

Summary of Public Comments, Responses, and Plan Modifications to the Draft 2026 South Carolina Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Positive: 0

Negative: 15

Neutral: 3

Comments:

From: M. P.

Subject: Lyman Lake SC

Date: Sun. 2/8/2026 9:59 PM

You are endangering our lives when you apply these chemicals. Please DO NOT!

Have the labor done to remove the weeds.

Prevent the runoff from adjacent properties that cause the problems.

You cause health problems when you allow these chemicals.

From: M. P. (same person as above)

Subject: These are my comments to be presented on the brief scientific proof of health effects the chemicals are causing.

Date: Tues. 2/10/26 12:13 PM

Triclopyr:

Triclopyr, causes damage to kidneys, liver, and blood, developmental toxicity and reproductive issues in animal studies (Beyond Pesticides, 1990; San Francisco Forest Alliance, 2024).

Triclopyr can persist in dead vegetation for up to two years, which is one of the reasons why the San Francisco Forest Alliance refuses to use the chemical anymore (San Francisco Forest Alliance, 2024).

In 2020, a pesticide application at a middle school made 47 students fall ill after a pest control company sprayed an herbicide cocktail containing chemicals like 2,4-D, triclopyr, and clopyralid (Beyond Pesticides, 2020).

2,4-D:

In a multigenerational reproductive studies, significant increases in mammary gland swelling, stiffening of mammary glands, uterine weight, earlier menarche in females, and Estradiol were caused by exposure to 2,4-D (Cardona & Rudel, 2021).

It also known to cause kidney damage, and decreases in hematocrit, platelets, and erythrocyte counts (NCBI, 2024).

The Safe Food Campaign, Pesticide Action Network, Soil & Health, and the Breast Cancer Network pushed for a ban of 2,4-D on golf courses and lawns because "2,4-D is an organochlorine that has been linked to prenatal brain damage, breast and other cancers." (Sherrod, 2007).

2,4-D has been banned in Europe for over 20 years, and is banned or severely restricted in Denmark, Belize, Norway, Kuwait, and providences of Canada and Australia (Ministère de l'Environnement, 2005; Ontario.ca, 2016; APVMA, 2013; Gaberell & Viret, 2020).

A citizen petition by PANNA prompted the Obama administration to ban 2,4-D and the EWG stated, "EPA lawyers told the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit that Dow AgroSciences had withheld data showing that the chemical mix has "synergistic effects," meaning that the combination of pesticides intensifies the toxicity of the product to plants and possibly other living things" (EWG, 2015; Abrams, 2022). It was banned in prior to 2020 due to its damage to endangered species and natural areas, before the ban being reversed by the Trump administration (Hettinger, 2024). The Biden administration reversed Trump's undoing and passed the ban once again in 2022 (Abrams, 2022).

Imazamox:

Hepatic and pancreatic toxic effects - increases ALT and glucose levels, decreases AST levels for days after exposure (Sevim et al, 2018).

Liver damage within days of exposure (Sevim et al, 2018).

"it is possible that exposure to imazamox at low doses, via contaminated water, over a prolonged period of time may cause a change in cellular structure and function, even if it is not toxic at high doses." (Sevim et al, 2018)

It has been observed that this herbicide can cause cell death (Sevim et al, 2018)

Adverse effects of Imazamox on plants (Sevim et al, 2018)

Imazamox has a soil half-life of 1 to 3 months (approx. 27–92 days) (PubChem, 2024).

In deep, dark water with little oxygen, the half-life can extend to approximately 2 years, as it binds to sediments (PubChem, 2024).

Imazamox should be considered hazardous to non-target plant species (DNR, 2024).

The MSDS for IMOX states it is "very toxic to aquatic life" (DNR, 2024).

"Do not apply to water that may move. Be sure that any water has no chance of movement for several days before treating an area with standing water." (DNR, 2024).

"reduce contact with water resources and minimize application amounts and number of applications." (DNR, 2024). "unintentional spray drift has potential to significantly increase risk to the environment and public welfare." (DNR, 2024).

Penoxsulam:

Linked to large granular lymphocyte (LGL) leukemia in male rats at all dose levels and Mononuclear Cell Leukemia (MNCL) at high doses (EPA, 2019; Wisconsin, 2022).

