

LGA Membership meeting
October 4, 2023, 9:30 am at Lake Gaston Baptist Church

Attendees

Public: approximately 47 attendees with Directors

Board of Directors: Jeff Zimmer, Eric Wooster, Anne Wood, Brian Goldsworthy, John Cataldo, Jane Stringer, Lewis Mustian, Patricia Price

Chairs: John Franz

Welcome

Jeff welcomed everyone at 9:33 am and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance

Jeff provided LGA updates.

Reminder of the National Emergency Alert Test

Introduced Directors and Committee Chairs present.

Committee reassignment

- Nominating: Jane Stringer
- Safety: Eric Wooster
- Lake Environment: John Franz
- Lake Clean-Up: Shannon McAlister
- Government Relations: John Cataldo and Bob Allan (Co-Chairs)
- Membership & Marketing: Brian Goldsworthy

Chair updates

Jeff for John F – Lake Environment Survey is well under way.

Lewis – Warren County is dedicating a 72-hour 200 bed evacuation center today in Warrenton.

Brian – M&M committee chair handled out membership applications to non-members.

Intro Speaker/Presentation

Jeff introduced the Speakers, Kirk Rundle and David Belkowski Wildlife Biologists with NC Wildlife Commission. They provided intriguing information on the management of the fish populations in Lake Gaston (LG) through sampling of Crappies, Stripped Bass, Blue Catfish, and other fish to determine age, growth rate, mortality, genetics, and more. Also provided information on their fish stocking programs and the introduction of invasive fish species. Please review the slides for detailed information.

Lake Gaston is in District 3. There are 9 Districts in the State. NC and VA agreed that the NC Wildlife Commission would manage the Lake Gaston fishery while VA Wildlife Resources manages the James R. Kerr Reservoir fishery.

Alabama Bass are coming into LKG from Alabama and Mississippi. Genetic testing has confirmed their introduction. They are aggressive and inter breed with native bass. They are out competing native Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass. Need to stop the spread. Identifying Characteristics – See slides.

There is a 5-year program for stocking F1 Hybrid Largemouth Bass. See slides.

F1 can grow about a pound a year and are monitor through fin clips to confirm if they are F1.

For more details see Power Point slides that are posted on the site.

Questions:

- Where are the Walleye? In early summer around the 85 bridge. Winter all over the lake.
- How do you select where the nets are placed? Keep consistent location with placement of the nets.
- Why a hybrid of the F1 Largemouth Bass? Hybrids are bigger with more trophic potential for anglers.
- What is the mortality rate of F1? They are stocked in vegetation areas to help them survive. They have a 99% survival rate.
- Are you seeing White Bass in LKG? Not seeing them and just starting to hear about them.
- What is the number of fish in LKG? That is hard to track. Roughly LKG can support 200 lbs. per acre of fish (all species)
- What is the impact of Lyngbya on the fish? It can take oxygen out of water. Fish don't eat it and can be a challenge for anglers.
- Has the drop in Hydrilla impacted fish populations? The fish habitat changed but didn't significantly impact them.
- What about Water Willow? Water Willow is good for fish and shorelines.
- What is the best way to notify boaters to not spread Lyngbya and Alabama Bass? Boaters need to be educated on impact and how to stop the spread from one lake to LKG.

Jeff thanked the Speakers.

Meeting adjourned 10:39 am