

## Kissimmee Interagency Meeting – Aquatic Plant Management

January 9, 2007

Keshav Setaram (SFWMD) gave an update on floating plant management throughout the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes (KCOL). Crews are currently working in Lakes Hatchineha and Kissimmee, depending on weather conditions. The recent Aquathol treatment on Lake Hatchineha was very successful and is being monitored for longevity. There is some harvesting being finished on Lake Kissimmee. Previous in-lake disposal is being moved to Brahma Island with permission of the property owners. There is a possibility of tussock work being needed for Lake Mary Jane. District crews will assess and report on current conditions. There are also 2 open positions within SFWMD's aquatics program.

Ed Harris (FDEP) gave an update on the harvesting project at Lake Runnymede. The contractor has moved operations to the southern shoreline. The road in the Runnymede trailer park has been repaired under budget. Also, the Chisolm Park disposal site has been graded and seeded. Water levels are high and work is continuing and nearing completion.

Tim Coughlin (FFWCC) reports that there have been no updates on snail kite activity in the chain of lakes for some months. Tylan Dean (USFWS) has been very good about providing information so we presume that there is no news.

Mike Netherland (USACE and UF) said that there is no update on the suppression of hydrilla tuber formation in the north end of Lake Toho. He thinks one or two more samples are needed to flesh out the data set. David Tarver (SePro) and Chuck Seacrist (SePro) reported that they have been sampling the area every 2 weeks. Fluridone concentrations in the study zone are still in the target range (13-19 ppb) and very few rhizomes or tubers are being formed. In other areas, tuber formation commenced in late November when fluridone concentrations dropped below the target threshold.

There was discussion about the needs for hydrilla treatments in the next 60 days. Several areas were identified as likely targets. Goblett's Cove on Lake Toho is an important water conveyance area adjacent to C-31 and is heavily infested with hydrilla. It was agreed to make applications with Aquathol K sufficient to create water movement areas in approximately 400 acres. Tim Coughlin agreed to coordinate with Wiley Kitchens (UF) and make sure there are no issues with treatment boundaries. Ed Harris (FDEP) will survey the area with Keshav and Dharmen Setaram (Cerexagri) to make treatment areas and calculate herbicide needs. Keshav will locate a staging area adjacent to C-31 for helicopter operations and provide information to Bill Graf (SFWMD) for a press release. David Tarver offered to provide a prescription for the use of fluridone as an enhancement to the endothall treatment. SePro is evaluating fluridone tolerance of those plants and should have results in about 2 weeks. Treatments will be scheduled ASAP and Mike Bodle (SFWMD) will coordinate herbicide ordering and delivery and will schedule Mike Page to apply the material. Approximately 30 days are required for herbicide production.

Tim Coughlin requested that Cypress Cove on Lake Toho be treated to provide fishing access. Ed and Dharmen will survey the area and create a treatment plan.

There was also discussion of a lakewide treatment of hydrilla in Lake Cypress. Mike Netherland gave information about several smaller lakes that had undergone early season treatments with endothall and had lakewide hydrilla control for 6 to 9 months. Tim Coughlin asked if a treatment like this was effective if only a portion of the lake was treated. Mike Netherland said that it was possible and that cooler weather would enhance the efficacy of the herbicide. He predicted that a lakewide concentration of 0.5 ppm endothall would effectively control most of the hydrilla. After more discussion, consensus was to treat the southern half of the lake with sufficient Aquathol K to achieve a 0.75 ppm concentration. Aquathol Super K would be used in several of the shallower areas of the lake. A rough calculation from Cerexagri staff indicates that approximately 2500 gallons of material would be required and that it would be available within 30 days of placing an order. Ed, Keshav, and Dharmen will survey the area to delineate a treatment zone. Treatments will be scheduled for mid-march and Mike Bodle will coordinate herbicide ordering and delivery and will schedule Mike Page to apply the material.

There was discussion of the recent treatment in Lake Hatchineha. Danielle Sobczak (FDEP) reported that the access areas treated on November 16 were still open. There are several areas around the perimeter of the lake where hydrilla is encroaching stands of native submerged vegetation. It was agreed that this hydrilla should be treated as soon as possible to enhance the spread of native plants. Danielle and Keshav will conduct additional surveys of the lake and plan treatments accordingly.

Danielle reported that approximately 75 acres near Lake Kissimmee State Park was topped out with hydrilla. There is also a 60 acre area west of Strum Island and several areas near Jackson slough that should be treated soon to keep the hydrilla in check. Danielle and Keshav will survey the areas and create a treatment plan. There is also a lot of hydrilla inside the grassline north of Overstreet's Landing. However, Phil Darby (UWF) has identified this area as important apple snail habitat and it was agreed to restrict treatments in this area unless absolutely necessary. Danielle will continue to monitor that area. David Tarver suggested that the NE cove of Lake Kissimmee was a good candidate for the use of Galleon (penoxsulam). There was some discussion about wanting to see data from current Galleon test lakes before committing to any use of penoxsulam in the Kissimmee chain of lakes.

Tim Coughlin and Mike Bodle discussed the possibility of controlling torpedo grass in Lake Jackson while the water levels were extremely low. Current workplans for SFWMD and FFWCC include torpedo grass control on this lake. Mike and Tim will evaluate their workplans and submit any TACOs needed to prepare for a treatment.

Matt Phillips (FDEP) wanted to know how close the chain was to full pool. Most lakes are currently 18" below full pool. Matt stated that FDEP wants to contract with ReMetrix to finish bathymetric and vegetative mapping of these lakes but the work is best done with as much water in the system as possible. David Tarver reported that Ryan Moore (ReMetrix) is working with SFWMD to analyze and map lake sediments. New equipment is available but nothing has been agreed upon.

Mike Netherland reported that funds were available from the EPA grant obtained by Osceola County to evaluate new and existing herbicide compounds for aquatic plant management. Both he and Bill Haller (UF) are looking for test sites between 5 and 50 acres. Ed stated that Boggy Creek was full of limnophila and hygrophila and might be a good test site. Ed, Keshav, Dharmen, and Greg Reynolds (Syngenta) will survey the area and create a proposal for Mike Netherland to consider.

Kimberly Lawrence (Osceola County) reported that the County has created a Lakes Advisory Committee. Their first meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 8 at 5:30 PM and the group is seeking regular members. Kimberly also stated that several people had asked her why some lakes were having hydrilla treated in shallow water and others were not. There was a short discussion on this subject and Kimberly said she would pass the information along to those who had asked.

Mike Bodle gave an update on floating plant applications on Lake Okeechobee utilizing backpack sprayers due to extremely low water conditions.

Bo Burns (BASF) reported that a new granular formulation of Clearcast (imazimox) was available and BASF was looking for treatment sites as part of the EPA's experimental use permit.

Eleanor Foerste (UF IFAS) introduced Tina Bond and spoke about a public awareness event that IFAS was planning for Osceola County. She requested input and assistance from this interagency group in preparing and attending a meeting in early April. She will provide more information to interested staff.

The next meeting of this interagency group was scheduled for Wednesday, April 4, at 10 AM. The meeting will be held at the IFAS facility in Kissimmee. Eleanor will provide more details in the near future.