Endocrine disruptor (Wisconsin, 2022) and targets the liver and kidneys (Sondhia et al, 2016)
Neurotoxicant (PPDB, 2024)

Birds chronic ecotoxicity: Moderate; Fish acute ecotoxicity: Moderate; Earthworms acute ecotoxicity: Moderate; Earthworms chronic ecotoxicity: Moderate (PPDB, 2024)

Penoxsulam and its metabolites, have been identified as potentially meeting the structural definition of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). (Sondhia et al, 2016)

Induce oxidative stress, DNA damage, and inhibit reproductive behavior in soil organisms (Sondhia et al, 2016)

This class of triazolopyrimidine sulphonamides are linked to:

Imazapyr:

This herbicide has been detected in groundwater up to eight years after its application (Börjesson et al, 2004).

Imazapyr can effect the endocrine system and target the thyroid (Babalola et al, 2021).

Glyphosate:

Professor Christopher Portier an expert in environmental health data said, “Malignant lymphomas, kidney and liver tumours, skin keratoacanthomas... glyphosate fuels cancer and the list goes on. No matter how you look at it, there is more than enough evidence of carcinogenicity, and this evidence meets the criteria to classify glyphosate as a substance presumed to have carcinogenic potential for humans.” (Health and Environment Alliance, 2022).

Dr. Angeliki Lyssimachou said, “To beat cancer starts here and now with a ban on glyphosate.” (Health and Environment Alliance, 2022).

For example, glyphosate, one of the most widely used herbicides in the world, has been shown to cross the blood-brain barrier (Beyond Pesticides, 2023).

significant tumors linked to glyphosate exposure (Health and Environment Alliance, 2022).

Glyphosate is linked to cancer, malignant lymphomas, kidney and liver tumors (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022; Kafshgiri et al., 2021; Meftaul et al., 2020; Health and Environment Alliance, 2022). An exposure to glyphosate can put people at a 2x greater risk of multiple myeloma, a type of blood cancer (De Roos et al., 2004, 49-54).

Mounting scientific evidence continues to reveal the potential dangers of glyphosate, linking it to a 41% increase in NHL cancer (Health and Environment Alliance, 2024).

Dr. Angeliki Lyssimachou said, “Scientific proof showing that glyphosate may cause cancer and hence is dangerous to human health keeps piling up” (Health and Environment Alliance, 2024). Those exposed to Glyphosate have an 80% increased risk of melanoma (De Roos et al., 2004, 49-54).

Colorectal cancer is linked to pesticide exposures such as: Imazethapyr, Atrazine, Dicamba, Glyphosate, Metolachlor, and Trifluralin (Mesnage & Antoniou, 2021; Kang et al., 2008; <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9880902/>).

Exposure to Boscalid, Dicamba, Dimethanamid, Glyphosate, Metolachlor are linked to Pancreatic cancer (Gerkin et al, 2024)

Linked to malignant lymphomas, including cancers that affect the lymphatic and blood systems—both closely tied to cardiovascular health (Health and Environment Alliance, 2022; Meftaul et al., 2020).

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is related to exposures of Organophosphates (such as diazinon, dichlorvos, malathion, parathion, and phorate), Organochlorines (such as aldrin, chlordane, dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), dieldrin, heptachlor, and lindane), insecticides phenoxyacetate herbicides (such as fenoprop; 2,4,5-TP, 2,4-D, and 2,4,5-T), Malathion, permethrin, glyphosate, benomyl, Captan, and ethylene dibromide (Montgomery et al, 2017).

Exposure to Glyphosate, Pendimethalin, Aldicarb, Fluazinam, Chlorothalonil, Tetramethrin, Pyrethrin and Paraquat have also been linked to asthma (Beard et al., 2003, 724-730).

Glyphosate, has been linked to neurotoxic outcomes such as oxidative stress, inflammation, and neuronal damage (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022; Kafshgiri et al., 2021; Meftaul et al., 2020).

Glyphosate, for example, disrupts the production of essential aromatic amino acids by inhibiting an enzyme called EPSP synthase, which is crucial for many microorganisms but absent

in humans (Román et al., 2024). Glyphosate exposure is linked to leaky-gut syndrome (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022; Kafshgiri et al., 2021; Meftaul et al., 2020).

