

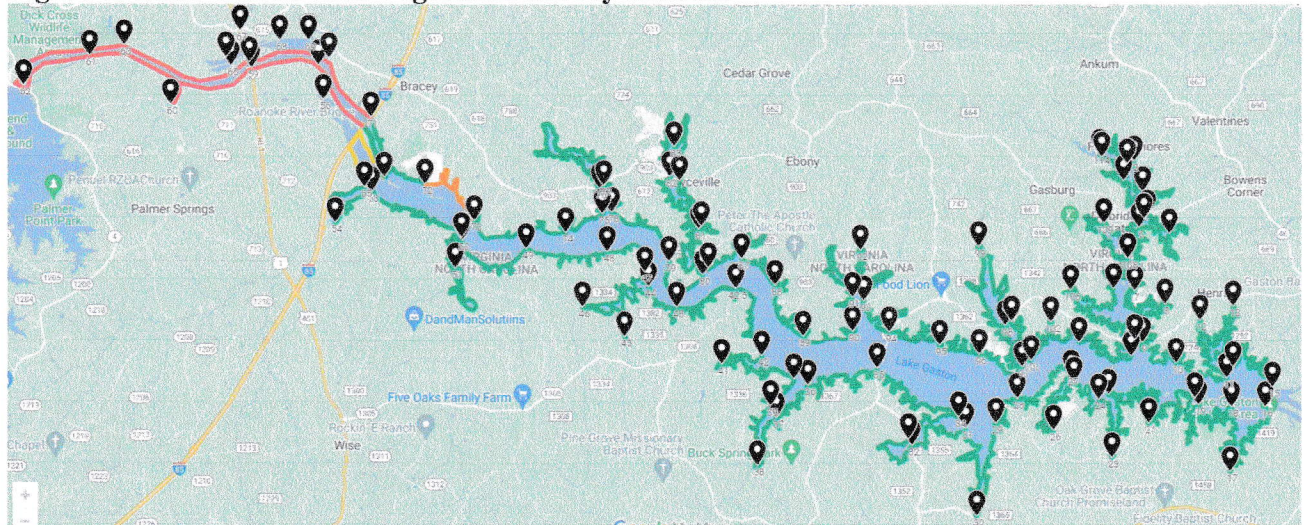
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
LAKE GASTON ASSOCIATION AND THE LAKE GASTON WEED CONTROL COUNCIL
IN SUPPORT OF LAKE GASTON VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

1. This is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Lake Gaston Association (hereinafter referred to as “the LGA”) and the Lake Gaston Weed Control Council (hereinafter referred to as “the LGWCC”). When referred to collectively, the LGA and the LGWCC are referred to as the “Parties.”
2. **BACKGROUND:** Going back many years the LGA and the LGWCC have had a working relationship in support of managing the water quality of Lake Gaston. The focus has been primarily related to managing invasive/noxious aquatic vegetation while enhancing the growth of native aquatic vegetation in Lake Gaston. The management of shoreline aquatic vegetation is a critical part of ensuring the continued beneficial uses of Lake Gaston to include:
 - Potable water supply
 - Water recreation
 - Fisheries and other wildlife habitat
 - Maintaining property values
3. **ORGANIZATION MISSIONS:**
 - LGA Environment Committee - To maintain the environmental well-being of the lake and surrounding areas in balance with recreational use and enjoyment of Lake Gaston. Represents the LGA on Stakeholders Group; monitors, encourages, and supports sound environmental efforts with the Lake Gaston Weed Control Council.
 - LGWCC - To promote research, control or eradicate undesirable aquatic weeds, improve the quality of water and control pollution in and around Lake Gaston. This mission will be accomplished by serving as an advisory council and making recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners in North Carolina and the Board of Supervisors in Virginia and by making recommendations to all local, state, and federal agencies concerned with quality of human life, water, pollution, recreation, wildlife, fish, and fishing conditions, in and around Lake Gaston.
4. **PURPOSE:** To ensure effective and proactive communication between the LGA and the LGWCC. In addition, to identify and conduct mutually beneficial operations and activities that support the missions of both Parties and the Lake Gaston environs.
5. **LAKE GASTON ANNUAL SHORELINE AQUATIC VEGETATION SURVEY:** The LGA and the LGWCC agree to cooperate to plan and conduct the annual aquatic vegetation survey. The survey is key to the LGWCC’s ability to identify aquatic invasive/noxious/nuisance species (ANS) that may require management to maintain the water quality at Lake Gaston. Data from the survey is used by the LGWCC to plan future actions related to aquatic vegetation management. As part of the effort, approximately 350 miles of shoreline is surveyed at specific intervals to identify and document various ANS, and native species located at the lake.
 - The LGWCC agrees to fund and provide the necessary tools and equipment to enable the LGA to support the annual vegetation survey. This may include electronic tablets and

