide Regulation; Mr. Marc Cribb, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water, and Conservation Division; and Mr. Steven de Kozlowski, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water, and Conservation Division.

Visitors in attendance were Dr. Joe Krausz, Clemson University, Department of Pesticide Regulation, Chris Page, and Walter Meitzen; S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water, and Conservation Division

2. Minutes of the March 4, 2009 Council Meeting

A call for changes, additions, deletions, and or modifications to last meeting's minutes was made by the chairman. None was offered. Lay motioned for the minutes to be approved as written; the motion was seconded by Eidson. The motion carried unanimously.

3. South Carolina Aquatic Nuisance Species Program Updates

Chris Page handed out a monthly status reports for May and June showing acres treated and cost by water body. A total of 266 acres have been treated at a cost of \$45,129. He reviewed specific operations of note. Grass carp were stocked as planned on Lake

Greenwood (3,300), Goose Creek Reservoir (2,200), and Santee Cooper (8,500). Chris further updated the Council on the status of Island Applesnail control in Horry County. The snails are in stormwater retention ponds in Socastee that are adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway. The concern is that if they get into the waterway and move down stream into the Waccamaw River and Winyah Bay they could cause ecological and human health harm. The Council agreed that everything should be done now to control their spread, however, DNR staff are not able to do it by themselves due to other responsibilities throughout the state. It was agreed that Steve would write a letter to the Horry County administrator requesting assistance in controlling the snails. Jeannie was asked to look into adding wording to DHEC's stormwater permits regarding maintenance including snail control.

4. Other Business

Steve informed the Council about the Aquatic Plant Management Society annual meeting in Milwaukee going on this week and the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Society annual meeting to be held in August in Clemson.

5. Background information and Boat Tour of Strom Thurmond Reservoir

Steve gave an overview of the hydrilla infestation in the lake stating that it was first discovered in 1995 and has increased to over 7,000 acres. Most is on the Georgia side (4,900 acres). This was the first occurrence of monoecious hydrilla in the state. He then summarized the AVM (Avian Vacuolar Myelinopathy) concerns. Studies show that 43 eagles and thousands of coots have died from AVM from 1998-2007 with nine eagles dying during the winter of 2006-07 alone. The deaths have resulted in the loss of 3 out of 4 nesting territories in South Carolina and 2 out of 7 in Georgia. He briefly reviewed the research on the cause of the deaths and how it ties in with vegetation and in particular hydrilla coverage. He then reviewed meetings by the states and the Corps of Engineers to discuss actions to take to manage the problem. The states asked the Savannah District COE to 1) document and map hydrilla coverage, 2) initiate public stakeholder meetings

to develop a management plan, 3) include USFWS in the process, and 4) utilize the Corps' Research and Development Division to assist in preparing a management plan. The drought of the past two years has resulted in exceptionally low lake levels and diverted attention from the AVM issue so no action has taken place.

6. Adjournment

Being no further business the Council adjourned at 12:30 a.m. to take a boat tour of Lake Thurmond to see the extent of hydrilla growth.