

# Introduction

by  
J. L. Decell<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the United States, the use of the white amur (grass carp) has historically caused varying degrees of controversy, depending on the nature and location of the problem, the level of environmental sensitivity, policies, and politics.

There have been, and should remain, concerns over the use of this biological control method. Consistently, regardless of the motivating interest, one overriding concern has been the possible eradication of the submersed plants that provide habitat for fisheries. This is a continual concern, regardless of the method of control being employed. The use of the grass carp elevates this concern because of the perception that its use is commensurate with a lack of control over the degree and rate of control.

Compared with other methods, the use of the grass carp requires a significantly greater degree of understanding about both the agent and the environment in which it is placed to obtain the desired results. Nonetheless, the protection of the aquatic habitat should remain

a part of the overall objective of any plant control operation.

A symposium was held in Gainesville on March 7-9, 1994, to discuss the effects of stocking grass carp for aquatic plant control. The purpose of the workshop was to provide information related to the concern for habitat protection and the suitability of using grass carp for aquatic plant control in large lakes. Individual lake studies, long-term impacts, low stocking rates, and grass carp recapture methods were presented in a context of using grass carp in a manner that prevents eradication of submersed aquatic plants. In addition, public perception and questions for experts were presented during panel discussions. Invited speakers were given a tour of area lakes.

As with all technology, it is necessary to assess the status of not only the state of the art, but the general view of its applications in the real-world environments. It was intended that this workshop serve at least a portion of that assessment. It is anticipated that another will serve the same need again in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Program Manager, Environmental Resources Research and Assistance Programs, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.