

Attendance (9 voting members):

Rob Richardson (chairman), Rob Emens (secretary), Vic Dicenso, Mike Grodowitz, Mike Smart, Brian McRae, Rich Noble & Kirk Rundle, *John Madsen.*

Also present: Pete Deschenes, Rick Iverson, Chuck Wiley, Wally Sacho, Daniel Stich, Steve Hoyle, Mark Heilman, Sarah Miller, Justin Nawrocki, Tom Warmuth, *Doug Henderson.*

Italicized names notate attendance via conference call.

Dr. Richardson brought the meeting to order at 9:07 AM

1. Doug Henderson provided vegetation survey report:

- Physical sampling performed at 852 points (~2,000' apart around entire lake).
- Hydro-acoustic data collected within entire littoral zone (4,823 acres).
- Intensive hydro-acoustic mapping of SAV in three sites:
 - o Southern Flats, Jimmy's Creek, and Poe Creek
- Lakewide SAV estimated at 1,205 acres, of which 1,069 contains some hydrilla.
- Doug identified variation in the numbers (comparing 2009 with 2010) and hypothesized that some of this variation is due to the large-scale hydrilla treatment that was performed at the flats area in 2010.

TAG approved the report as presented with corrected figures (numbers listed above are correct).

2. Dan Stich presented summary of grass carp tagging study:

- Average mortality was calculated to be 20.4%.
- Survival of 1st year (post stocking) calculated to be ~57%.
- Age and growth data can allow us to predict total biomass of fish in the system; a biomass model may prove to be a stronger tool for managers than models that only consider resident population of grass carp.
- The population model predicts that the current population of grass carp will increase in total biomass in 2011.

TAG agreed to use the two VT models (the age-specific mortality and biomass models) to "verify" the current model in an effort to help make more informed decisions regarding future stocking of grass carp.

3. Justin Nawrocki presented tuber monitoring study:

- Core samples were collected from all sites (work is a repeat of 2009 sampling).
- Core samples were collected from additional sites.

- Tuber density (#tubers/area) increased at all control sites.
- Tabulated data that summarized results of sampling work was provided to group.

4. Mike Smart presented summary of re-vegetation efforts (demo project):

- Survival of plants was estimated to be 90+%.
- Emergent plants were found to not require physical protection (exclosures) from grass carp herbivory.
- 45 exclosures were relocated and planted with new seedlings.
- Mike recommended that monitoring re-vegetated areas and exclosures maintenance be continued in 2011; volunteers should be recruited to assist with these activities as much as possible.
- The ACOE was not specifically funded to work on Lake Gaston, but limited technical support could be provided under the Aquatic Plant control Research Program.

5. Lakefront property owners want to begin removing lotus plants:

Discussion revolved around public education, legalities of pesticide use, how Dominion Power currently regulates this type of activity, and the potential of initiating a mitigation program. Generally the group felt that LGWCC funds should not be used to remove native plants, and there was some concern of setting the wrong precedence. However, the group does acknowledge that there will be some situations where limited removal of native vegetation is going to be acceptable. Evaluation will need to be done on a case-by-case level, see action item below.

6. NPDES...? nobody really knows

7. LGWCC Lake Manager Position:

Discussion of potentially creating an extension position that would be funded from LGWCC, NCSU, and Virginia Tech.

8. Recommendations for hydrilla management (year 2011 activities):

- No supplemental grass carp stocking needed.
- No additional otolith collections needed in (although collections via bow-hunting may be worthwhile in future because growth rates would not remain predictable if SAV is reduced to low levels).
- No expenditure for telemetry (grass carp radio-tag tracking).

- Re-vegetation to be continued and supported by LGWCC funding (specifically, a second demo similar in scope to the first)
- Tuber monitoring to continue and be expanded to include sampling in additional areas (specific areas TBD).
- Improve integration of Remetrix survey data and point sampling data collected by organized volunteer group efforts.
- Additional point sampling to be conducted for annual surveys.

9. Summary of action items for specific agencies:

- NCWRC will prepare three grass carp stocking models for the next meeting:
 - o The first model will be a copy of the model TAG has been using.
 - o The second model will be based on the age-specific mortality data generated from the VT tagging study.
 - o The third model will be based on the carp biomass data generated from the VT tagging study.
- NCSU to develop a “special problems” course for students to review Lake Gaston grass carp data and try to incorporate other factors (hydrilla, environment, treatment, etc.)
- USACOE and Richardson to work as a committee on native plant control guidelines.

10. Miscellaneous items:

• Hydrilla was reported at Kerr Reservoir (a.k.a. Buggs Island Lake) in 2010. Responding to conformed reports a vegetation survey lead by NCDENR and NCSU personnel took place in October 2010. The survey was limited to the section of Kerr Reservoir that extends into Vance County (NC). Established hydrilla colonies of significant size were observed. A hydrilla infestation existing there will act as a source of fragments and propagules; a concern, especially since this reservoir is directly upstream of Lake Gaston. Kerr Reservoir is an Army Corps of Engineers managed resource. TAG members suggested that USACOE personnel at Kerr Reservoir request assistance from the agency’s WOTS (Water Operations Technical Support) Program.

Dr. Richardson adjourned the meeting. (12:45)

**Prepared by:
 Rob Emens, Secretary
 Technical Advisory Group
 Lake Gaston Stakeholders Board**