

CHAPTER 11 - SEAPLANE OPERATIONS ON CIVIL WORKS WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

11-1. Purpose. This chapter establishes guidance for seaplane operations at civil works water resource projects in order to protect project resources, the integrity of all authorized uses of Corps projects, and the safety of all users of the lake projects.

11-2. Guidance.

a. The operation of seaplanes is allowable in accordance with ER 1130-2-550. In determining sites for potential seaplane operations, the District Commander shall:

(1) Examine and investigate each Corps project within his/her district which a seaplane operator could conceivably attempt to use for seaplane operations, and determine those projects, or portions thereof, in which seaplane operations should be prohibited. Seaplane operations at water resource development projects administered by the Commander, HQUSACE may involve hazards including, but not limited to, conflicting recreational activities, floating debris, and underwater hazards, which may be accentuated by the normal fluctuations of water levels.

(2) Establish such restrictions on seaplane operations as he deems necessary or desirable in accordance with this chapter and ER 1130-2-550. Seaplane takeoff and landing maneuvers within specified distances of the shoreline, bridges, causeways, water utility crossings, dams, and similar structures should be prohibited.

(3) Prior to concluding any such examination and investigation, consult with the FAA, appropriate state aeronautical agency, lessee or licensee of outgranted lands, the Coast Guard, state boating law administrators, aeronautical associations, and use his best efforts to consult with other interested or affected public authorities and private interests for their guidance, particularly for those projects which are regularly used by the public for recreational purposes or are located in the vicinity of actively used airports, air fields, or densely populated areas. News releases, public notices, and congressional liaison should be used. Public hearings are encouraged.

(4) In making his investigation, examination, and determination, consider environmental factors in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Public Law 91-190. The impact that seaplane operations may have on the safety at the project, aquatic, fish and wildlife, noise levels, recreation, and air and water quality must be considered. Prior to concluding any such investigation and examination, he shall prepare an environmental impact assessment (EIA) and, if necessary, an environmental impact statement (EIS) assessing the environmental impacts of permitting seaplanes to operate at the projects, or portions thereof, in his district.

(5) Notify the FAA by letter of projects, or portions thereof, where seaplane operations are prohibited or restricted. The letter should use the words seaplane operations prohibited, or seaplane operations restricted to describe the geographical location of such areas as precisely as possible, describe any restrictions, include a telephone number for FAA to contact the District, and be sent to: Federal Aviation Administration, Area Traffic Service, Flight Services Division (AAT-432), 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20591.

(6) After completion of an examination, investigation, determination and notification of the FAA of projects, or portions thereof where seaplane operations will be prohibited or restricted, the District Commander should periodically reevaluate the determination as additional operational data becomes available. The District Commander may modify, delete, or add projects, or portions thereof, where seaplane operations are prohibited or restricted. Except where immediate action is required, he should consult with appropriate public authorities and private interests for their guidance with regard to such actions. Notification of these actions shall be forwarded to the FAA as indicated in the above paragraph.

b. Seaplanes may not be operated at Corps projects between sunset and sunrise unless adequate lighting and supervision are available.

c. Appropriate signs in accordance with Chapter 6 of ER 1130-2-500, should be employed to inform users of projects, or portions thereof, where seaplane operations are permitted. Local seaplane operation information should be included in applicable Corps maps and brochures to adequately apprise the public and interested agencies of projects, or portions thereof, where seaplane operations are prohibited or restricted. Each map, brochure, or other notice should clearly indicate that operation of a seaplane at Corps projects is at the risk of the plane's owner, operator and/or passenger(s).

d. Seaplanes on project waters and lands in excess of 24 hours shall be securely moored at mooring facilities and at locations permitted by the District Commander. Seaplanes may be temporarily moored on project waters and lands, except in areas prohibited by the District Commander, for periods less than 24 hours providing that (1) the mooring is safe, secure, and accomplished so as not to damage the rights of the government or members of the public and (2) the operator remains in the vicinity of the seaplane and reasonably available to relocate the seaplane if necessary.

e. No commercial operation of seaplanes from project waters will be allowed without written approval of the District Commander following consultation with and the necessary clearance from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and other appropriate public authorities and affected interests. Requests for public commercial facilities in support of seaplanes will be handled under normal concession policies.

f. Permits for floating and non-floating structures of any kind, in, on, or affecting project waters, under the management of the Operational Project Manager, including waters under lease, license or other outgrant agreement, shall be handled in accordance with the lakeshore management plan or policy statement for the project involved, Part 327.19 of Title 36 (CFR) and, where required by statute or regulation, Section 10 of the River and Harbor Act (approved 3 March 1899) and Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (PL 92-500).

g. Nothing in the preceding provisions bestows authority to deviate from rules and regulations or prescribed standards of the State Aeronautical Agency, Federal Aviation Administration, Coast Guard, or other appropriate federal, state, or local authority.