

## Lake Gaston Stakeholders Board Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2019

### Attendance (17 voting members):

West Bishop (SePRO), *Joan Blankenship (B.A.S.S.Federation Nation of Virginia, Inc)* Corey Chamberlain (Dominion), Pete Deschenes (Chairman, RWF Fire Tax Board), Bill Frazier (NC BASS), Brian Goldsworthy (LGWSC), Robert Hendrick (Mecklenburg County), Vincent Jones (Warren County Manager), Mozine Lowe (LGA), Rives Manning (Halifax County Commissioner), Jim Noland (Striper Club), Rob Richardson (NCSU), Kirk Rundle (NC Wildlife Resources), Wally Sayko (Brunswick County), Barney Watson (Lake Gaston Realtors), Christina Wells (Lake Gaston Regional Chamber), John Zubrod (Brunswick County Supervisor)

### Also present:

Jessica Baumann (NCSU), *Mark Fowlkes (NCWRC)*, Clinton Morgeson (NCWRC), John Jessup (Pro Lake Management), Will Miller (Dominion Reservoir Supervisor), Justin Nawrocki (UPL), Al Potter (LGA), Tracy Thompson (PLM), Moira Underwood (LGA) Tom Warmuth (BioSafe Systems), Stacy Woodhouse (Warren County EDC),

*Italicized names indicate attendance via conference call.*

### Agenda

- Welcome & Attendee Introduction.....All
- Review LGSB Membership.....All
- NC Weed Council Budget.....Rob Emens
- Re-Vegetation.....Kirk Rundle
- Fall Survey.....NCSU
- Algae Update...Dr West Bishop, SePRO
- TAG Recommendations.....NCSU
- Update LGSB Management Plan Update.....All

The meeting of the Stakeholders Board was held on March 8, 2019 at Dominion's Roanoke Rapids Station. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Pete Deschenes at 9:00 am. A Distribution List was sent around as a sign-in sheet. People were asked to make any changes to it and check voting members of the group they represent. A quorum was in attendance, with 17 voting organizations represented.

Pete thanked Dominion for hosting the meeting and gave a brief history of the LGSB Membership and Mission. It is the best group to disseminate information about the status of aquatic vegetation on Lake Gaston and is looked to by many impoundments throughout the U. S. as a model. This is the 14<sup>th</sup> annual meeting.

### **NC Weed Council 2019 Budget...Rob Emens and Pete Deschenes**

Lake Gaston has been receiving \$50K annually. The 2019 plan allows up to \$50K as needed.

### **LGWCC Budget...Judge Manning**

The budget will remain the same as last year. The counties have been asked to budget up to \$116K as needed but no money was drawn from the counties last year. The 2017-2018 treatment money came from the 2016 balance. VA Beach is required to pay \$280K and this took care of expenses for 2018.

### **Revegetation ... Kirk Rundle & Mark Fowlkes**

The 2019 Proposal includes:

- • Spring Survey...inventory or record details of exclosures and vegetation.
- • Needed maintenance at existing sites – Damaged cages specifically earmarked for repair.
- • Continue to chem. treat exclosures to reduce competition with Hydrilla

- • Plant outside of cages (Little Stone House, Still House, Kings Branch, Great Creek Upper Poplar, Upper Flats)2019-2024 proposal for long term maintenance – motivate local land owners
- • Expand existing sites (Beachwood, Kings Branch, Smith Creek)
- • New Sites - Eelgrass in lower lake...broadcast
- • Final Report 2014-2018
- • Fall Survey

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

Kirk reported that the health of the fishery is excellent but there is a problem with spotted bass which is an invasive species that likely displace Largemouth Bass over time. In 2016 8% of the survey showed spotted bass, in 2018 that figure rose to 33%. Striped bass continue to be stocked.

### **Water Levels...Corey Chamberlain**

Normal water levels on Lake Gaston are between 199 – 200 feet above sea level and up to 203 ft during flood operations. In 2018 those parameters were between 199 – 201.3' and so far in 2019 they have been 199-201.4'. Over the past 12 months more water has moved through the Roanoke River Basin since 1912.

\*Corey's presentation can be found as an attachment to these minutes

### **Fall Survey... Jessica Baumann**

In 2018, 200 acres of hydrilla were treated using sonar and contact herbicides. The Fall Survey included 720 volunteer hours with 5048 rake tosses. Hydrilla showed up on 6% of those tosses. The fall survey also showed that there are 374 acres infested by hydrilla. Lyngbya increases from 8% of rake tosses in 2012 to 15% in 2018. There has been a pilot study over the last two years of herbicide treatment between July and October using 3 different products. No treatment is clearly effective so far. In 2019 the same sites and products will be kept but the treatment will start earlier in the April time frame. The collection method will be expanded to include viability and a bio-sonic unit over rake samples.

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

### **TAG Recommendations**

#### Hydrilla

1) Treat No More Than 300 acres - Lizard Creek, Cages as needed, Reserved for Unexpected Explosions  
- Keep an Eye on Hawtree

2) Stock Appropriate Number of Grass Carp - Lizard Creek and Hawtree

3) Maintain Equipment Needed for Volunteer Survey

#### Lyngbya

1) Continue Experimental Treatments

2) Improve on Survey Techniques

#### Vegetation Project

1) Continue Funding for 2019

The Stakeholders Board will present the TAG recommendations to the LGWCC without any exceptions.

### **Revegetation Program – Wally Sayko**

Wally encouraged the members present to get involved in the revegetation project and to get their respective members and neighbors involved as well. It takes about 6-8 hours of time.

### **Water Quality Monitoring**

Currently the LGA is involved in checking water quality and water clarity. Clarity has been poor over the last year due to increased turbidity which cuts down on plant growth.

### **Education of the public**

The LGA does the brunt of getting information out to the public about noxious weeds through presentations at monthly meetings, the LGA Newsletter, speaking to individual organizations, and HOA presentations. Will Miller reported that the federal license requires as part of their recreation plan that signage for each recreational site. He is proposing minimal signage imbedded with a QR code to link with a website that will expand the information required. Will made a motion that the LGSB approve this idea, seconded, passed.

### **Eel Grass Propagation**

Joan Blankenship is experimenting with growing eel grass from seed to prevent spreading any noxious weeds from one lake to another. She has been very successful so far in vegetating Crater Lake and Smith Mountain Lake with healthy eel grass. Mark Fowlkes will get in touch with Joan to learn how to propagate seeds in quantity in a greenhouse.

Judge Manning made a motion to adjourn, seconded, passed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15

Respectfully submitted

Susan Deschenes, Secretary