

LAKE GASTON SURVEY – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

August 25,2018

1. What are the dates of the survey? Surveys should begin after **September 1 and end by October 15.**
2. Who will be the points of contact (POC) and the Survey Team during the survey?

A: **Key contacts are:**

- **Judy Waters** 804.387.1124 Judy Waters, k1dskab@hotmail.com, will be the POC for picking up tablets, rakes, Seechi disks, batteries and arranging for teams to get and share equipment. All equipment is picked up and returned to Judy at **142 W Harbor Dr., Littleton, NC** on the south end of the lake across from Pea Hill Creek. She can also arrange from groups of volunteers to pick up equipment that can be passed between volunteers in some of the larger creeks and areas.
 - **Jessica Baumann**, 252-419-6411, aquaticplants@ncsu.edu is the NCSU Lake Manager for questions on plants, survey procedures, data analysis, and arranging to submit pictures and other materials.
 - **David Murphy**, 703-901-5900, dmurphy3@centurylink.net, will provide technical support for your tablet and software and will upload the survey data daily when tables are returned to LGA.
 - **Wally Sayko (434) 636-5393**; wasay1943@gmail.com, is the Chairman of LGA Environment Committee. In addition to his role in the LGA, he is helping organize some of the major creeks such as Poplar and Pea Hill and will assist in questions about survey areas for those portions of the lake.
3. Where can I learn more about the tablets and survey methods? A: The tablets are **Android Operating Systems (OS)** and share common screens, icons, pages, and use similar to 90% of smart phones on the market. Information on the tablets and mapping application used by LGA and NCSE can be found on the **LGA training slides** that are on the LGA Web Site at: <http://www.lakegastonassoc.com/pdfFiles/weedtraining2018.pdf>
These slides show screen shots of the features on the tablets you will use, or there are many examples of “how to use Android table” videos on U-Tube such as: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDDIUJufBDw>
 4. Where can I find pictures of the plants I will sample. A: **The LGA site has the training slides** which include an attachment you can print out with all of the common plants. Also, the **NCSU Aquatics Plants** book is on each tablet and you can select that icon to see pictures of each type of plant. You can have both the **Survey Form** and the **NCSU Aquatics Plants** open at the same time on the tablet, and move between each by using the lower right button which will open a page that will show both applications and by selecting either one you can move form one to the other.
 5. What should I do if I want to take **pictures** during the survey? A: Use your cell phone to take pictures and then contact Jessica Baumann and she will provide you with instructions to send

LAKE GASTON SURVEY – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

August 25, 2018

pictures you have taken. LGA and NCSU have limited data on the survey licenses and so we are going to separate the pictures to be sure we don't exceed that limit.

6. Are there any safety issues? A: **Safe boating practices** should be used at all times on the lake including using life jackets particularly for those using kayaks. The portable batteries also have a light on the batteries to both illuminate the tablet screen and also as a safety signal if needed. Lyngbya should be handled with care as some people may get skin reactions to the algae and gloves are recommended for sampling and handling the lines and rakes.
7. If this is my first time, can I get **someone to go with me**? A: Yes. We have volunteers who will drive a pontoon boat or work with you who have done surveys last year and before. Let Judy Waters know if you need that help.
8. How can my children or grandchildren get community hours credits for working with LGA? A: LGA will provide certificates to students who need to show **community service** for college or other use.
9. If I don't see "**2018 Survey**" or the survey form after clicking on the MDC GIS Icon, what should I do? A: If the tablet asks for a USER ID and password. You should for the USER ID and password put in LakegastonsurveyX, where X is the number on the tablet such as LGA5, thus the ID would be Lakegastonsurvey5. Passwords are all **gaston1234**. If that doesn't work, request a new tablet from Judy Waters
10. How long does the battery last? A: About **4 hours**. So, it is important to charge the batteries before going onto the lake. A backup battery and solar charging battery is also available.
11. How do I check how much battery is left? A: In the **upper right of the tablet screen** there is a small battery icon that will show the percentage of battery remaining. Be sure it is charged at 90% or more. You can also use your finger and slide the icon down to see the battery charge percentage.
12. What can I do to extend battery life? Be sure **no other applications or Wi-Fi are running**. On the tablet the right lower icon when clicked shows the **OPEN Applications (APPS)** and you should have the MDC GIS and maybe the NCSE Weed book open. Close any other application not needed by sliding the APP icon LEFT to close them. **You can have both the NSCU Aquatic Plans and 2018 Survey Form open at the same time and see both by using the lower right button.**
13. Are Portable Batteries available? A. A **portable battery will be available** that you can connect to the tablet that will continually charge it and also we have ACCESSORY plugs if you have a boat/pontoon with a cigarette lighter type plugin that will also keep the tablet charged. The portable battery should also be plugged into either a wall plug or an Accessory plug and then the portable battery has a cord that can be plugged into the tablet, providing power in more than one way to keep the tablet operational.

