

South Carolina State Report (Freshwater Invasive Plants)  
GSARP Meeting, Gulf Shores, AL, Nov. 30 – Dec. 1, 2022

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Since the last meeting, we have primarily been working in the office. We drafted our annual Aquatic Plant Management Plan. The plan was presented to the Aquatic Plant Management Council for review in January after hearing reports on the vegetation treatment, vegetation surveys, water quality, and sterile grass carp health in the Santee Cooper lakes. These lakes are the most contentious portion of the plan due to the large size of the lake (160,000 acres), shallow depth (average 15') and the large numbers of grass carp that have been put in the system several times since 1989. There are roughly 34,500 carp currently in the system, and the plan proposed stocking 12,000 additional fish, which was slightly above the mortality rate. The Plan was put out for a 30-day public comment period before the Council met in March. The number of carp to be stocked in the lakes was reduced to the true mortality rate of 11,025 and the plan was approved.

We are in the process of ordering sterile grass carp for various water bodies across the state, excluding the Santee Cooper lakes which are purchased by that organization and expect them to be stocked in mid-May. We're also hoping to get some alligatorweed flea beetles from the Army Corps of Engineers in Florida.

We have done community outreach at the Southeastern Wildlife Expo in February in Charleston and at the Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic in March in Columbia.