

Kissimmee region aquatic and invasive plants meeting notes  
6 November, 2001

**UF study of lake restoration effects.** Report from Wiley Kitchens regarding his planned 3-5 year study of effects of lake restoration efforts in Florida lakes. Dr. Kitchens is working under FWCC contract and aims to compare scraped, unscraped, herbicided and herbicide-free areas. Wildlife utilization sampled with many arrays would be completely disrupted if spraying disrupts vegetation uniformity. But, uncertainties were voiced in the face of maintaining control over periods for and large coverages of floating weeds in the Kissimmee lakes. He had felt that 300-foot buffers were needed to isolate his plots from the effects of routine spraying.

Discussion led to modifications including that buffers could be reduced to 75-100 feet and that there will be quick open communication with Dr. Kitchens and Kissimmee FWCC project managers if treatments seem to be needed within buffers. SFWMD crews are aiming to control floating weeds thoroughly by December 1. Study plots will be established thereafter. Hyacinths and lettuce will be controlled outside of the buffer areas by SFWMD crews. At the end of the project, an aerial application can be utilized to control any floating plants remaining in the plots.

**Lake Runnymede** - Discussion concerning Lake Runnymede focused around the tussocks that, on the date of the meeting, weren't blocking boating access but that readily move around and concerned many parties for several years. DEP grant for the lake includes \$5,000 for this year for tussocks. Other resources include Osceola County's ability to haul and dispose. FWCC's provision of airboats for pushing tussocks. County only has a grade-all, with limited reach, etc. Questions included whether SFWMD could provide a dragline, could secure the services of a "cookie cutter" and harvester.

More communication to answer these questions will follow.

**Hydrilla treatments planning** - Discussion revolved around timing, placement and amounts of endothal plots desired prior to fluridone treatments. As always, drawdown before March could adversely affect fish spawn if falling lake levels strand fish nests established at higher water

levels. Last year, schedule modification was approved so that February was the month of drawing down the chain to low pool and fluridone work started March 1. Would endothal work need to wait for low pool? It was proposed to move funds from Lake Hatchineha to Lake Toho, leaving \$150K to maintain navigational trails. Additionally, it was proposed to treat the north end of Lake Toho exclusively with Aquathol. Ed Harris shared current hydrilla coverages as follows:

Hatchineha	4,100 acres
Cypress	3,200
Toho	14,100
Kissimmee	2,500

Many outstanding questions led the group to plan to inspect together in early December and go from there. Next meeting was set for Tuesday, December 11 at Overstreet boat ramp. SFWMD staff may be able to move vehicles up to Lake Toho so that survey doesn't have to circle back at the end. (Note: At the time of this mailing, it appears that the meeting may be moved to January 22; the fate of the field trip is in limbo.)

**Tussocks in Lake Kissimmee** - There are several large tussocks in the North Cove area that have blocked the pig trail and have blown into the areas previously scraped by FWCC. It may be possible to have Texas Aquatics, under contract with FWCC, to run a cookie cutter through the Pig Trail and push the material out into the North Cove, where it would blow into an area accessible by the large harvesters. There is approximately \$74K available through the combined agency funding for this project. Mike Bodle will check on the availability of the SFWMD harvesters to help offset costs.