



JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

JACK MONTOUCKET
SECRETARY

January 9, 2018

Rebecca Triche
Executive Director
Louisiana Wildlife Federation
PO Box 65239
Baton Rouge, LA 70896

RE: Review of the Triploid Restriction on Grass Carp

Dear Ms. Triche,

The Inland Fisheries Section of LDWF has reviewed the resolution (# 1A, 2016) adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation at its August 20th meeting in Bossier City, LA in 2016. Said resolution requests LDWF review its restriction on the use of triploid grass carp (TGC) by the public to manage submersed aquatic vegetation (SAV) in private waters. Imported into the U.S. in 1963, the grass carp was first documented in the wild by LDWF fisheries sampling in 1976. In 1991, the LWF Commission promulgated the rules (Title 76, Part VII, Chap. 9, Section 901) to allow the use of triploid grass carp (sterile) by landowners for the purpose of vegetation control in private waters, while reducing the potential spread of diploid carp (fertile) in state waters. Pursuant to state statutes, LDWF Inland Fisheries adheres to this rule in stocking TGC in public waters for SAV control as well.

Inland Fisheries considered the efficacy of the current TGC policy using the following criteria:

- 1) polled District managers for their input on the current program's effectiveness
- 2) reviewed LDWF grass carp catch/abundance data from 2000 to 2016
- 3) evaluated biological efficacy of SAV control in private and public waters (cost/benefit analysis when compared to mechanical or chemical means)

All nine District managers reported that they believed the current TGC program to be a success in both the control of SAV in public and private waters, as well as reducing the spread of diploid carp. The presence of TGC (sterile fish) in the environment reduces the reproductive potential or success of diploid grass carp populations in the wild. The natural reproductive process of the diploid population is interrupted when a sterile TGC spawns with a diploid fish resulting in a failed spawn.

Review of LDWF catch data for grass carp for the time period 2000 – 2016, showed that fisheries biologist captured 920 juvenile and adult grass carp, of which 135 fish (14.6%) were potentially diploid fish. A recent larval fish study by LDWF collected 48,319 individuals during a two-year study throughout Louisiana's vast rivers system. Of that number, only two were identified as being grass carp larvae, while bighead and silver carp larvae comprised almost 14% of the total number of larval fish.

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The cost effectiveness of TGC as a biological control agent for SAV is highly beneficial when considering the longevity and herbivory potential of grass carp, and greatly exceeds that of mechanical or chemical control means under most conditions. Inland Fisheries data does not indicate diploid grass carp to be as prevalent as stated in the LWF resolution, and believes the TGC program has been very beneficial in preventing the spread of diploid fish while at the same time controlling undesirable levels of SAV in Louisiana waters.

Sincerely,



Ricky Moses
Biologist Director