Exposure to Glyphosate, DDE, and DDT and their metabolites are linked to celiac disease (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022; Kafshgiri et al., 2021; Meftaul et al., 2020).

Glyphosate, a globally dominant herbicide, has been shown to disturb the endocrine system and interfere with hormone regulation at multiple levels (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022; Kafshgiri et al., 2021; Meftaul et al., 2020).

Glyphosate, one of the most widely used herbicides, can impair reproductive function through its endocrine-disrupting effects (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022).

Other Herbicides such as 2,4-D, Alachlor, Butachlor, Glyphosate, Paraquat, Propanil have also been linked to Diabetes (Juntarawijit & Juntarawijit, 2018).

Glyphosate, Fonofos, Maneb, Pyrethroids, Insecticides, and Toxaphene are all linked to Rheumatoid Arthritis (Parks et al., 2022; Meyer et al., 2017; Parks et al., 2016).

Glyphosate exposure has been discovered to cause several heart rhythm issues (Quilliec et al., 2023). These include problems with the heart's electrical signals, such as a prolonged QT interval and delays in how signals travel through the heart chambers (Quilliec et al., 2023).

Over 162 DNA methylations have also been linked to the active ingredient of pesticides, specifically: Dicamba, Heptachlor, Picloram, Mesotrione, Acetochlor, Metolachlor, Glyphosate, Atrazine, and Malathion (Hoang et al., 2021).

Some chemicals, like Azoxystrobin or Glyphosate, remain toxic even in trace amounts.

Glyphosate can remain in groundwater for up to 91 days (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022).

Glyphosate, a commonly used pesticide in the U.S., can persist in soil for up to 6 months (National Pesticide Information Center, 2024) Repeated use of this chemical can be found in plants 365 days later (Costas-Ferreira et al., 2022)

ProcellaCOR-SC:

Ingredients:

Florpyrauxifen-benzyl - immunotoxicity and cell damage in mice, Spleen Damage, Immunosuppression, elevated levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines, splenic apoptosis (Morsi et al, 2024)

Propylene glycol - Propylene Glycol has been shown to cause arrhythmias and hemolysis (ATSDR, 2024). Not only disrupts heart rhythm but also causes hemolysis, underscoring its dual hematologic and cardiac impact (ATSDR, 2022).

In the air, Propylene Glycol has a half life of 50 hours (CDC, 2024).

Propylene Glycol can cause metabolic acidosis, arrhythmia, hypotension, multi system organ failure, hemolysis, renal dysfunction, seizure, central nervous system decrease and coma (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 2024).

Exposure to Propylene Glycol caused increased hemoglobin in monkeys (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (US), 1997).

Balance (contains Isoxaflutole) - causes liver and/or thyroid tumors (Bayer SDS sheet)

Flumioxazin:

damaging the fertility of the unborn child. Developmental studies in rats have shown cardiac and skeletal malformations, along with reduced offspring viability. (WSDT, 2021; EPA, 2003) Endocrine disruptor (EPA, 2003)

Causes anemia and increased liver, spleen, and kidney weights (EPA, 2003)

Flumioxazin is toxic to aquatic invertebrates and non-target plants (WSDT, 2021; EPA, 2003)

Diquat:

Diquat binds and accumulates indefinitely to sediments in water, and can be found in water for 35 days after application (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, 2012).

Epidemiological data shows a 62% increased risk of Parkinson's disease with exposure to Paraquat or Diquat (Pouchieu et al., 2018).

Diquat, banned in the EU, causes tremors, convulsions, and death (NJ.gov, 2024).

Diquat, often used as a desiccant on crops, has been linked to kidney damage in multiple studies (EPA, n.d.; NJ.gov, 2024).

Diquat, another commonly used herbicide, is linked to hepatic damage (EPA, n.d.; NJ.gov, 2024).

Additionally, pesticides like Diquat and Imidacloprid can damage tight junctions in the intestinal epithelium, leading to weakened cell cohesion and increased permeability of the intestinal barrier (Román et al., 2024).

Diquat can decrease male fertility (NJ.gov, 2024; EPA, 2024).

The herbicide Diquat, induces DNA changes and increases genetic mutations by 2-3x in lymphoma cells (Formoli, 1994).

