



TENNESSEE WILDLIFE RESOURCES AGENCY

ELLINGTON AGRICULTURAL CENTER
P. O. BOX 40747
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37204

Mr. Hinsdale:

Thank you for your correspondence of January 20, 2017. We appreciate the consideration being given to the issue of aquatic vegetation in Tennessee Reservoirs. We offer the following for your consideration:

- TWRA has been thoroughly engaged in the issue of aquatic vegetation in Tennessee rivers and reservoirs since the mid-1970s. We work closely on a continuing basis with Tennessee's regulatory authority, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), and the two Federal agencies most responsible for operations in the Tennessee River System, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).
- TWRA, along with our natural resource conservation partners, is thoroughly engaged in the issue of aquatic nuisance species (ANS). Our focus and authority are on invasive fish and aquatic life including exotic mussels and clams, snails, crayfish, and live bait. Invasive Asian carp are a threat to sport fishing, commercial fishing, and aquatic biodiversity in practically all North American river systems. The management of aquatic vegetation in public waters does not fall within the scope of work of TWRA.
- Control of aquatic vegetation around private docks and piers is a decision for the property owner. Use of chemicals in public waters of the State of Tennessee requires a permit from TDEC and treatments must be conducted by a licensed applicator. TVA offers assistance in the management of aquatic plant adjacent to public facilities such as boat ramps, public swimming areas, and navigation channels.
- TWRA recognizes that *monoecious hydrilla* is one of numerous invasive exotics that are an issue in Tennessee aquatic systems. We are committed to continuation of work with our conservation partners to address the challenges presented by ANS.
- TWRA is aware of the misinformation related to aquatic vegetation that has been spread by local media and others. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) did not stock invasive aquatic plants in Watts Bar or any other Tennessee reservoir.
- TWRA strongly recommends that both local environmental review and lake-front property owner groups include active and equal representation from both sport and tournament fishing organizations. These important stake holders are well represented at Watts Bar. Watts Bar, Chickamauga, and Nickajack Reservoirs offer outstanding sport fishing opportunities for Tennessee anglers and visitors from throughout the nation. Individual and tournament anglers make significant financial contribution to local economies.