

CHAPTER 2 - RECREATION MANAGEMENT

2-1. Purpose. This chapter establishes guidance for the administration and management of USACE recreation programs and facilities at civil works water resource projects.

2-2. Background.

a. Programs and activities related to outdoor recreation have as their design base:

(1) the following mission statement:

" The Army Corps of Engineers is the steward of the lands and waters at Corps water resources projects. Its Natural Resources Management Mission is to manage and conserve those natural resources, consistent with ecosystem management principles, while providing quality public outdoor recreation experiences to serve the needs of present and future generations.

In all aspects of natural and cultural resources management, the Corps promotes awareness of environmental values and adheres to sound environmental stewardship, protection, compliance and restoration practices.

The Corps manages for long-term public access to, and use of, the natural resources in cooperation with other Federal, State, and local agencies as well as the private sector.

The Corps integrates the management of diverse natural resource components such as fish, wildlife, forests, wetlands, grasslands, soil, air, and water with the provision of public recreation opportunities. The Corps conserves natural resources and provides public recreation opportunities that contribute to the quality of American life."

(2) and, the following program objectives:

(a) To provide a quality outdoor recreation experience which includes an accessible, safe and healthful environment for a diverse population,

(b) To increase the level of self sufficiency for the Corps recreation program,

(c) To provide outdoor recreation opportunities on Corps of Engineers administered land and water on a sustained basis, and

(d) To optimize the use of leveraged resources to maintain and provide quality public experiences at Corps water resources projects.

EP 1130-2-550
15 Nov 96

b. To accomplish the program objectives, the Corps manages land and water resources in cooperation with other Federal, state and local agencies, quasi-public organizations and the private sector supplemented by volunteers, contributions and challenge cost sharing programs.

2-3. Guidance - Operations and Maintenance.

a. Master plans and operational management plans will be developed in accordance with the guidance contained in Chapter 3 of ER 1130-2-550, Project Master Plans and Operational Management Plans.

b. Outdoor Recreation.

(1) General. Whenever possible, the Operations Project Manager will employ the following management measures to increase the public's opportunity for a high quality recreation experience:

(a) Based upon social and resource carrying capacity, establish and enforce maximum use limitations to prevent overcrowding or site deterioration.

(b) Reduce or eliminate use conflicts. Public day use activities should be separated from camping areas and Corps managed areas should be separated from outgranted areas.

(c) Establish a project wide cost effective program to rehabilitate recreational facilities whenever feasible to increase visitor satisfaction while reducing O&M costs. Consolidate areas and/or close and discontinue facilities that are under utilized.

(d) Implement other approved management measures to provide for recreational use of the project by all visitors, including persons with disabilities.

(e) Issue Special Events and Use Permits in accordance with Chapter 9 of ER 1130-2-550, Recreation Use Fees.

(f) Consider leasing areas for commercial concession or park and recreation purposes.

(g) Managers should establish a project wide cost effective program to rehabilitate recreational facilities whenever feasible to increase visitor safety and satisfaction while reducing O&M costs. O&M budget Feature Cost Codes 606.1 and 606.3 allow for justified levels of public health and safety at the least cost and Codes 629.1 and 629.9 allow for the insurance of public safety.

(2) Public Campgrounds. Normally the Corps or another public agency will provide and administer facilities for use by the camping public. Campgrounds may also be provided by commercial concessions.

(3) Camping is permitted only in those area designated in the Master Plan and such activity will be in accordance with 36 CFR 327 and Chapter 9 of ER 1130-2-550.

(4) Swimming Beaches. New swimming beaches should be developed and maintained under the guidelines of PL 89-72 and the criteria established in Appendix A of EM 1110-2-400. Existing beaches and concentrated swimming areas operated by the Corps will be maintained in a

physically safe and efficient manner in accordance with the stated EM. This will include maintaining appropriate gradient, beach nourishment, adequate buoys and proper signing.

(5) The following criteria should be used in the analysis of recreation areas highlighted to be considered for closure consolidation, or transfer to others to operate. Each review should include an analysis of the socioeconomic impact of the area upon the surrounding community. (This criteria was presented before the United States Congress in 1982 by the Commander, HQUSACE.)

(a) A cost-per-visit analysis.