Ten pesticides are directly toxic to neurons and linked to Parkinson's development, those chemicals include: dicofol, endosulfan, naled, propargite, diquat, endothall, trifluralin, copper sulfate, folpet (UCLA Health & Harvard, 2023).

Traces of Organochlorines such as Aldrin, Chlordane, DDT, and Lindane; Organophosphates like Diazinon, Malathion, and Parathion; Pyrethroids and Pyrethrins, Deethylatrazine, Cyanazine, Alachlor, Chlorpyrifos, Simazine, 2,4-D, Diuron, Tebuthiuron, Prometon, Diquat, Permethrin, Bifenthrin, Imazethapyr, Simazine, Atrazine, Thiamethoxam, Chlorothalonil and Glyphosate can all be found in our water supply (Syafudin et al., 2021;

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/935854/>; Minnesota Department of Health, 2024;

International Agency for Research on Cancer, 1999; EPA, 2006).

From: K. P.

Subject: Herbiscides

Date: Wed. 2/11/2026 2:27 PM

Please do NOT use harmful herbicide's and pesticides to curb growth of unwanted plants especially in sites that eventually become drinking water. Specifically I am referring to Lake Keowee.

Thank you

From: J. C.

Subject: Disapproval of plan

Date: Wed. 2/11/2026 4:04 PM

I'm dissatisfaction with the plan and I'm not in favor of using herbicides and pesticides in the water that becomes our drinking water, the water we may swim in or the water that is the habitat for the fish we may consume.

From: K. H.

Subject: Herbicides and Pesticides

Date: Wed. 2/11/2026 4:47 PM

I am not in favor of any plan that allows the introduction of pesticides and herbicides into our ponds, lakes and streams for the control of invasive weeds.

From: A. H.

Subject: using chemicals to kill the aquatic plants

Date: Wed. 2/11/2026 6:09 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am a resident of Greenville County and have just learned there is a possible plan to utilize herbicides and pesticides to kill aquatic plants. Putting these dangerous chemicals into the area lakes and reservoirs will create countless health problems for residents, including children.

I urge you to find another solution that will not put the surrounding communities at risk.

Thanking you in advance,

From: L. C.

Subject: Waterways

Date: Wed. 2/11/2026 7:33 PM

Please do not allow more pollution of our waterways by the use of dangerous pesticides and herbicides to kill invasive plants. Remember that Roundup was once stated to be safe. We need to protect our environment.

From: G. C.

Subject: herbicides and pesticides

Date: Thurs. 2/12/2026 8:45 AM

I am not in favor of your plan to use these.

From: R. W.

Subject: Proposed placement of herbicides and pesticides in our lakes and reservoirs

Date: Thurs. 2/12/2026 12:00 PM

I am opposed to placing herbicides and pesticides in water sources that provide drinking water, swimming, and habitat for fish we consume.

Please consider alternatives to the subject proposal.

From: S. S.

Subject: SC Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Thurs. 2/12/2026 2:24 PM

To Whom It May Concern

I want to let you know about my dissatisfaction with the SC Aquatic Plant Management Plan. I am not in favor of using herbicides and pesticides in the water that becomes our drinking water, the water we may swim in or the water that is the habitat for the fish we may consume. Surely there are other methods of killing aquatic plants that does not use pesticides and herbicides.

Thank you for considering other options.

From: R. K.

Subject: 2026 Proposed SCDES Aquatic Plant Management Plan

Date: Sun. 2/15/2026 4:43 PM

These comments pertain to Lake Wateree.

Duke Energy reported in their latest inspection of the area in Wateree Creek where the only hydrilla on the lake had been previously observed, that it is no longer there. So I suggest not allocating any resources on hydrilla, and instead focusing on lyngbya, giant salvinia, and cutgrass. If the target of grass carp is hydrilla, that would seem to be totally unnecessary.

Cutgrass is mentioned as a problem species; however, it should be emphasized that as a result of the extended drawdown for Duke's dam modification, it has taken on a massive presence all over the lake, negatively affecting navigation and shore/dock access, particularly in the many shallow areas and smaller coves. Lakefront property owners need guidance and assistance on treatment or safe removal options. I've talked to many waterfront residents who have injured themselves trying to pull up or shovel it out.

