

**DRAFT**

**HARRIS CHAIN OF LAKES RESTORATION COUNCIL**

**SITE VISIT SUMMARY**

**of the**

**Florida Bass Conservation Center  
Richloam State Fish Hatchery Tour  
Webster, Florida**

**May 4, 2007**

The regular meeting of the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council (Council) was cancelled to facilitate a site visit to the Richloam State Fish Hatchery. Council members met at the Florida Bass Conservation Center, located at 3771 County Road 788, in Webster, Florida for the site visit at 10:00AM on 5/4/07.

**Members Present**

Skip Goerner, Chairman  
Hugh (Dave) Davis II, Vice Chairman  
Robert Kaiser

**Member Not Present**

Keith Farner  
Don Nicholson  
Rick Powers, P.G., Secretary  
Richard Royal  
Edward M. Schlein, M.D.  
Ted Woodrell

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) hosted a site visit of the Richloam State Fish Hatchery on 5/4/07. The tour was conducted to observe and discuss future proposed projects of the SJRWMD. Also in attendance at the site visit were Technical Advisory Group (TAG) members of the Council included Barbra Bess of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Bill Johnson (FWCC), and Dr. Daniel Canfield of the University of Florida (UF). Rick Stout of the FWCC conducted the tour and provided information. Information on the Florida Bass Conservation Center and a general location map are provided as Attachment 1 of this summary.

The tour began with a presentation given by Rick Stout, Manager of the Richloam State Fish Hatchery, in the Florida Bass Conservation Center auditorium. Highlights of the presentation are provided below while the complete presentation is provided in Attachment 2.

### Overview

- To protect the strain of Florida Bass
- Replenish 25% of their brood stock each year
- Maintain 200 brood stock at the hatchery
- Bass brood stock strains includes; St. Johns, West Coast, and south Florida

### History

- Richloam Hatchery began operations in 1965
- Produced fingerling fish
- Primarily stocked farm ponds
- Broke ground on the new facility in February 2004

### Florida Bass Conservation Center

- Incubation racks
  - 144 McDonald Jars
  - Multi-species capabilities
- Intensive Fry Culture
  - 80 foot concrete raceways, 14,300 gallons each
    - o Used for large mouth bass spawning
    - o 25 pairs per raceway
  - 30 foot fiberglass raceways, 2,000 gallons each
    - o Fry are moved to these raceways
    - o All fry are the same age
    - o Fry are moved to outdoor, fertilized ponds to feed zooplankton
- Fish Transfer Pavilion
  - 14 concrete tanks, 2,000 gallons each
  - 200,000 to 300,000 channeled catfish per year are produced for the Urban Stocking Program

### Laboratories

- Bacteriology

- Wet Lab
- Necropsy/Pathology
  - Facility utilizes an electron microscope

#### Research Facilities

- 12 6-meter research tanks with independent temperature control to chill or heat the water
- Two photo/thermal rooms for out of season research
- Produce 20,000 pounds of feeder fish per year from wild fish
- Facility aerates utilizing liquid oxygen

#### Water Filtration for Tanks

- 6,000 gallons per minute
- Water sterilization utilizing ozone and ultra violet (UV) light

#### Process Water System for Ponds

- Filtered Well Water at 8,000 gallons per minute
- Disinfected Recycle Water at 6,000 gallons per minute

#### Pond Renovation

- Phase 2 and 3 of the project
- Refurbished all 63 ponds at the facility
- Ponds range in size from 0.25 acres to 1.5 acres

#### Exhibit Area

- 2,500 gallon aquarium
- Stocking Maps
- Meeting Room (Auditorium)

- Displays on Florida Black Bass

Upon completion of the presentation, the tour continued to the production floor and then to the outdoor ponds of the facility to observe operations. Mr. Stout said that they produce Florida large mouth bass and striped bass, in addition to catfish. He explained that approximately 20% of the catfish moved to the outdoor ponds are predated by birds.

Chairman Skip Goerner asked about the large mouth bass, advanced fingerling production. Mr. Stout explained that they produce 1 million, 4-inch large mouth bass fingerlings per year. He said they use the 4-inch fish for experimentation to determine mortality rates for the stocked fish.

Mr. Stout went on to explain that the fry grow from 2 millimeters (mm) to 35 mm in approximately 30 days; averaging 1.3 mm per day. He said that the bass fry will grow to approximately 8 inches in a year. Mr. Stout also said they stock 80,000 fry per acre and experience a 65 – 85% return rate.

Chairman Goerner asked how many fish can be shipped for restocking. Mr. Stout explained that the larger the fish, the fewer that can be shipped. He gave the following breakdown for size of fish and the number that can be shipped:

2-inch fish allows 100,000 to be shipped  
4-inch fish allows 10,000 to be shipped  
8-inch fish allows 1,000 to be shipped

Mr. Stout explained that the facility breeds Coi (carp) fish to feed the brood fish and Gambusia for the fingerlings. He said they release 80,000 gambusia per acre to feed the fingerlings. When it comes to production, Mr. Stout explained that in 2007 the facility produced approximately 3 million eggs from which they released 1.3 million, 4-inch fry. He said the fry have a value of \$0.17 per inch.

The tour ended at 11:45 AM

Photographs were taken to document observations made at the facility.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Chairman Skip Goerner

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Vice Chairman Dave Davis

**Attachment 1**

**Information on the Florida Bass Conservation Center  
and a General Location Map**

**Attachment 2**

**Florida Bass Conservation Center**

**Richloam State Fish Hatchery Presentation**

**given by**

**Rick Stout**

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

**May 2007**