

APPROVED
BY ORANGE COUNTY BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FEB 21 2012 CMS/CAS

RESOLUTION

of the

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

regarding the

CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT OF *HYDRILLA VERTICILLATA* IN LAKE APOPKA

Resolution No. 2012- M-03

WHEREAS, it is the position of the Orange County Board of County Commissioners (Board) that both submergent and emergent vegetation play a critical role in the overall health of a natural surface water system;

WHEREAS, while diverse, native communities of aquatic vegetation that are indigenous to Florida are always preferred in a surface water system, this situation does not always occur;

WHEREAS, furthermore, many surface water systems may receive some benefit from non-native species when natives are no longer present, but this benefit needs to be evaluated as not all non-native species have the same level of beneficial impact to the system;

WHEREAS, some non-native species are so aggressive and invasive that their negative impacts outweigh any benefits that may be received;

WHEREAS, *Hydrilla verticillata* is a species of aquatic vegetation native to parts of Asia that was imported into the U.S. by the aquarium industry in the 1950's, and once released into the Florida ecosystem, this species found ideal conditions to thrive;

WHEREAS, with no known predators or diseases and year round conditions conducive to growth, left unmanaged, *Hydrilla verticillata* quickly dominates canals, lakes and ponds;

WHEREAS, *Hydrilla verticillata* has a tremendous growth rate, where each branch of a single plant can grow up to 2 inches a day per stem branch;

WHEREAS, *Hydrilla verticillata* has numerous methods of spatial transplant, and can spread by tubers, buds, runners and stem fragmentation, making it a highly mobile species;

WHEREAS, as a result, *Hydrilla verticillata* has many undesirable effects to water systems in Florida they dominate, including:

- Displacement of native submersed vegetative species;
- Shading of benthic communities;
- Significant restrictions to water flow (flooding, mosquitoes);
- Reduction of overall biodiversity and habitat; and
- Oxygen swings, odors and fish kills;

WHEREAS, although some believe *Hydrilla verticillata* can be controlled and managed for its benefits, these same benefits can be found in native species without producing the negative consequences associated with *Hydrilla verticillata* as outlined above;

WHEREAS, while some initial benefits may be observed in sport fishing and specific aviary presence (as with any vegetative dominance), long term impacts to water quality and habitat are still unknown; and

WHEREAS, it is therefore the Board's position that the highly invasive, non-native *Hydrilla verticillata* species should be controlled and managed to the greatest extent practicable in order to keep its densities at the lowest possible coverage practical.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:

Section 1. Controlling and managing *Hydrilla verticillata* in Lake Apopka. Orange County supports any proposal that would control and manage *Hydrilla verticillata* in Lake Apopka to the greatest extent practicable.

Section 2. Effective date. This Resolution shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

ADOPTED this 21st day of February, 2012.

ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: Board of County Commissioners

By: *Veresa Jacobs*
Veresa Jacobs
County Mayor

ATTEST: Martha O. Haynie, County Comptroller
As Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners

By: *Kathleen C. Johnson*
Deputy Clerk
Print Name: Kathleen C. Johnson
CESD - C - 03

