

Lake Gaston Stakeholders Board Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2021

Attendance (14 voting members):

Don Carson (President, Lake Gaston Association), Tare Davis (Chairman, Warren County Commissioners), Pete Deschenes (Chairman, RWF Fire Tax Board), Rob Emens (NC DEQ), Mark Fowlkes (NCWRC), Bill Frazier (NC B.A.S.S.), Brian Goldsworthy (LGSWC), Ted Griner (Lake Gaston Striper Club), Vincent Jones (Warren County Manager) Rob Richardson (NCSU), Kirk Rundle (NCWR) Wally Sayko (Brunswick County), Erika Van Goethem (SePRO Corp), Jeff Zimmer (Lake Gaston Weed Control Council).

Also present:

Jessica Baumann (NCSU), Andrew Gay (NCDWR), David Murphey (LGA), Al Potter (LGA),

The 16th meeting of the Stakeholders Board was held on February 11, 2021 via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Pete Deschenes at 9:08 am. Pete stated the reason for this meeting, which is earlier than the usual yearly meeting, was to act on the T.A.G. recommendations for the treatment of Lyngbya which needs an earlier treatment timeline than Hydrilla.

T.A.G recommendation... Jessica Baumann

Jessica explained that a lot of work for 2020 was interrupted by Covid – 19 epidemic so two T.A.G. meetings were scheduled for this year. The first meeting took place in January to discuss treatment acreage and recommendations for Lyngbya. Preliminary results from last year's vegetation survey indicates acreage of Lyngbya continues to increase and is now approximately 1200 acres. Increasing treatments for Lyngbya was suggested up to 300 acres, up from the 91 acres treated in 2020. The LG Stakeholders Board meeting was called to review and accept this recommendation, without any reservation, to the LG Weed Control Council in order to be able to begin an earlier treatment schedule. The second T.A.G. meeting is scheduled for later in February to discuss protocols and the balance of the 2021 management plan.

*Jessica's presentation can be found as an attachment to these minutes.

TAG Recommendations

- Lyngbya
 1. Treat a maximum of 300 acres of Lyngbya in 2021

Questions:

- What were the findings for Pretty Creek? Only collected samples from Hawtree and Smith due to time constraints. Pretty Creek has less acreage than Hawtree and Smith Creeks.
- The data shows a need for more acreage to be treated, do we need to ask for more money to treat Lyngbya? This would create a financial strain in matching funds – it is a big step to go from 91 acres to 300 acres...300 acres is an aggressive end of the spectrum. Full funding is not being received from all five counties.
- When and where is the water temperature taken to determine treatment timing? It is taken at 35 sites including all creeks and the main waterway. It will be an average. It was suggested that there is a wide disparity between creeks nearer Kerr Reservoir and coves and creeks further east of Kerr Reservoir.
- It was suggested that an article be placed by LG Weed Control Council with support from N.C. State in the newspaper, on FaceBook and in the LGA bulletin to report the treatment plan for 2021.

Kirk Rundle gave a brief up date about this invasive species. Alabama bass are similar to spotted bass. We are doing some genetic work to determine if indeed they are Alabama Bass at Lake Gaston, which is what I suspect. The 2018 survey showed 33% of bass were spotted bass, most likely Alabama Bass. Currently there is no solution to this problem, which is irreversible In an attempt to mitigate the situation, there is no size or creel limit for Alabama Bass or Spotted Bass at Lake Gaston and anglers are encouraged to harvest them.

The group agreed that the T.A.G. recommendation for Lyngbya treatment should be given to the LG Weed Control Council without reservation.

Before adjourning, Pete shared the recent death of Jack Saunders with the group saying how much Jack contributed in time and effort to the health and safety of Lake Gaston.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 am.

Respectfully submitted

Susan Deschenes, Secretary