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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 01-039-1]

Giant Salvinia; Availability of an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability and request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has prepared an environmental assessment relative to a demonstration project to eradicate and prevent the spread of the aquatic weed giant salvinia in the Toledo Bend Reservoir and surrounding areas in Louisiana and eastern Texas. The environmental assessment documents our review and analysis of the environmental impacts associated with the alternative actions under consideration. Among the alternative actions considered in the assessment is a program using an integrated approach to eradicate giant salvinia from the Toledo Bend Reservoir and surrounding areas in Louisiana and eastern Texas. We are making this environmental assessment available to the public for review and comment.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive by August 23, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to: Docket No. 01-039-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 01-039-1.

You may read any comments that we receive on this environmental assessment in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of

the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690-2817 before coming.

APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register**, and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Alan V. Tasker, National Weed Program Coordinator, Invasive Species and Pest Management, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 134, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236; (301) 734-5225.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Giant salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) is a free-floating aquatic fern, native to South America, with a tremendous growth rate and the potential to significantly affect water-reliant agricultural industries, recreation, and the ecology of freshwater habitats throughout much of the United States.

Giant salvinia reproduces vegetatively through fragmenting and from dormant buds breaking away. A colony consists of many leaf pairs connected by branching rhizomes. The colony is easily broken, thus producing viable fragments. The colonizing or immature stage of giant salvinia is characterized by small leaves that lie flat upon the water. As the plants rapidly expand and compete for space, the leaves become larger, crowding occurs, and the plants are pushed upright. Mats may grow to a meter thick and can cover large areas. Giant salvinia grows best in stagnant or slow-moving water, and the plant can tolerate a wide pH range. While able to survive severe winters, giant salvinia grows best in temperatures ranging between 25 °C to 28 °C (77 °F to 81 °F).

Because giant salvinia is a free-floating plant, it disperses by passive means (water currents and wind) and by "hitchhiking." Animals may carry the plants over short distances, but humans can spread it widely on fishing gear and boating equipment. Intercontinental dispersal and dispersal within the United States probably have occurred

when giant salvinia was sold in the nursery trade, either intentionally as a plant for aquaria or for ponds, or unintentionally when it "hitchhikes" with other aquatic plants collected for academic study or for use in aquaria or ponds. Although native to southeastern Brazil, giant salvinia is now found in North America, South America, Africa, Asia, Australia, New Guinea, and Oceania.

The dominant characteristic of giant salvinia is its tremendous growth rate, which makes it an aggressive invader. Observations at the Toledo Bend Reservoir, which is located on the border between eastern Texas and western Louisiana, noted that a small, unobstructed patch of giant salvinia doubled in size in a few days during the winter of 1998-1999.

Where it occurs outside its native range, particularly in the tropics and subtropics, giant salvinia has become a problematic aquatic weed with the potential to choke irrigation systems, streams, and lakes. The mats also may harbor snails and insects that carry human and animal diseases. In a single growing season, giant salvinia can destroy a thriving water community by forming a destructive mass, halting transportation, killing fish, and promoting disease. Giant salvinia is considered a direct threat to rice farming. It gives off hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), which can damage copper components of hydroelectric generators. The thick mats, which can develop on open lakes, are avoided by small and large boats alike.

In the past several years, giant salvinia has been detected in the United States, mostly in association with the nursery trade in aquatic plants. Generally, detections have been in small, confined sites and are currently contained or have been eradicated. Such detections have occurred in Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. Of more serious and immediate concern is the current infestation in the Toledo Bend Reservoir and the surrounding areas in Louisiana and eastern Texas. The Toledo Bend Reservoir infestation is a major one in a large body of water.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) listed giant salvinia as a noxious weed in 1983.

Under APHIS' regulations, no person may move giant salvinia into or through the United States, or interstate, unless he or she obtains a permit for the movement from APHIS.