software used to capture the survey data, hand tools used to conduct the survey as well as training and associated aids used by LGA volunteers during the survey activities. The LGWCC agrees to provide timely results of the survey and any planned actions emanating from the survey for use in the education and outreach of the LGA membership. The LGWCC also agrees to provide funding for an “annual end of survey celebration” where LGA volunteers are provided food and beverages as thanks for their dedication.

- The LGA agrees to use volunteers to conduct the annual vegetation survey in accordance with reasonable guidelines provided by the LGWCC. Watercraft used to conduct the work will be provided by individual volunteers. The use of volunteer support enables the LGA to support the LGWCC at minimal cost:
 - In 2023 the LGA volunteers conducted the survey over a 75-day timeframe. The lake shoreline was divided into approximately 114 survey sections. The LGA was responsible for surveying 100 survey sections and the North Carolina State University was responsible for the other 14 survey sections. This division of work can vary depending on circumstances. Figure 1 provides a map of the lake and associated survey sections. There were over 5,000 sample points taken by the LGA volunteers. Each survey section was sampled at approximately 200-foot intervals. The average time to survey each section is approximately 4 hours. With LGA volunteers completing 100 survey sections at 4 hours per section, the overall volunteer time invested is approximately 400 manhours. An additional ten percent for training, travel time, and management is added for a total of 440 manhours. The value of the volunteer labor is estimated at \$29.86/hour (see <https://independentsector.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/VOVT-Report-2023.pdf>) for a total labor value of approximately \$13,138.40. In addition, to the labor value, there are other undetermined costs borne by the LGA and the volunteers such as use and fuel for watercraft, t-shirts, and safety equipment.

Figure 1: Lake Gaston with Vegetation Survey Sections



6. LAKE GASTON ANNUAL HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT: The LGA and the LGWCC agree to cooperate to plan and conduct the annual aquatic habitat enhancement project. This project is an important component of the LGWCC's goal to increase the native aquatic plant species populations on Lake Gaston. The benefits of an increased native plant species include a potential reduction in ANS along with improved habitat for fish and other wildlife.

- The LGWCC agrees to fund and provide the necessary tools and materials to enable the LGA to support the annual habitat enhancement effort in coordination with North Carolina and Virginia environmental/wildlife agencies. The LGWCC will also provide funding to purchase refreshments and lunches for the volunteers.
- The LGA agrees to use volunteers to work with North Carolina and Virginia environmental/wildlife agencies to plan and implement the identified work supporting the initiative. The use of volunteer support enables the LGA to support the LGWCC at minimal cost:
 - In 2023 the LGA volunteers provided project implementation over a 4-day period, plus an additional day for a planning assessment of required work. The total time invested by LGA volunteers was approximately 203 manhours. The value of the volunteer labor is estimated at \$29.86/hour (see <https://independentsector.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/VOVT-Report-2023.pdf>) for a total labor value of approximately \$6,051.58.

7. GENERAL PROVISIONS:

- Points of Contact: The Parties shall establish points of contact for the purposes of carrying this MOU.
- Modification/Termination of MOU: This MOU may only be modified or terminated by the written agreement of the Parties, duly signed by their authorized representatives. This MOU will be reviewed annually.

APPROVED:

Elton H. Brown Date: 3-26-24

Elton H. Brown, III
LGWCC President

Jeffrey L. Zimmer Date: 3/26/24

Jeffrey L. Zimmer
LGA President