



Title: Hydrilla Control in Henderson Lake

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State: LA **Region:** Southern

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Theme: Environmental Restoration

Situation: Henderson lake is a 4,000 shallow water body located in south central Louisiana. The lake is used intensively for commercial and recreational purposes. Hydrilla has completely infested the lake in recent years causing decreased use and economic hardship for service businesses associated with the lake. Management attempts using seasonal drawdowns to control hydrilla were not successful. These draw downs caused tremendous economic loss for swamp tour industry centered there. An alternate means of hydrilla control became necessary.

Objectives: Our project revolved around the use of aquatic herbicides to control hydrilla. We were invited by local leaders to provide technical and educational assistance to develop a long-term plan for hydrilla control in Henderson Lake.

Methods: Meetings were held with local businesses, media, citizens, state and federal agency personnel and political leaders to provide science based education on hydrilla control alternatives.

Partnerships: LSU AgCenter built a strong relationship and cooperative spirit among all Henderson Lake stakeholders. A lake treatment plan was developed and implemented. AgCenter served as technical advisors and provided quality control oversight. A Henderson Lake advisory committee was established to oversee long-term hydrilla issues in the lake. The hydrilla chemical control project was conducted with not a single complaint.

Research: The Henderson hydrilla project was a classic interaction between research, extension and stakeholders. The LSU AgCenter watershed agent coordinated the project with the aquatic weed scientist. Together they interacted with all pertinent players to insure the success of the project. The media played a large part in keeping the public informed with project timing and status.

Resources: Only 2 AgCenter personnel carried out the entire project. Planning meetings and implementation was conducted over a 6-month period. Local commercial boat landing businesses provided lake access and transport for media during several phases of the project. They also hosted several public meetings conducted during the planning phase. During the chemical application, local law enforcement assisted with moving people away from the active treatment zones as necessary.

Results: The initial hydrilla control effort in Henderson lake was marginally successful. Additional chemical treatments will be necessary. The process of developing consensus among the stakeholders was the real success of this project. A group of people came together, contacted LSU AgCenter for assistance and carried out a project to deal with a complex problem. The lines of communication and cooperation have now been established. The Henderson Lake advisory committee now in place has created a mechanism for the long-term control of hydrilla in Henderson Lake.



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