

Staff Directory

Keith Andreu, Aquatic Technician
 William Colon, Aquaculture Technician
 Jeremy Ford, Aquatic Technician
 T. Wayne Gale, Executive Director
 Ernesto Lasso de la Vega, Pond Watch Coordinator
 Kenneth Sonne, Aquatic Technician
 Linda Walstrum, Administrative Assistant
 Kevin Watts, Operations Manager



District staff participating at the Neighborhood Lakes and Ponds Management Workshop

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Lee County Hyacinth Control District

Top Ten Plant Species Treated In 2014 (acres treated)

1. Spatterdock	72		
2. Nymphoides	63		Nymphoides
3. Torpedograss	49		
4. Muskgrass	41		
5. Cattail	40		Spatterdock
6. Rush	39		
7. Southern naiad	30		Cattail
8. Water lettuce	17		
9. Water Pennywort	12		
10. Water hyacinth	10		Water hyacinth

Public Outreach

Pondwatch is a volunteer program developed by the Lee County Hyacinth Control District to educate citizens about stormwater pond management. The focus of this program is to identify not only water quality and plant problems, but the source of the problem. Participants in this program learn how to apply best management practices to improve water quality and help alleviate excessive aquatic plant growth within their waterways. Program participants are asked to bring a water sample to the District headquarters for analysis.

The Pond Watch Program has joined efforts with other private and government partners in an initiative called WETPLAN which stands for Watershed Education and Training Ponds Lakes and Neighborhoods. This partnership's objective focuses on educating the public, specifically Home Owner Associations, about the purpose and function of storm water ponds.

LCHCD staff continues to offer proper identification of aquatic plant species which is critical for differentiating between beneficial and invasive plants for compliance with herbicide label restrictions. Many native macrophytes are purposely planted for various mitigation activities and it is important to be able to identify the difference between the target species for control and those are considered beneficial. LCHCD's staff are highly skilled at identifying aquatic plant species and are often called upon to help in identifying aquatic plant identification at workshops and short courses.