LAKE GASTON SURVEY – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

August 25,2018

14. Can I do the **sample alone** in a kayak or canoe? A: Yes. We have a tablet holder that allows you to put it around your neck to hold it and also have solar charging units for the tablet that can also be attached to the tablet holder. You can paddle, drop the rake, check the depth and the do the survey with one person. Three people are ideal for surveying, a driver, a person to sample, and another person for data entry, but we can use every volunteer and some critical survey areas can be accessed only by kayak or canoe. **Lake Gaston Outfitters** provides rental kayaks for those who want to do areas such as Pea Hill, Lizard, or Poplar.
15. **What fields are REQUIRED on the table survey form?** A: The **Position** (at the top of the form) and the **Water Depth** are required. If you get an error it will say either the depth or position is missing. All other fields are filled based on your findings. The position will change as the boat moves and is fixed when the SEND button on the bottom left is pushed. **Provide some time for the position to orient itself to the satellites for your first sample. It may take a minute to get enough satellites to read on the tablets to get to 5M on the position.**
16. **How do I check my work?** After each survey is done you click the **SEND button** and that will add your results in the **QUEUE** at the middle of the bottom of the survey form. That **QUEUE** will show how many samples have been taken and there are edit instructions on the LGA Web site and in the training handouts that show how you can check or edit your work. **When all is done, power the unit off and return it to Judy Waters.**
17. Do I need to add my Name, County, or email on every data point? A: No, **add your initials or name, whichever is most convenient and County (H, W, B, N, or M).** Judy Waters will be taking the names and other information when you pick up a tablet so we can figure it out. Also put your initials on the LAST data entry which ends your work
18. How do I determine water depth? A: The **rake has depth markers**, use that for the entry or use your depth finder if you have one on your boat. Secchi Disk can also show depth. You must provide the **POSITION** of your sample and the **WATER DEPTH** or you will get an error when you click on the send button. Those two data elements are the only data points needed all other items are based on your observations.
19. How often do I use the Secchi disk to check water clarity? A: Once every **20 samples**
20. Should I turn on the Wi-Fi? A: No. **Wi Fi searches and uses a lot of battery** so it will be OFF and turned on only to take the data in the **QUEUE** and post it to the database.
21. Can I see my map? A: No. You will see your map after we set the Wi-Fi on and we send you your map by email.
22. Should I wear gloves? A: These are **not needed**, but since you will be working with a rope and maybe taking Lyngbya off the rake, garden gloves are a good idea.

LAKE GASTON SURVEY – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

August 25, 2018

23. If I have to **stop and then later complete my work**, what should I do? A: Power off the unit and if you can, connect it to power or to the portable battery power. When you turn it back on, check that the form is shown, if not, click on the lower left icon to show the open APPS which should show the MDC GIS and click on that to get back to where you were.
24. What do I do when I am done? **Power off the tablet by clicking the upper right button and return it to Judy Waters.** If you do provide it to another volunteer in your creek or area, be sure you let Judy Waters know that you have done that so she can log who has the equipment and be sure to keep the unit charged. Finally return the tablet, battery power unit, rake, Secchi disk, and tablet accessories to Judy Waters for the next volunteer.

Tablet Use Instructions and these FAQs are also available, along with pictures of aquatic plants on the LGA Web Page at:

<http://www.lakegastonassoc.com/pdfFiles/weedtraining2018.pdf>