

CHAPTER 14 - AQUATIC PLANT CONTROL PROGRAM

14-1. Purpose. This chapter establishes the policy for research, planning and operations for the USACE Aquatic Plant Control Program.

14-2. Policy. It is the policy of the Corps of Engineers that:

a. An Aquatic Plant Control (APC) Program shall be maintained to control specific types of aquatic plant infestations of major economic significance, or weed infestations that have potential for reaching such economic significance, in navigable waters, tributaries, streams, connecting channels and all allied waters. The APC Program is authorized under Section 104 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1958 (PL 85-500), as amended, and Sections 103, 105, and 712 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (PL 99-662). Specific guidance on the development of cost-sharing agreements, planning studies, and funding requests can be found in Chapter 14 of EP 1130-2-500.

b. The APC Program, cost-shared with a non-Federal local sponsor (Sponsor), shall be undertaken with close coordination of local interests and states so as not to overlap or conflict with other Federal agencies, including the Tennessee Valley Authority, Bureau of Reclamation, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency, in accordance with EO 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

c. Weed control or operation and maintenance of reservoirs, channels, harbors, or other water areas of authorized projects under jurisdiction of the Corps of Engineers or other Federal agencies shall not be undertaken as a part of the APC Program, except as such areas may be used for experimental purposes. Guidance for routine herbicide use as a part of an on-going project operations and maintenance (O&M) pest control program is located in Chapter 3 of ER 1130-2-540. Subordinate commands shall fund aquatic plant control work required for O&M of Corps operating projects through the normal O&M budget process.

d. A Corps-wide Aquatic Plant Control Operations Support Center (APCOSC) shall be maintained within the Operations Division of Jacksonville District. Project support and/or assistance shall be obtained through direct contact with the APCOSC, the Waterways Experiment Station (WES), or through HQUSACE (CECW-ON). If on-site assistance is required, a formal letter shall be submitted. All APCOSC services requiring the commitment of significant manpower and/or travel shall be cost-reimbursable, with all costs, including travel allocations, supplied by the user district. Priorities shall be established by the Jacksonville District according to time of request and critical need.

14-3. Responsibilities.

a. HQUSACE (CECW-ON). HQUSACE (CECW-ON) shall be responsible for the overall administration of the Aquatic Plant Control Program. The Program Manager shall direct overall planning, establish program policy, authorize studies, grant work allowances and allocate funds for planning studies, research and management operations. The Program Manager shall provide direction and guidance to the Aquatic Plant Control Operations Support Center and serve as Technical Monitor of the Aquatic Plant Control Research Program. The Program Manager shall also:

(1) Compile, prepare, and defend the APC Program budget requests to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Congress.

(2) Coordinate APC Program legislative actions.

(3) Coordinate with other Federal agencies on APC Program matters not handled at subordinate commands.

(4) Coordinate and facilitate the training of field operations personnel.

(5) Rule on controversial matters that cannot be resolved at subordinate commands.

b. Aquatic Plant Control Operations Support Center (APCOSC). The APCOSC, situated within the Construction-Operations Division of the Jacksonville District, shall provide Corps-wide planning and operational advice, assistance, and support to operating elements without the in-house capability or experience to initiate and/or conduct an APC program. Funding for base support for the APCOSC shall be by line item in the Jacksonville District annual APC Program budget request. The Chief of the APCOSC, in order to perform the mission assigned by HQUSACE (CECW-ON) shall:

(1) Serve as the Corps center of expertise on APC Program operational matters.

(2) Provide operational guidance to Corps districts in the planning phases of APC programs (i.e., during the development of the Reconnaissance Report, Detailed Study Report (DSR), Environmental Assessment (EA), and/or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and consultation required by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act).

(3) Provide technical guidance to Corps districts in the operational phases of APC programs (i.e., during development of the technical portions of Local Cooperation Agreements (LCA) with sponsors, when preparing contracts with private contractors, or when developing hired labor guidance).

(4) Provide operational expertise, personnel, and equipment, as necessary, to quickly respond to localized, short-term critical situations created by excessive growths of aquatic plants. Situations are considered to be critical if severe navigational blockages are occurring, the potential for interference with flood control or water supply capability is evident, or when public health is threatened. This type of support will be undertaken only when the district in-house response capability is inadequate and when it is not possible to obtain contractual APC Program services.

(5) Provide assistance to HQUSACE (CECW-ON) in the administration of the Corps-wide APC Program and in the training and certification of Corps pesticide (herbicide) application personnel.

(6) Assist the Waterways Experiment Station, as requested, in the field application and evaluation of newly developed control techniques or procedures.

c. Research and Development. USACE APC Program research activities shall be managed by HQUSACE (CERD-C) with emphasis on identification and development of innovative and environmentally-compatible technologies for aquatic plant management.

Research shall be accomplished by Corps research personnel or through contracts or cooperative agreements with Federal, state and private research institutions. Research of regional or national significance shall be at 100 percent Federal cost. Research conducted to provide local or site-specific information or data shall be cost-shared 50/50 with the local sponsor, and shall be coordinated through the Research Program Manager, WES, to ensure no duplication of efforts. The APC Program, Research Program Manager at WES shall:

(1) Serve as the Corps center of technical expertise on aquatic plant control research matters. Provides assistance to HQUSACE (CECW-ON) concerning the planning and development of the APC Program - research program.

(2) Conduct and coordinate a nationwide research and development program responsive to aquatic plant control operational needs.

(3) Provide technical assistance and information in the use of experimental aquatic plant management technologies. Experimental technologies are those not yet proven on an operational scale, as well as those that have not yet been authorized or approved for use where regulatory approval is required.

(4) Plan and conduct large-scale field tests to evaluate aquatic plant control technology developed through the research program, requesting assistance from the districts and the APCOSC as needed. Coordinate with the APCOSC to ensure inclusion of operational expertise.

(5) Develop, through consultation with other researchers, MSC and district representatives, the APCOSC, and the Program Monitor, proposals for research of national or regional significance. Conduct research and development (R&D) in response to operational needs as identified during the Civil Works R&D Program Review for the APC Program or by letter to the district R&D Coordinator, the Program Monitor, a Field Review Group member, the Research Program Manager, or the Civil Works Research and Development Committee.

(6) Upon request, provide assistance in the use of current methodologies for the identification and assessment of aquatic plant problems and in the development of long-range aquatic plant control management plans.

(7) Upon request, provide base data and information pertinent to the development of Reconnaissance Reports, DSRs, EAs and EISs.

(8) Review and evaluate all proposals for cost-shared research to provide site-specific information. Submit all research proposals, along with estimated costs and an explanation of expected benefits of the proposed research, to HQUSACE (CECW-ON) for approval and funding.

14-5. **Funding.** The APC Program is a continuing activity funded under Construction, General, and subject to an annual expenditure ceiling of \$12,000,000. Recommendations and supporting data will be submitted in accordance with ER 11-2-240 (RCS DAEN-CWB-13). The amounts requested should be the minimum necessary to meet essential program needs. Funds should be within the district's capability to utilize within the budget year, taking into account the foreseeable availability of local cost-sharing funds for planning purposes or management operations. Specific guidance on funding requests for APC program activities is contained in Chapter 14 of EP 1130-2-500.