The multi-year lyngya treatment program led by CWWMG with strong support from LWA is an excellent program, and deserves DES's continued participation. This professionally managed/implemented effort is focused not just on public access and water intakes, although those are definitely important, but will be urgently needed all over the lake for years to come. Thank you for participating, and please look for ways to contribute more aggressively to the effort.

Thank you for posting the draft plan and taking public input.

From: K. W.

Subject: Aquatic NuisancePlants

Date: Sun. 2/19/2026 2:20 PM

This will be the third year that we have not been able to use our lake in any capacity. We have an infestation of pond weed and have not been able to get any help eradicating these weeds. We can not participate in any activities that this lake offers.

We have a large family and we have not been able to swim, fish or any water sports. Our entire cove is experiencing the same.

The value of our home has severely diminished.

Any assistance you can give us will be greatly appreciated. Please reach out to us if we can be of any assistance.

(Editor's Note: This comment is in regard to Lake Murray, based on phone conversations.)

From: D. T.

Subject: 2026 Proposed Aquatic Plant Management Plan (Lake Wateree)

Date: Thur. 2/26/2026 12:03 PM

Dear SCDES Review Team,

I am submitting the following comments regarding the 2026 Proposed Aquatic Plant Management Plan for Lake Wateree.

I appreciate the continued effort to manage aquatic vegetation on our lake; however, several elements of the proposed plan require clarification, strengthening, and redirection to adequately address current conditions and emerging threats.

1. Species Identification & Omissions

Specify Lyngbya Clearly: The plan should explicitly identify Lyngbya (filamentous cyanobacteria) rather than using the broad term “filamentous algae.” Precision in terminology is critical for effective management strategies and funding allocation.

Recognize Active Threats: The plan appropriately references giant salvinia and cutgrass, but it must clearly acknowledge the severity and ongoing expansion of Lyngbya across multiple areas of the lake.

2. Surveying & Data Accuracy

Require a Comprehensive Lake Survey: Reliance on a limited-area inspection (e.g., Wateree Creek) is insufficient to conclude the absence or limited presence of invasive species in other coves and shoreline areas. A full-lake survey is necessary to provide accurate, defensible data.

Document Scope of Algal Growth: The plan should include an updated, lake-wide assessment of algae distribution and density. Current growth patterns indicate increasing coverage that is not fully reflected in the draft.

3. Resource Allocation & Strategic Priorities

Clarify Budget Language: The reference to “\$30,000 for Lake Wateree” lacks transparency. It is unclear how much funding is specifically dedicated to giant salvinia versus Lyngbya control, and whether treatment of one species may reduce available funds for another. This should be clearly itemized.

Shift Focus from Hydrilla: Hydrilla is no longer present in Lake Wateree. Resources—including funding for triploid grass carp—should be redirected toward urgent, active threats: Lyngbya, giant salvinia, and cutgrass.

Reject a “Public Access Only” Strategy: Limiting treatments to public access areas is not a viable long-term approach. Invasive aquatic vegetation does not respect property boundaries. A lake-wide strategy is necessary to prevent continued spread and reinfestation.

Support Continued Participation in the Multi-Year Lyngbya Treatment Program: Ongoing professional, science-based management is essential to maintaining long-term control.

4. Economic & Property Owner Impact

Complete and Update the Budget Section: The plan should reflect realistic funding needs. Lyngbya control alone has been estimated at approximately \$160,000 annually. The cost section should clearly include projected funding requirements for algae and giant salvinia management.

Address the Surge in Cutgrass: Following the dam drawdown, cutgrass expansion has significantly increased along many shorelines. In my own case, cutgrass overgrowth is limiting safe access to the water from my property. Navigation and dock access in multiple coves have been compromised.

The plan must provide:

- Clear guidance for property owners regarding permissible treatment or removal methods.
- Coordinated assistance where necessary.
- A defined strategy for managing shoreline cutgrass before it becomes further entrenched.

Unmanaged cutgrass not only restricts access but also impacts property values, recreation, and overall lake usability.

Lake Wateree is both a critical natural resource and a significant economic driver for surrounding communities. The 2026 management plan should reflect current on-the-water realities and prioritize proactive, lake-wide control of invasive and nuisance species.

Thank you for considering these comments. I respectfully request that these concerns be formally addressed before the plan is finalized.

From: B.P.

