

CYPRESS VALLEY NAVIGATION DISTRICT

MARSHALL TEXAS 75661

GIANT SALVINIA RESPONSE PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

CVND's efforts on Giant Salvinia started in 2007 when Giant Salvinia was first reported in the Jeems Bayou area of Caddo Lake. A plan was devised to put up a barricade 2 miles long across the middle of the lake to intercept the floating salvinia. The fence was erected and patrolled daily. It was effective on stopping large quantities of salvinia but could not stop it all. The fence was destroyed by winds from Hurricane Ike and was subsequently removed from the lake.

CVND has been spraying herbicides since late 2007 first using the Greater Caddo Lake Associations spray rigs and personnel. In April 2008 we received a surplus airboat from TPWD which we retrofitted with a new engine and spray rig. In March 2009 we purchased a smaller boat with a Pro Drive motor and a spray rig on it.

From 2007 to May 2011 we have sprayed almost 4000 acres of Giant Salvinia and over 3000 acres of Water Hyacinth

GIANT SALVINIA COVERAGE

In 2007 TPWD's annual vegetation survey found only trace occurrences of GS on the Texas side of Caddo,

In 2008 the annual survey showed almost 1100 acres

In 2009 the annual survey rang up over 3200 acres, the largest coverage to date.

In 2010 the amount was vastly lower @ 605 acres. This was due to a colder than normal winter along with some higher water levels in the winter of 2009...in the winter of 2010 we again had a colder than normal winter which reduced the Giant Salvinia even more...down to an estimated 350 acres.

FUNDING

CVND has received funding for its efforts from a number of sources, mainly Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, USFWS, ALCOA, NETMWD and the counties it represents...Harrison and Marion Counties.

As of the end of fiscal year 2011 CVND has received a total of \$685,000 from all sources since 2007. This has been used to maintain navigation which includes herbicide applications for water hyacinth and Giant Salvinia. It also has been used for Barricade construction, maintenance and cleaning as well as rebuilding donated airboat, purchasing and outfitting new spray boat, boat road maintenance and log/tree removal.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

CVND has retained Gecko Pest Control LLC. as its spray contractor for Caddo Lake. Gecko is spraying giant salvinia using our boats and equipment. Our equipment consists of;

- 1- 16' American Airboat capable of spraying in excess of 25 acres a day
- 1- 18' Go Devil mud boat with Prodrive 27hp surface drive engine capable of spraying in excess of 25 acres a day.

Gecko started their spraying operation in May 2011 and has sprayed approximately 780 acres of Giant Salvinia and Water Hyacinth to date.... They will continue to conduct maintenance spraying operations on Caddo this fall.

Texas Parks and Wildlife has conducted contract spray operations this summer on Caddo and Texas A&M's Center for Invasive Species Eradication also has hired a contractor to spray on Caddo.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Giant Salvinia on the Texas side of Caddo Lake is for the most part contained to the upper sections of the Lake in the Caddo Lake Wildlife Management Area (Clinton and Carter Lake area) where it is prevalent. There are very spotty outbreaks around the other areas of the lake.

Extreme low water levels are inhibiting our efforts to effectively spray the GS in the WMA. Spraying is only able to take place along the boat roads and a few isolated deeper pockets.

This low water condition also seems to be keeping the GS in check, depriving it of the opportunity to spread very far. It also seems that there may be a lack of nutrients in these shallow areas even further impeding its ability to grow.

Another factor that may be affecting the GS movement is near- record growth of American Lotus this year. Dense stands of Lotus cover a substantial amount of the Texas side of Caddo.

FORECAST

The low water conditions are expected to continue for some time. The La Nina condition in the Pacific will continue to keep us dry for an extended period. As of September 6th 81 % of Texas was in Exceptional Drought...the Highest Level of Drought.

The NRCS forecast just out calls for above normal temps and below normal rainfall through March of 2012. Some models are predicting no relief from this pattern through Fall 2012.

Caddo Lake is only a few inches from reaching its record low level. If these predictions are correct most, if not all of the backwater of Caddo could dry up...a natural drawdown that would further restrict GS and other vegetation as well.

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