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Executive Director

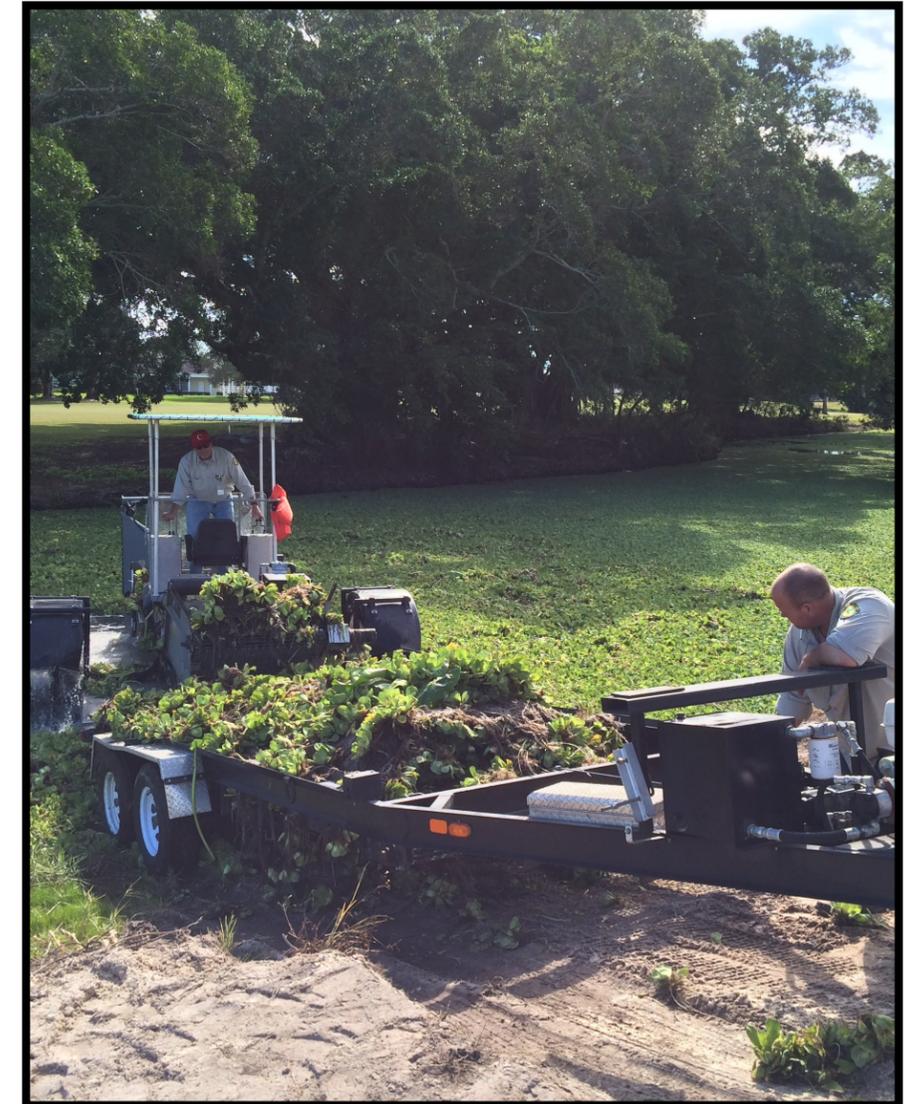
T. Wayne Gale

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Lee County Hyacinth Control
 District
 15191 Homestead Road
 Lehigh Acres, FL 33971

Phone: 239-694-2174

WWW.LCHCD.ORG



The Lee County Hyacinth Control District was formed by an act of the Florida Legislature on June 12, 1961.



Operations

Aquatic vegetation is managed by the application of EPA labeled herbicides and with the use of a herbivorous fish species known as grass carp. 2014 summaries are as follows:

Chemical Control

Service Requests 555
Acres Treated 439

The geographical jurisdiction of LCHCD includes all of Lee County, the Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries up to the Ortona Locks in Glades County (33,000 acres managed). The District defines public waters as any waterbody accessible by the general public, or owned as a public resource. Uses of the water may include, but are not limited to, navigation, recreation, fishing, flood control and water supply.

The District continues to effectively manage nuisance aquatic vegetation with the emphasis on control. In years past, residents would contact the District initially with their aquatic plant problems. This is still a very important process in aiding staff to which areas are more problematic and require immediate attention. Recognizing the importance for developing a more proactive approach the implementation of a successful integrated management program has resulted. Continuous monitoring of local water ways with onsite inspections, data collection, and timely plant control methods has yielded favorable outcome with excellent public service.

This year the District acquired a new aquatic weed harvester which was immediately deployed into service at Lee County's Rutenberg Park stormwater retention pond. This clean-up was a joint effort between LCHCD and Lee County Parks and Recreation Department to help improve the health and aesthetics of this highly visible public waterbody. The park's pond had an enormous amount of floating vegetation and herbicide applications were not the preferred method due to the over abundance of decaying biomass and chronically low oxygen levels. The harvester worked extremely well in these conditions and made a significant visual impact at this location.