Because current efforts to eradicate giant salvinia in the Toledo Bend Reservoir and the surrounding areas in Louisiana and eastern Texas have been unsuccessful, APHIS has evaluated additional control methods available to help eradicate this noxious weed. These control methods include:

- An integrated control approach utilizing herbicides and mechanical, biological, and regulatory controls.
- A biological control program that requires no herbicide application.

APHIS' review and analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with these control methods are documented in detail in an environmental assessment (EA) entitled, "Demonstration Project: Giant Salvinia, Toledo Bend Reservoir and Surrounding Areas in Louisiana and Eastern Texas" (March 2001).

The EA may be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/es/ppqdocs.html>. You may request paper copies of the EA by calling or writing to the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. Please refer to the title of the EA when requesting copies. The EA is also available for review in our reading room (information on the location and hours of the reading room is provided under the heading **ADDRESSES** at the beginning of this notice).

The EA has been prepared in accordance with: (1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), (3) USDA regulations implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1), and (4) APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372).

Done in Washington, DC, this 18th day of July 2001.

Bobby R. Acord,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 01–18389 Filed 7–23–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Meeting of the Land Between The Lakes Advisory Board

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Meeting.

SUMMARY: The Land Between The Lakes Advisory Board will hold a meeting on Thursday, August 16, 2001. Notice of this meeting is given under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App.2.

The meeting agenda includes the following:

- (1) Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review.
- (2) Short Forest Planning Overview.
- (3) Existing Environmental Education Programs.
- (4) Tours of Brandon Spring Resident Center & Homeplace.

The meeting is open to the public. Written comments are invited and may be mailed to: William P. Lisowsky, Area Supervisor, Land Between The Lakes, 100 Van Morgan Drive, Golden Pond, Kentucky 42211. Written comments must be received at Land Between The Lakes by August 9, 2001, in order for copies to be provided to the members at the meeting. Board members will review written comments received, and at their request, oral clarification may be requested at a future meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Thursday, August 16, 2001, 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., CDT.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Brandon Spring Resident Center, Land Between The Lakes, and will be open to the public.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharon Byers, Advisory Board Liaison, Land Between The Lakes, 100 Van Morgan Drive, Golden Pond, Kentucky 42211, 270–924–2002.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: There are no public eating facilities at Brandon Spring where individuals from the public can purchase lunch. However, members of the public attending the meeting are invited to bring their lunch with them to eat at Brandon. There are also public eating facilities within 7–15 miles in Dover TN. No official business will be conducted during the 45-minute lunch break.

Dated: July 18, 2001.

William P. Lisowsky,

Area Supervisor, Land Between The Lakes.

[FR Doc. 01–18370 Filed 7–23–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–11–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

DOC has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the

provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. chapter 35).

Agency: U.S. Census Bureau.

Title: Survey of Plant Capacity Utilization.

Form Number(s): MQ–C1.

OMB Approval Number: 0607–0175.

Type of Request: Regular submission.

Burden Hours: 38,250 hours.

Number of Respondents: 17,000.

Average Hours Per Response: 2 hours and 15 minutes.

Needs and Uses: The Census Bureau conducts the Survey of Plant Capacity annually to provide information on the use of industrial capacity for manufactured products. Data are gathered from a sample of manufacturing plants in the United States. The survey form collects data on the value of plant production during actual operations and at "full production" and "national emergency production" levels. The Census Bureau mails out survey forms to collect the data. Companies are asked to respond to the survey within 30 days of the initial mailing.

Survey data are used in measuring inflationary pressures and capital flows, in understanding productivity determinants, and in analyzing and forecasting economic and industrial trends. The survey results are used by such agencies as the Federal Reserve Board, Federal Emergency Management Agency, International Trade Administration, and the Department of Defense.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: Annually.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

Legal Authority: Title 13 U.S.C.,

Section 182.

OMB Desk Officer: Susan Schechter, (202) 395–5103.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Madeleine Clayton, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, (202) 482–3129, Department of Commerce, Room 6086, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at mclayton@doc.gov).

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to Susan Schechter, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10201, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

Dated: July 19, 2001.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 01–18386 Filed 7–23–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–07–P