

## County allocates extra funding to salvinia control

Robin Y. Richardson [ryrichardson@marshallnewsmessenger.com](mailto:ryrichardson@marshallnewsmessenger.com) | Posted: Tuesday, September 10, 2013 4:00 am

The Harrison County Commissioners Court approved additional funding in the amount of \$2,000 Monday to support Cypress Valley Navigation District's eradication and research efforts regarding the critical invasion of giant salvinia on Caddo Lake.

"This court, in its annual fiscal year budget, provides \$17,500 in funding to Cypress Valley Navigation District for their particular purposes," said County Judge Hugh Taylor. "I'm asking the court to consider an increase, a one-time contribution, today, an additional \$2,000 for the specific purpose of assisting with control of or research of giant salvinia."

Pct. 1 Commissioner William Hatfield asked Sheriff Tom McCool, the county's court-appointed member of the board, if he could make sure the \$19,500 contribution from the county benefited spraying efforts on the Harrison County side of Caddo Lake as opposed to Marion County's side.

"I'm torn between the spraying and the weevil research. I know the weevil program is very important, but I also have concerns about a lot of folks that are getting land-locked, that can't get their boats into the water," said Hatfield. "I'd like to ask you to see if we couldn't do the best we could with this \$19,500 to help the citizens out on the Harrison County side of Caddo Lake, if you would kind of spearhead that for us."

McCool said although there's spraying efforts on the Marion County side of the lake as well, he thinks a vast majority of CVND's funds are spent in and along the edges of Harrison County. He said due to the fact that CVND's funding has been substantially cut by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services as well as the Texas Parks Wildlife Department, the spray efforts are a temporary fix.

"We're just kind of a band-aid on the problem right now," said McCool. "All we can do is just as much spraying as we have the funds to do and that spraying is just a temporary fix."

And although CVND board members aren't totally convinced that the weevils will be a viable long-term cure for the problem, either, due to the geographical location of the lake, they do think it's certainly worth the research and effort, McCool said.

The sheriff congratulated the Greater Caddo Lake Association and their efforts to raise funds for giant salvinia control and research. More than \$10,000 was raised by the GCLA for the weevil research program, the McCool said.

"They had a tremendous turnout and success," said McCool.

The sheriff said he appreciates the court's consideration of adding additional funding to benefit the navigation district's efforts to fight the invasion.

"We will do the maximum amount of spraying that we have the funds to accomplish," said McCool. "At about \$80 some odd dollars per acre, we can't do all that much, but we are concentrating on boat roads and shoreline areas where people can make access to (the lake)."

Judge Taylor said the additional \$2,000 will be paid out of the county's sundry line item.

"Sundry currently has a remaining balance of \$26,000, so there's adequate funds to do that and then operate through the end of fiscal year for other items that may come out that we normally see come out of that account," said Taylor. "There's adequate funding to remove some over into the line item for CVND. That will increase the overall funding for this current fiscal year to \$19,500, and then next year I'll probably be asking the court to review that again in order to see where we can help out."

Taylor said he hopes other entities will be moved to help with control efforts as well.

"With the public sector engaging these problems at the county level, I think it encourages other jurisdictions to get involved also," he said. "We see private participation; we see some federal participation, state participation, and local participation from the private sector, and also from the public sector. So, hopefully, the communication line stays open and the interest stays up, such that we may attract big research investments from entities such as Texas A&M University and the federal government when it comes to controlling giant salvinia."