

## **Minutes of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council**

### **1. Call to Order**

Steven de Kozlowski called the 84th meeting of the South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Council to order at 10:00 am on November 22, 2004 in the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Board Room; 1000 Assembly Street, Columbia. 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. Marc Cribb, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water and Conservation Division; Mr. Stan Hutto, S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism; Ms. Jeannie Eidson, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control; Mr. John Hensel, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control; Mr. Cam Lay, Clemson University, Department of Pesticide Regulation; 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 and Mr. Chris Page, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Land, Water and Conservation Division

### **2. Minutes of the August 25, 2004 Council Meeting**

The minutes were reviewed, and a motion to accept the minutes as written was made by John Inabinet and seconded by Cam Lay. The motion carried unanimously.

### **3. Review of 2004 Control Operations**

Chris Page distributed summary information regarding funding and acreage for 2004, and made a PowerPoint presentation, which gave an overview of control sites throughout the state. In all, 2747 acres of nuisance aquatic plants were treated in 25 public water bodies at a total cost of \$470,814. Of that DNR treated 16 water bodies at \$377,548; PRT treated three water bodies at \$12,000; and Santee Cooper treated seven lakes at \$81,266 (reviewed by McCord later). Page indicated that two new products Renovate and Habitat have proven very successful in controlling emergent and floating plants and have increased efficacy. Water hyacinths were the primary target species with 915 acres treated followed by Phragmites with over 710 acres treated. Overall control was excellent, but acreage less than originally planned due to interruptions from numerous tropical storms this year.

De Kozlowski reviewed hydrilla status in Lake Murray. Grass carp stocked in 2003 appear to be providing control. Recent report by SCE&G consultant indicates that drawdown controlled about 2,700 acres, grass carp controlled about 1,475 acres, and about 2,412 acres remain. Most hydrilla is about five feet below the surface due to recent increases in lake level; however, it is topped out in areas nearest the dam (boat ramp and

West Columbia intake). Five-acre treatment at public boat ramp was to help prevent the spread of hydrilla to other water bodies as boats leave the lake through thick growth. Areas with greatest grass carp control are in the northern shoreline areas around Columbia Intake/Salem Church Rd., Coast Guard Station/Susie Ebert Island, Bear Creek, and Timberlake.

Inabinet questioned why the breakdown in the summary sheets to DNR, Santee Cooper, and PRT lakes. De Kozlowski stated that the breakdown began years ago to help summarize expenditures for the principal state agencies involved. It is still helpful to avoid confusion of treatments in the sub impoundments with the main Santee Cooper Lakes (Marion and Moultrie), e.g. stocking of grass carp in Dean Swamp and Church Branch.

#### **4. Aquatic Plant Coverage and Management Recommendations on the Santee Cooper Lakes**

Larry McCord presented a preliminary overview of the status of aquatic vegetation in the Santee Cooper system. Santee Cooper has contracted with a new vendor, Remetrix, for aerial photography. Unfortunately, due to tropical storms, aerial photography could be taken this year. Instead ground and aerial surveys were conducted by Santee Cooper staff and marked on topographic maps. They estimate that over 1000 acres of water hyacinth present; hydrilla was largely absent from the main lakes except small amounts in enclosures and Power House slew. Largest populations were in Potato Creek, Dean Swamp, and Taw Caw Creek Impoundments. While surveying for plants, grass carp can still be observed throughout the lake system.

Enclosure studies indicated that of the four enclosures built (2 in Marion and 2 in Moultrie), plant growth occurred in three. Most of the vegetation was native species (Valisneria, water shield, waterlily) and non-invasive exotics such as brittle naiad. Very little hydrilla growth occurred in two of the enclosures late in the season indicating that the hydrilla regrowth potential has declined significantly from the last studies in 1998. Plans are to treat the hydrilla with Aquathol K to prevent further growth.

Based on results from the plant survey and enclosures studies, Santee Cooper and DNR recommend that grass carp not be stocked in 2005.

#### **5. Draft 2005 Aquatic Plant Management Plan**

Page gave a brief overview of and answered questions about the 2005 Draft SC Aquatic Plant Management Plan. The Plan was distributed to Council members for their review and consideration. Council comments will be heard at the next scheduled meeting before the draft plan goes out for public review

#### **6. Other Business**

The Chairman reviewed federal funding challenges this year. Restrictions imposed this year did not allow funds to be carried forward and limited some treatments late in the

year and resulted in reductions in match for some. Corps cost share funds for 2005 do not look promising.

South Carolina is likely to join a Southeastern regional Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel to facilitate interstate coordination of invasive species issues. This is the only region of the nation without a regional task force.

DNR hired a new employee for the Aquatic Plant Management Program; looks good.

The next Council meeting was scheduled for 10 am on January 13, 2005.

## **7. Adjournment**

Being no further business the Council adjourned at 12:25 a.m.