



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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Grass Carp to be introduced into reservoir in Wilson County

RALEIGH – State and local officials will place 3,340 grass carp into the Buckhorn Reservoir in Wilson County in an effort to remove an invasive aquatic weed that is harmful to fish and people.

The carp will be deposited into the reservoir at about 10 a.m. June 1 by officials with the N.C. Division of Water Resources and the city of Wilson. The carp will be released on the north side of the reservoir off Rock Ridge School Road.

Grass carp eat hydrilla, a weed that clogs water supply intakes, impedes recreational uses of the reservoir such as boating and swimming, and competes with native vegetation. Hydrilla is recognized by the state as an invasive aquatic plant. It is illegal to sell, transport or possess hydrilla without a permit. The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services regulates the culture and distribution of this aquatic plant species.

The use of grass carp is the most economical tool in controlling hydrilla. Grass carp are herbivores and prefer hydrilla instead of many of the native aquatic plants. Aquaculture farms provide sterile grass carp intended for aquatic weed control. Only the sterile "triploid" grass carp can be legally introduced to waters in North Carolina. Grass carp live for an average of 10 years. Researchers will conduct annual vegetation surveys to determine supplemental stockings in future years.

“The negative impacts that the hydrilla plant can cause are both economic and environmental,” said Rob Emens, the manager of the N.C. Division of Water Resources Aquatic Weed Control Program. “It degrades the quality of habitat and impedes recreation.”

There are 334 acres of hydrilla that need to be controlled at the reservoir. This initial stocking will have about 10 fish to control each acre of hydrilla.

Buckhorn Reservoir is located off N.C. Highway 581 on State Road 1142 in Wilson. The reservoir consists of 850 acres of water and 350 acres of land. The reservoir offers a variety of outdoor activities for families including skiing, boating, fishing, personal water craft, picnicking and camping.

The state Division of Water Resources administers the state’s Aquatic Weed Control Program to help local governments and others in the removal of hydrilla and other invasive aquatic weeds. For more information, go to [http://www.ncwater.org/Education and Technical Assistance/Aquatic Weed Control/](http://www.ncwater.org/Education_and_Technical_Assistance/Aquatic_Weed_Control/).

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