

This Operational Statement only applies to small-scale removal of aquatic vegetation for recreation and navigation purposes in freshwater systems. Freshwater aquatic vegetation plays an important role as habitat for fish and other aquatic species. However, in some freshwater lakes and rivers, aquatic vegetation can be dense enough to interfere with recreation and navigation. This occurs in water bodies with high nutrient levels that create favourable conditions for aquatic vegetation growth. In many water bodies, even small amounts of vegetation removal can be harmful to fish and other aquatic life. However, in some water bodies, limited removal of aquatic vegetation using proper techniques can be done while protecting fish and fish habitat.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is responsible for protecting fish and fish habitat across Canada. Under Section 35 of the *Fisheries Act* no one may carry out a work or undertaking that will cause the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction (HADD) of fish habitat unless it has been authorized by DFO. By following the conditions and measures set out below you will be in compliance with Subsection 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act*.

The purpose of this Operational Statement is to describe measures to remove small quantities of aquatic vegetation (i.e., no greater than a 4 metre wide band) in order to avoid negative impacts to fish habitat. You may proceed with this aquatic vegetation removal project without a DFO review when you meet the following conditions:

- ▶ the removal activities does not involve dredging the bottom of the lake or river, and
- ▶ you incorporate the *Measures to Protect Fish and Fish Habitat during small-scale Aquatic Vegetation Removal* listed below.

If you cannot meet all of the conditions listed above and cannot incorporate all of the measures listed below then your project may result in a violation of Subsection 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act* and you could be subject to enforcement action. In this case, you should contact a DFO office in your area if you wish to obtain DFO's opinion on the possible options you should consider to avoid contravention of the *Fisheries Act*.

You are required to respect all municipal, provincial, territorial or federal legislation that applies to the work being carried out in relation to this Operational Statement. If you have questions regarding this Operational Statement, please contact DFO by telephone at (418) 775-0726 or by email at Habitat-qc@dfompo.gc.ca.

We ask that you notify DFO, preferably 10 working days before starting your work by filling out and sending the attached notification form to: Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 850 route de la Mer, C.P. 1000, Mont-Joli, Québec, G5H 3Z4; Fax: (418) 775-0658. This information is requested in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the work carried out in relation to this Operational Statement.

This Operational Statement applies to the province of Québec.

Measures to Protect Fish and Fish Habitat during small-scale Aquatic Vegetation Removal

1. Time aquatic vegetation removal to prevent disruption to spawning fish and incubating eggs by adhering to the following timing windows: between June 27 and September 1, unless it is clearly established that the work schedule will not interfere with the fish species life cycles.
2. The removal of aquatic vegetation for navigation and recreation purposes will not exceed a 4 metre wide band. This 4 metre wide band extends out perpendicular from the shoreline into the water body until you reach the navigable channel and includes any existing plant-free areas.
 - 2.1. Removal techniques should avoid disturbing the bottom substrates of the lake or river. This means you should try not to create large clouds of suspended silt and muck when removing the aquatic vegetation.
 - 2.2. Leave all rocks and woody material in the area that is being cleared of aquatic vegetation, unless they are obstructing navigation.
3. Hand removal of aquatic vegetation is the most preferred method. If hand removal is not possible, use only floating machinery to prevent disturbance to the bottom substrates of the lake or river.
 - 3.1. Machinery is to arrive on site in a clean, washed condition and is to be maintained free of fluid leaks.
 - 3.2. Wash, refuel and service machinery and store fuel and other materials for the machinery away from the water to prevent any deleterious substance from entering the water.
 - 3.3. Keep emergency spill kit on site in case of fluid leaks or spills from machinery.
4. Stabilize the aquatic vegetation that is removed to prevent it from re-entering the water body. This could include covering stockpiles with biodegradable mats or tarps or planting stockpiles with grass or shrubs.

Aussi disponible en français.



NOTIFICATION FORM

VERSION 2.0
Valid until March 31, 2007

PROPONENT INFORMATION			
NAME:			
STREET ADDRESS:			
CITY/TOWN:	PROVINCE/TERRITORY:	POSTAL CODE:	
TEL. NO. (RESIDENCE):	TEL. NO. (WORK):		
FAX NO:	EMAIL ADDRESS:		
CONTRACTOR INFORMATION (provide this information if a Contractor is working on behalf of the Proponent)			
NAME:			
STREET ADDRESS:			
CITY/TOWN:	PROVINCE/TERRITORY:	POSTAL CODE:	
TEL. NO. (RESIDENCE):	TEL. NO. (WORK):		
FAX NO:	EMAIL ADDRESS:		
PROJECT INFORMATION			
Select Operational Statements that are being used (check all applicable boxes):			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic Vegetation Removal	<input type="checkbox"/> Culvert Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance of Riparian Vegetation in Existing Rights-of-Way	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beach Creation	<input type="checkbox"/> Directional Drilling	<input type="checkbox"/> Moorings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beach Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Dock Construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Overhead Lines	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beaver Dam Removal	<input type="checkbox"/> Ice Bridges	<input type="checkbox"/> Punch and Bore Crossings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bridge Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Isolated Ponds	<input type="checkbox"/> Routine Maintenance Dredging	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear-Span Bridges	<input type="checkbox"/> Log Salvage	<input type="checkbox"/> Underwater Cables	
Select the type of water body or watercourse at or near your project:			
<input type="checkbox"/> River, Stream, Creek	<input type="checkbox"/> Marine (Ocean or Sea)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Lake (8 hectares or greater)	<input type="checkbox"/> Estuary		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pond or wetland (pond is less than 8 hectares)			
PROJECT LOCATION (S) (fill out this section if the project location is different from Proponent Information; append multiple project locations on an additional sheet if necessary)			
Name of water body or watercourse		Coordinates of the Project (UTM co-ordinate or Degrees, Minutes, Seconds), if available	
		Easting:	Northing:
		Latitude:	Longitude:
Legal Description (Plan, Block, Lot, Concession, Township, Section, Range)		Directions to Access the Project Site (i.e., Route or highway number, etc.)	
Proposed Start Date (YYYY/MM/DD):		Proposed Completion Date (YYYY/MM/DD):	

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I, _____ (print name)
certify that the information given on this form is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and complete.

Signature

Date

Note: If you cannot meet all of the conditions and cannot incorporate all of the measures in the Operational Statement then your project may result in a violation of Subsection 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act* and you could be subject to enforcement action. In this case, you should contact the DFO office in your area if you wish to obtain DFO's opinion on the possible options you should consider to avoid contravention of the *Fisheries Act*.

Information about the above-noted proposed work or undertaking is collected by DFO under the authority of the *Fisheries Act* for the purpose of administering the fish habitat protection provisions of the *Fisheries Act*. Personal information will be protected under the provisions of the *Privacy Act* and will be stored in the Personal Information Bank DFO-SCI-605. Under the *Privacy Act*, individuals have a right to, and on request shall be given access to, any personal information about them contained in a personal information bank. Instructions for obtaining personal information are contained in the Government of Canada's Info Source publications available at www.infosource.gc.ca or in Government of Canada offices. Information other than "personal" information may be accessible or protected as required by the provisions of the *Access to Information Act*.

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