(b) Area location and accessibility by a majority of the using public.

(c) The area's percentage contribution to total project visitation.

(d) Whether or not the closure of one area would benefit the more efficient use of adjoining areas.

(e) Visitor, ranger and contractor safety.

c. Service Contracts.

(1) OMB Circular A-76. In accordance with OMB Circular A-76, when it has been determined that a function or service can be contracted, the full cost of contracting will be compared with the in-house cost. When contracting costs are lower than in-house costs by a specified margin, the Government will contract for the product or service.

(2) Operations Project Manager's Role. Operations project managers can serve, if designated by the District Commander, as the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) when service contracts are found necessary. Other staff members may serve as the COR with proper recommendations and training.

d. Boundary Surveys and Marking. (See Chapter 2, paragraph 2-3.b of EP 1130-2-540)

e. Control or Access. Roads which are not maintained, outgranted or used by the Corps, or are not dedicated as public roads by the governmental entity, should be closed, obliterated and revegetated to blend with the natural environment.

f. Archeological, Historical and Cultural Resources. The protection of these resources is required by PL 86-523, and PL 89-665. Guidance is contained in Chapter 6 of ER 1130-2-540 for protecting these resources at completed projects not covered under ER 1105-2-100.

g. Outgranting of Lands. (See Chapter 2, para 2-3.c. of EP 1130-2-540.

2-4. Guidance - General.

a. Public Awareness. The following may be used as appropriate to increase public awareness and involvement:

(1) Submit for comment major plans or programs affecting public use of project lands and waters to the appropriate individual or officer of organizations such as Federal and state wildlife agencies, local conservation groups, sportsmen clubs, and lake associations.

(2) Inform the public of the Corps' natural resources management program through project initiated news releases, regularly published columns or articles, interpretive programs and visitor center activities. Guidance on interpretive services is contained in Chapter 4 of ER 1130-2-550. Visitor center guidance is in Chapter 5 of ER 1130-2-550.

(3) Involve local schools in Corps programs through the provision of speakers and use of project lands and facilities for class assignments.

(4) Project personnel involvement in community activities. Make maximum use of all means to keep the public informed of Corps services and activities.

(5) Establish and maintain working relationships with local private recreation industries, lake associations, conservation organizations, and professional societies and exchange views, speakers, exhibits and publications.

(6) Maintain communication through various means including public meetings or agency coordination meetings at all organizational levels. Keep congressional leaders and state and local government representatives apprised of impending policy changes or actions which may be controversial.

b. Health and Safety.

(1) General. EM 385-1-1, "Safety and Health Requirements Manual" and Engineer Regulations in the 385 series establish the safety program requirements for all Corps of Engineers activities and operations. It does not apply to concessionaires. Resource personnel should become familiar with these instructions to facilitate implementation and enforcement of those provisions applicable to all Corps personnel, contract personnel and the visiting public. Other measures that may be employed to maintain health and safety include, but are not limited to the following:

(a) The project safety officer should develop plans and programs to carry out the provisions of EM 385-1-1 and the Engineer Regulations in the 385 series.

(b) Safety education lectures should be given to government personnel by qualified instructors as required by EM 385-1-1.

(c) Resource management training courses and requirements should comply with Section 1 and 2 of EM 385-1-1.

(d) The project safety plan portion of the OMP should be used in program planning and operation.

(e) Project personnel may participate in and take advantage of programs offered by organizations such as the National Water Safety Congress, National Safe Boating Council, U.S. Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Power Squadrons, the American Red Cross, the National

Association of State Boating Law Administrator, and state conservation agencies. Guidance and assistance may be obtained from the district safety office.

(f) Safety equipment and materials such as first aid kits, search, rescue and recovery equipment, portable signs and barricades, communications equipment, vehicles, motor launches, and fire fighting equipment should be maintained at each project.