Subject: Proposed 2026 Draft Aquatic Management Plan for South Carolina

Date: Fri. 2/27/2026 10:26 AM

SCDES & Aquatic Plant Management Council,

Please see the attached letter in opposition to the proposed 2026 Draft Aquatic Management Plan for South Carolina. The Blue Ridge Rural Water Company feels strongly that the proposed use of dangerous herbicides and pesticides in or around waterways is a practice that should not be allowed.

If you have any questions or I can be of assistance please let me know.



February 27, 2026

**S.C. Department of Environmental Services
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201
Attn: Aquatic Nuisance Plants**

Re: 2026 Draft Aquatic Plant Management Plan

S.C. Department of Environmental Services
& Aquatic Plant Management Council,

I am writing you on behalf one of the largest member owned, not-for-profit water utilities in the state of South Carolina. The Blue Ridge Rural Water Company (BRRWC) serves a population greater than 40,000 customers and covers nearly 18% of Greenville County. After reviewing the 2026 draft South Carolina Aquatic Management Plan the BRRWC hereby would like to voice its concern and strong opposition to the proposed plan. BRRWC is gravely concerned with the S.C. Department of Environmental Services (SCDEC) and the Aquatic Plant Management Council (Council) allowing, promoting and funding pesticides and herbicides being applied to waterways and lakes that serve millions of customers drinking water in South Carolina. BRRWC understands the challenges with invasive aquatic plant life and the difficulties removing them from waterways and lakes. While acknowledging these challenges BRRWC knows there are alternate means of controlling and removing these species that do not involve the use of herbicides and pesticides. The exposure to these dangerous chemicals has been well documented across the world and many of these chemicals are currently banned from use in other countries. For the SCDEC, as well as the Council, to promote and fund the use of these chemicals within the waterways of South Carolina is simply not acceptable. Furthermore, the residents of South Carolina that enjoy these waterways for recreation, fishing and ultimately consume treated water from these waterways, frankly, deserve to be protected by the S.C. Department of Environmental Services. BRRWC would ask that SCDEC and the Council eliminate the use of these chemicals altogether in state waterways and instead use the same funding to assist in the control or removal of these aquatic plant species by the use of mechanical means or by best management watershed practices. Thank you for your help and if you need further information, please contact me at (864) 895-1719.

Sincerely,

Brad Powers
General Manager / COO

2241 Fews Chapel Road, Greer, S.C. 29651
864-895-1719 | BRRWC.ORG

From: R. S.

Subject: Cutgrass Invasion

Date: Fri. 2/27/2026 12:47 PM

I live in Wateree Keys. About 10 years ago, I contacted Kermit Taylor at Duke Energy when I noticed the grass growing along my shoreline to see if they would do anything about getting rid of it. I was told that Duke would not because it was native to South Carolina. When the water was taken down to install the bladder, the grass started aggressively growing everywhere. I again contacted Mr. Taylor and was told Duke would not do anything and that it would be up to the property owners to get rid of it. I then contacted Charly Greenthaler at the Clemson Extension Service. I gave her a sample of the grass which she sent to Jacob Taylor Ph.D., Plant Taxonomist at Clemson University, who identified it as giant cutgrass *Zizaniopsis miliacea*. I then contacted Julie Holling at SCDES to see if they would help and was told that, because Duke managed Lake Wateree, they could not help. This grass invasion has become overwhelming, is ruining recreational use, and is adversely affecting property values on the lake. I am asking that Duke, who is responsible for managing the lake, and any other agencies work together to control this grass. This has already been done on Lake Marion and Lake Moultrie.

From: J. S.

Subject: Invasive plants

Date: Fri. 2/28/2026 8:29 PM

I am writing to give input for the support for the management of an invasive plant(s) (saw grass) On Lake Wateree .When Duke energy pulled down the lake for the southern dam modification, this plant took root and invaded mine and neighbors properties along the shore lines and has rendered our docks unaccusable. It has invaded numerous other areas on the lake. It has limited the use of our properties and decreased property values. I and my neighbors have been in contact with Duke energy lake management and were informed that they would not do anything because the plant is native to SC. Any help would be greatly appreciated in the management of this invasive plant on our property and many other areas along the shore lines of Lake Wateree. If any other input would be helpful I and my neighbors would be more than happy to assist.

Please see the attached photos.





From: P. B.

