



Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission

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Learn about changes in Lake Toho hydrilla treatment Nov. 5

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will hold a public meeting to discuss the changes for hydrilla management on Lake Toho for the winter of 2010-2011. The meeting will be Friday, Nov. 5, from 6-8 p.m., at the Osceola County Commission Chambers in the Administrative Building at 1 Courthouse Square, Kissimmee.

Staff from both the FWC and the USFWS will present information on the upcoming hydrilla treatment plan to manage the nonnative plant. A preview of the evening's public meeting will be offered in the same location from 3-4 p.m. for government officials interested in the topic.

"Lake Toho contains large amounts of hydrilla, which can cause navigation problems and limit access to boaters," said Bill Caton, the FWC's Invasive Plant Section leader. "This plant also provides an abundant food source and habitat used by a nonnative species of apple snail that lives in the lake."

The snail is eaten by the (Everglades) snail kite, one of the most endangered birds in Florida, making Lake Toho one of the few areas in the state where kites can still find plenty of food. As a result, the FWC and the USFWS will change how,

when and where hydrilla is controlled on the lake so that enough snails will be available when kites start nesting in the early spring.

This coming winter, the agencies will take an extra-cautious approach when controlling hydrilla to help the kites recover from a severe winter last year. The FWC and the USFWS are attempting to balance the needs of this endangered species with the needs of the people who use this lake. The meeting will provide information on how this plan is expected to affect hydrilla growth through the summer of 2011.

For more information on the meeting, please contact Zach Welch at 352-266-6139.

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