(g) Restricted areas, swimming areas, danger zones, and hazardous areas shall be properly marked with the appropriate buoys, markers, signs, or barricades which conform to the current Uniform State Waterway Marking System EP 310-1-6a&b, and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (U.S. Dept of Transportation, Federal Highway Commission D6.1, 1978). Such devices will be placed and maintained to insure the public is adequately safeguarded against hazards. ENG LAB 2, For Your Safety (Buoys and Markers), may be used to assist in informing and educating the public about these devices. Tailwater areas and areas immediately above spillways and dams will be properly marked with signs, buoys, booms, or other markers. Signs, buoys, and markers will be installed in connection with powerhouses, fish ladders, locks, and outlet control structures. Project roads and boat launching ramps will be adequately signed, marked, or barricaded for proper use and protection of the visiting public.

(h) All facilities and equipment will comply with applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.

(3) Search, Rescue and Recovery. Body recovery missions should also be accomplished in coordination with the sheriff's department, state police or other local law enforcement agencies. Safety of personnel must be taken into consideration at all times. Proper equipment must be available at all times and personnel must be trained for this function if these activities are undertaken.

c. Personnel Requirements.

(1) Operations Project Managers. Except for specifically designated facilities such as some locks and powerhouses, the Operations Project Manager will be responsible for all aspects of operations, maintenance, and administration of a water resource development project and its natural and cultural resources. An operations project manager will be assigned to a new project shortly after the initiation of land acquisition. In addition to coordinating with the real estate element, the Operations Project Manager will be actively involved in coordination aspects of planning, design, construction, and other project activities.

(2) Professional Registration and Certification. Natural resources management personnel should be strongly encouraged to become registered in their professional field and actively participate in their state or professional society.

d. Training.

(1) In-house, in-service training, including HQUSACE sponsored courses, shall be conducted on subjects directly related to the Natural Resources Management Program.

(2) Operations Project Manager/Ranger Training Program. Each district should establish and maintain a formal Operations Project Manager/Ranger training program. As a minimum, the

training program should span 18 months and include assignments to the district office and one lake project.

(3) Conference and Seminars. Judicious management of attendance and participation in various professional conferences, seminars and training schools is necessary to obtain maximum benefits from minimum expenditures. The importance of staying abreast of current information and discussing issues of mutual interest with various local, state, and Federal government, and private sector representatives demands expenditure of some resources.

e. Inter-Agency Coordination. This coordination involves utilizing the expertise of other elements and other governmental agencies having collateral interests in parks, recreation, natural resources, law enforcement, and other matters which are of concern in proper management of the project. Coordination also involves ensuring that the operations view point is considered by other elements and these other agencies, when their actions will affect the operation and management of the projects. Cooperative agreements between the Corps and the Forest Service in accordance with the principles and procedures set forth in the 1964 Memorandum of Agreement between the Secretaries of the Army and Agriculture, will be entered into prior to impoundment to assure an effective management program for the project. Agreements with agencies of the Department of the Interior will be in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between the Secretaries of the Army and the Interior, dated 2 February 1973.

f. Signs.

(1) General. Project signs will conform to guidance given in EP 310-1-6a&b, Sign Standards Manual.

(2) Traffic Control. All traffic control signs will conform to the manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (D6.1 - 1978).

(3) Symbol Signs. The use of symbol signs should be maximized.

(4) Purchase of Signs. Section 4124 of Title 18 USC requires Federal agencies to purchase, at no more than fair market prices, prison made products when such products are available and meet the requirements of the agency. Therefore, unless the district has its own sign shop, the policy relative to the purchase of project signs is that such signs will be purchased from the Federal Prison Industries (FPI) unless the District Commander is notified by the FPI that it cannot provide the needed signs in a timely manner.

(5) Memorial Plaques. Memorial plaques may be provided at major projects where considered appropriate by the District Commander. A major project is defined for this purpose as one which costs \$10,000,000 or more.

(6) Design. A plaque may be placed in a conspicuous location on a major project structure or other appropriate location where it will be readily visible to the visiting public. Plaques will conform to design guidelines given in EP 310-1-6 and will show in the order listed, the following:

(a) Project name

(b) Engineer castle

- (c) U.S. Army
- (d) Corps of Engineers
- (e) District office
- (f) The following names:
 - Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
 - Chief of Engineers
 - MSC Commander at the time of dedication
 - District Commander who contributed most toward construction
 - Project engineer in charge during the major portion of construction
- (g) Years during which the project was constructed.
- (8) Any deviation from the above listing will require approval of HQUSACE (CEIM-IV).