Subject: Lake Wateree Public Comment regarding Invasive Weeds/Plants

Date: Sun. 3/1/2026 2:37 PM

It is my understanding that approximately \$30k with an equal matching amount from Duke Energy is allocated for the treatment annually of Lyngbya. Based on the information provided by the Lake Wateree Association, this treatment is grossly underfunded. Please address how DES will insure the proper treatment of the increasing amount of Lyngbya algae in Lake Wateree.

Since the drawdown of Lake Wateree by Duke Energy forth southern dam repairs, Cutgrass is now heavily present along the banks of the lake where it didn't exist prior to the lake drawdown. How will DES address the proliferation of Cutgrass due to the Duke Energy

drawdown and who will be responsible for removal of this weed?

From: L. W. & B. W.

Subject: Lake Wateree management

Date: Mon. 3/2/2026 9:45 AM

To whom it may concern:

We have owned our property on Lake Wateree since 1997. With the drawdown for dam work, the Cutgrass explosion has taken over much of our section of the lake. It is impacting navigation and enjoyment of the lake. Our grandchildren are at risk for injury. Several owners further back in the cove are unable to navigate the lake and get boats in or out of their property. While Lyngbya is a known prior issue, this seems to be controlled, and attention should be turned to management of the Cutgrass.

A Full Lake Survey is encouraged. Simply checking Wateree Creek seems insufficient to justify the absence of invasive species elsewhere. We are just North of there, and the Cutgrass exploded. We do not have an accurate assessment of the growing volume and geographic spread of algae across the lake. I have volunteered in the past and performed algae checks with neighbors. I would encourage attention toward the urgent threats of Lyngbya, Giant Salvinia, and Cutgrass. It seems unreasonable and unfair to limit treatment to public areas. Private owners are being left out. A lake-wide strategy is needed to manage this sprawling infestation effectively. A finalized increased budget is needed to combat all the invasive species.

As a property owner, cutgrass has compromised navigation and dock access for ourselves and our neighbors. We welcome input and guidance and assistance for safe removal or treatment.

From: C. D.

Subject: Invasive weeds

Date: Mon. 3/2/2026 6:08 PM

Good day my name is C. D., I live on the Camden side of Lake Wateree. As a member of the Lake Wateree association(LWA) , I am concerned about your failure to include Lyngbya as a problem in the lake. My husband and I volunteered to collect data on the survey of this algae in 2025. Although I live in the deepest waters of the lake, we found through our survey, many places that contain this horrible smelling algae. It was interesting to see the worst places we found, was where the intake for Camden water was. This algae has been a problem for years. It travels with the numerous fishing tournaments we have here and will impact the fishing and recreation activities. Think about the property values as well. Duke needs to commit to more funding to treat this problem. In the last year alone, LWA with collaboration of water and counties spent 160,000 to treat. This funding only as of now, covers acession areas, and water intake places. It's not enough. We have now found giant salvia in our lake. This has all been done through people who are LWA members or owners of properties on the lake. We need help in the long term control of these invasive species. The 30 thousand dollars Duke has proposed is not enough. This is a beautiful lake, that is enjoyed by thousands... THOSE WHO OWN PROPERTIES ON LAKE SHOULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTROL OF ALGAE.

Response:

1) Objections to the use of herbicides

The Aquatic Plant Management Council (Council) understands the concerns. However, we are faced with invasive plants that grow unchecked in many South Carolina water bodies. There are no natural controls in our water bodies to control or eliminate these invasive plant species that spread rapidly. Due to the lack of natural controls, these invasive plants can shade out and kill the natives, reduce water flow, and reduce oxygen in the water, which is imperative for fish and natural plant growth. The invasive plants increase the water temperature, increase mosquito populations, and impede navigation on SC water. Controlling this invasive vegetation improves water quality for the overall ecosystem, the native plants and animals that use them, and withdrawal for human consumption.

Not all areas included in the plan are worked on each year. The plan provides guidelines if control work is needed.

For several decades, the Aquatic Nuisance Plants Program (ANPP) has used and continues to use many options to control and manage invasive and nuisance species in our publicly accessible waters. We use biological control agents (sterile grass carp and insects) when possible, but those are only effective for a small number of the species we need to control. In lakes, regular drawdowns are used to help control problem vegetation in shallow areas. Physical removal is rarely used, as it is very expensive and often causes additional problems, including spreading the vegetation and removing invertebrates and small fish that support the food chain. The most effective and efficient control method is EPA approved aquatic herbicides, which are used in a judicious and targeted manner, following the label guidelines and using the smallest amount needed to control the vegetation while minimizing impacts to non-target species.