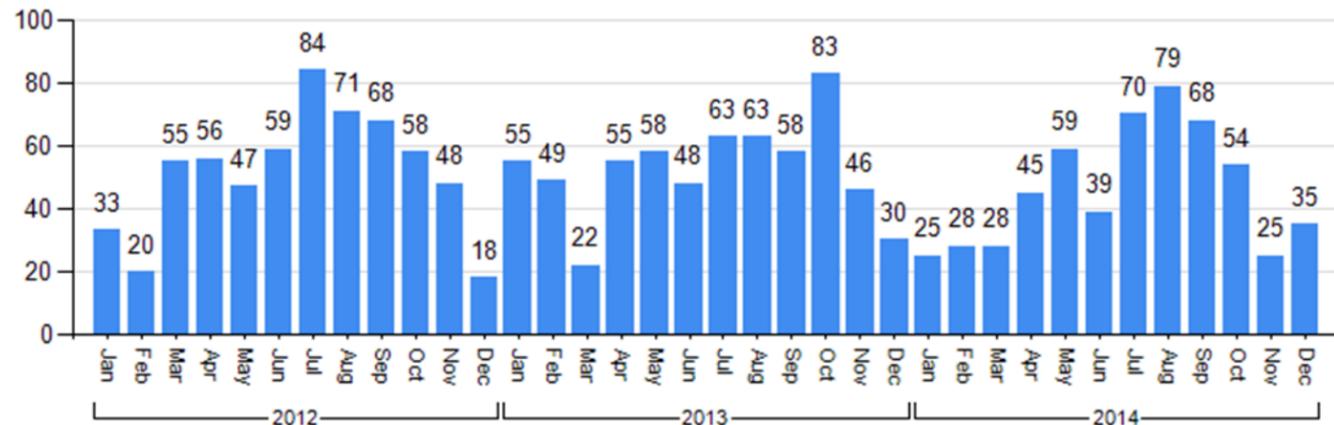


Harvester in action at Rutenberg Park



Rutenberg Park after

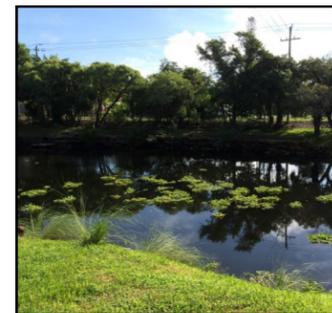
Monthly Service Calls by Year



LCHCD has been working with the City of Bonita Springs Public Works Department and Bonita Springs Utilities this past year on developing and improving our efforts to control water lettuce and water hyacinth in Lee County public waterways. Some of the areas for concern and addressed this year were: Leitner Creek, Rosemary Creek, and Oak Creek all of which flow directly into the Imperial River. A continuous work project between our District, City of Bonita Springs and Shangri-La Springs' staff to help eliminate water lettuce from Oak Creek yielded very favorable results as seen below.



Before picture of Oak Creek inundated with water lettuce



Oak Creek three weeks after initial removal of water lettuce

Biological Control / Grass Carp

Acres Stocked 34
Grass Carp Stocked 498
Cumulative Acres Managed 2,301

The Districts biological program emphasizes the use of triploid grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) which continues to serve as an excellent weed management tool. Successful implementation of this species has rendered long-term positive results in controlling problematic, reoccurring and/or persistent aquatic weeds. Grass carp are the preferred method of control due to their selective diet and preference for certain palatable macrophytes over less hardy plant species. The overall costs and significant management improvement associated with utilizing grass carp helps in developing an effective strategy for long-term aquatic plant control. The District uses a variety of methods to manage and control

Treating water hyacinth in Leitner Creek



Lee County Natural Resources Department reached out to the District for help with an ongoing problem of spatterdock in Lakes Park earlier this season. Soon after the construction of the filter marsh north of Lakes Park, issues became evident with the overabundance of spatterdock infiltrating the spreader waterway. Residents who share this public waterbody with the County Park were concerned about the eyesore it was presenting. Spatterdock (*Nuphar advena*) is a beneficial native aquatic plant species that has a tendency to be invasive. Responding to this issue, District staff began a long-term plant management strategy to include continuous plant growth assessment in conjunction with aquatic herbicide applications. Currently, the spatterdock is under successful maintenance control.

nuisance aquatic plants. Mechanical, chemical, and biological are all employed. Frequently, two or more these methods will be integrated to achieve the desired result.

Currently, LCHCD manages over 2,300 acres with grass carp throughout Lee County waters provided by our program. Cape Coral with its large contiguous urban reservoir system is comprised with a network of freshwater canals which are suitable for grass carp. This system has a series of barriers in place for containment and compliance with the FWC triploid grass carp permit. Since, grass carp are designated as a restricted species for use in the State of Florida a permit is required. To date, roughly 1,236 acres of freshwater canals in Cape Coral are stocked and managed with grass carp.

