

January 22, 2004

Dear Applicant:

As you know, there have been some recent changes in state law (IC 14-22-9-10) and administrative rules (312 IAC 9-10-3) that pertain to aquatic plant management within Indiana's public lakes. The most significant changes involve the establishment of permit requirements for mechanical, physical or biological control of aquatic plants and the reduction in the size of area allowed for private permit exemptions from ½-acre to 625 square feet. In the past, only chemical herbicide treatments required a permit from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Some of the new changes also affect how permits will be processed. To facilitate implementation of these changes, some new procedures and policies are being developed.

First, a permit will now be required for each lake within a chain of lakes. For example, treatments at Big Chapman Lake and Little Chapman Lake will require two separate permits and will no longer be approved under a single permit listed as Chapman Lake. If there is any doubt about how many permits might be required for individual lakes within a chain of lakes, contact the district fisheries biologist in your area for guidance.

Second, for some lakes where multiple treatments occur we would prefer to issue a single permit to one licensed applicator to avoid any unnecessary duplication of permits and/or duplication of treatment areas. We encourage you to contact previous customers as soon as possible and work with those customers to develop an appropriate aquatic plant management plan prior to the treatment season.

Also beginning in 2005, you will be asked to provide on the permit application form as complete a list of plant species as possible within the treatment areas as well as the relative abundance of the dominant plants expressed as a percentage of the plant community. General terms such as "pondweeds" and visual observations of the plant community will need some additional clarifications. To aid you in this process, we are currently evaluating various plant sampling techniques that might prove useful in the future. However, for the 2004 season, we ask that you do your best to identify plant species and measure their relative abundance. We also encourage you to make onsite inspections prior to treatment to verify your species and abundance estimates. Our biologists may be available at some locations to assist you in the plant sampling within some selected areas. These onsite inspections will become the basis for plant species and abundance estimates for the 2005 permit applications.

Fourth, you will be asked to provide greater treatment area detail on maps submitted with the application. GPS coordinates that "box out" the treatment areas would be most useful, but not required. However, a linear distance along the shore and the maximum perpendicular distances from shore are required.

And finally, once a permit is issued and the treatment has occurred, you will be required to submit a report either to the Tri-Lakes Fisheries Station or the Indianapolis office on a standard DNR form within seven (7) days. Information required on the form will be the date of

treatment, the method of control, the actual locations of treatment areas and the acreage of the treatment areas. This form will be provided with each approved permit. Failure to submit the reporting form within a timely manner could result in the denial of future requests for permits.

As has been general policy in the past, we discourage treatments that exceed 10 percent of a lakes surface area. In the future, this percentage may be adjusted to reflect the actual acreage of littoral zone in each treated lake. We will currently allow treatments of larger percentages in areas with three-sided manmade channels that are residentially-developed and on a case-by-case basis for other areas.

We prefer that all treatments be done prior to June 30. This practice would reduce the chances for indirect adverse effects on fish. Largemouth Bass Virus and other causes of fish stress may be exacerbated by late season treatments. Normally, plants should be treated during the active growing phase that occurs during the spring months. Follow-up treatments in previously treated areas are allowed if done prior to July 1 and anticipated on the permit application (a second follow-up report will be required) or where the permit is conditioned to allow for later treatments. All unanticipated follow-up treatments must be approved by the district biologist as a condition of the permit.

We strongly discourage treatments of native plant species. As a result, we may condition permits to require an on-site inspection by a DNR fisheries biologist prior to the actual treatment in some areas. This, too, will be coordinated on a case-by-case basis but might cause us to postpone or cancel specific treatment projects.

Aquatic plant control has become increasingly more complex and controversial in recent years. There is no doubt, however, that we can continue to work together through the permit process to ensure all control programs are done in a way that best manages public resources and guarantees the rights of all citizens to enjoy the lakes. Thank you for your patience and understanding. We look forward to working with you. If you have any additional questions on lakes north of SR 32 don't hesitate to contact our Tri-Lakes Fisheries Station office, 5570 N Hatchery Road, Columbia City, IN 46725. Office hours are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. The telephone number is 260-691-3181 and our fax number is 260-691-3494. You may also contact us by e-mail at : sshipman@dnr.state.in.us or rlongenbaugh@dnr.state.in.us. For lakes south of SR 32 please contact our Indianapolis office by phone at 317-232-7169 or 4093, fax at 317-232-8150 attn. Nadia, or e-mail at tflatt@dnr.state.in.us.

Sincerely,

Tom Flatt, Aquatic Habitat Coordinator