All aquatic herbicides used in South Carolina must be approved and registered by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and again registered with each state. The EPA approval process requires stringent testing over many years and strict regulation before herbicides may be used in the environment. Registration of herbicides assures that proper use of the herbicide will not result in unwanted impacts on human health or the environment. Aquatic herbicides require more testing than terrestrial herbicides to ensure our water bodies are kept safe. Data from nearly 150 tests, including toxicity, environmental persistence and other factors, are submitted to and evaluated by the EPA before any herbicide is even considered for approval to be used.

Many of the plants we control receive the application of herbicide to the vegetation above the water, so there is very little herbicide getting into the water. All applications are following label instructions of the approved and registered EPA herbicide and are designed to use the minimum amount of herbicide needed for control, target the invasive or nuisance plants, and limit impacts to non-target species.

Depending on the product, the active ingredients either break down through hydrolysis, photolysis or microbial action, with a few being adsorbed or precipitating out of solution.

The time it takes to break down varies by ingredient and environmental conditions. Many break down within a week or two, therefore limiting the time they are in the water system. Most of the studies that have been conducted are on terrestrial herbicides.

2) Lake Wateree issues.

Lake Wateree is under the control of Duke Energy. Per their FERC license, they are responsible for invasive vegetation control. ANPP assists them as they request with consultations, treatments, and sterile grass carp stockings on all their lakes in SC. ANPP will cost share with Duke on treatments and carp stockings if they request assistance with those actions.

As Duke is the manager of the lake, surveying is primarily their responsibility. Traditionally, they surveyed the entirety of Wateree every 2-3 years. Due to increasing issues and staffing reductions, they have focused on trying to quantify existing populations for management purposes and partnered with local groups to do presence/absence surveys. ANPP will be surveying for giant salvinia until it is determined that it is no longer an issue. If other issues are seen during that process, they will be relayed to Duke. Additional surveying by ANPP will be done as time permits between the surveying and treatment of all the other water bodies where we are responsible for managing invasive plants. It is also important that property owners and lake users assist in identifying problem plants, especially invasives, and reporting them. They may do so to Duke

(<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/91765ba34b4f4dc9aeeb45bf4708e323>) or ANPP (<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/2af2bef79d46456cbc2fb182d7e639f3>). Reports to ANPP will be relayed to Duke.

We are aware that hydrilla is not currently a problem in Lake Wateree and there is no plan to release grass carp into the system or do any herbicide treatments this year. If it comes back in the future, we will look at addressing it.

The funding potentially available for cost share from ANPP is \$30,000. This is always dependent on the funding received and the treatments needed for other water bodies. Because we can't predict what vegetation will grow fastest each year, funding is not designated to specific plants each year. Because giant salvinia is an emerging issue and can get very bad very quickly, our focus in 2026 will be to continue to attempt to eradicate this species. If it is determined that it is no longer present in the system, we will move to support the control of Lyngbya.

Lyngbya is a problem. However, it is not on the prohibited plant list, which is one of the requirements under Duke's FERC license to initiate treatment. Duke has supported the management of it by providing technical support, doing data compilation, and providing some funding to the Catawba Wateree Water Management Group (CWWMG). ANPP has also provided some financial assistance for Lyngbya control and will continue to do so when the salvinia issue is resolved.

Cutgrass is a native plant which can become problematic. There is a possibility that some of the new plants will not be able to tolerate the deeper water since the lake levels returned

to normal and die off. As it is native, Duke will not currently fund treatment of it by ANPP unless there is a general navigation issue. They are allowing homeowners to contract with a licensed applicator to manage growth impacting shoreline uses by submitting a request to their Lake Services group (LakeServices@duke-energy.com). Requests must include name, address, dock permit number, and location and photos of the plants impacting use.

3) Lake Murray Issues

Additional grass carp will be added to Lake Murray this year, which will hopefully start impacting the curly leaf pondweed and hydrilla. ANPP will be having discussions with Dominion about herbicide treatments as the year goes on.