

Integrated Aquatic Plant Management – Draft Rule

Key Change 4

Incorporate monitoring for large scale control activities.

What is large-scale control?

Mechanical or chemical management is “large scale” when it affects a significant part of the lake, stream reach or wetland. Mechanical, and chemical control have different impacts in the water, so there are different threshold for each type. Chemicals can quickly move through water and often have affects beyond where they are applied. Affects from mechanical or manual removal are site specific. The DNR proposes three different thresholds in the draft rule.

Current Rule – No large-scale threshold exists for mechanical, physical, or biological control. Chemical control is defined as “large scale” if the area where chemicals are applied is larger than 10 acres or more than 10% of the water area less than 10 feet in depth in the waterbody.

Proposed rule –

Mechanical, manual, or physical control in lakes, rivers and streams will be considered large scale if the operation is more than 50% of the littoral area.¹

Chemical control in lakes, rivers and streams will be large scale if the herbicide concentration rate calculation shows the application will affect most or all the body of water. This can occur even when the herbicide is applied to a small part of the waterbody because herbicides move through water easily.

Control in wetlands will be large scale if the control is on more than 5 acres of contiguous wetland.

What kind of monitoring is required for large scale control?

For lakes, rivers and streams, a point intercept survey will be conducted before and after control. A boat uses a GPS to follow points found on a geo-referenced sampling grid laid out on a map of the lake. At each point, the sampler uses a rake on a rope to gather information about the plants at that point. This information includes the types of plants, and how abundant the plants are. A point intercept survey is a consistent and repeatable monitoring technique, so we can compare information over time and between lakes across the state.

For wetlands, the plant populations will be delineated before and after control. The DNR is still working with wetland field staff both in and outside the DNR to complete a protocol for this requirement.

¹ The littoral area is the light-rich shallow-water zone of a lake extending from the ordinary high-water mark to the greatest depth capable of supporting submersed aquatic plants. This is typically between 0 and 10 to 20 feet depending upon water clarity.

Why is monitoring required for large scale control?

Standardized, and repeated monitoring over time is a key part of Integrated Pest Management. Large scale control affects large parts of the aquatic habitat. Monitoring data can show if there were harmful impacts to the aquatic habitat. Large scale projects can also be more time consuming and costly to plan and implement. So, it is important to make sure that the control worked. Resource managers can use their survey data over time to see if their plan of action is achieving their goals or causing unnecessary harm to the aquatic habitat.

Do I have to monitor my waterbody if I'm doing small scale control?

If your approved aquatic plant management plan incorporates monitoring for small scale control activities, then yes. However, if your plan does not incorporate additional monitoring requirements, then you will not need to conduct additional monitoring.

Will I have to conduct monitoring if my waterbody is less than 10 acres in size?

No