

MODULE 8: LAND ALLOCATIONS, LAND CLASSIFICATIONS, WATER SURFACE AND PROJECT EASEMENT LANDS

Key Concepts

- Land Classifications, coupled with Resource Objectives, are the most important part of the Master Plan
- Distinction between Land Allocation and Land Classification
- Considerations in choosing a particular Land Classification

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LAND CLASSIFICATIONS IN A SINGLE WORD...IMPORTANT!

- Land Classification, in tandem with Resource Objectives, is where the Corps missions of public outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship are balanced against expressed public needs and in ways compatible with primary project purposes
- When entities or individuals propose to use Corps lands and water surface, the Land Classifications and Resource Objectives provide a consistent and powerful basis for evaluation and decision making
- A project without meaningful Land Classifications and Resource Objectives is like a ship without a rudder



LAND ALLOCATION AND LAND CLASSIFICATION

DIFFERENT YET CONNECTED

- Land Allocation – a subset of project land based on the purpose for which the land was acquired (in general, does not change throughout the life of the project)
- Land Classification – a subset of project land based on how the land will be managed (in general, can be periodically changed through formal revision to reflect changing policy, public needs, or to meet mission requirements)

FOUR LAND ALLOCATION CATEGORIES



- Operations
Most Corps lands fall within this allocation for constructing and operating the project
- Recreation
“Separable” lands purchased only for recreational purposes
- Fish & Wildlife
“Separable” lands purchased only for fish & wildlife management
- Mitigation
Purchased only to mitigate losses

See EP 1130-2-550, Chapter 3, Change 7 dated 31 Jan 2013 for complete definitions

LAND CLASSIFICATION CATEGORIES

- **Project Operations**
- **High Density Recreation**
- **Mitigation**
- **Environmentally Sensitive Areas**
- **Multiple Resource Management**
 - Recreation – low density
 - Wildlife management general
 - Vegetative management
 - Inactive and/or future recreation areas
- **Easement Lands**
 - Operations Easement
 - Flowage Easement
 - Conservation Easement
- **Water Surface (if applicable)**
 - Restricted
 - Designated no wake
 - F&W sanctuary
 - Open recreation

(see EP 1130-2-550, Chapter 3, Change 7 dated 31 Jan 2013 for complete definitions)



LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS PROJECT OPERATIONS

Project Operations – includes only those lands encompassing prime facilities such as dams, outlet works, spillways, levees, switchyards, pump stations, office complex, maintenance yards, locks, etc., used solely for operation of the project. Allow an adequate buffer around key operational features for security or maintenance purposes.

LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

MITIGATION

Mitigation – This classification will only be used for lands with an allocation of “Mitigation” and that were acquired specifically for the purpose of offsetting losses (normally ecological losses) associated with development of the project.

- Mitigation lands may sometimes include minor recreation facilities to support passive recreational uses of Mitigation lands. Examples of minor recreation facilities may include parking lots at access points, small boat ramps, minimal sanitary facilities, natural surface pedestrian trails and primitive campsites. In general, the land used for these minor recreation facilities should be included in the “Mitigation” classification and not be included in another classification category.



LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

HIGH DENSITY RECREATION

High Density Recreation – this classification identifies areas where high density recreation facilities and activities are located such as picnic and camping areas, marinas, comprehensive resorts, and major boat ramps. Those areas with a “Recreation” Land Allocation may only have a “Recreation” Land Classification and should be identified as “Separable Recreation Lands” on Master Plan maps. *(See EP 1130-2-550, Ch 3 for definitions)*

- Tip: Older master plans dating to the 1960’s through 1970’s were heavily focused on recreation development with the result being the designation (classification) of a majority of project lands for developed recreation activities. Much of this land was never developed for recreation and may now be better candidates for a Multiple Resource Management Lands classification with a sub classification of low density recreation, vegetation management or wildlife management. Fewer, but larger, developed parks tend to be more efficient and may better serve the public than a large number of smaller, dispersed parks.

LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

HIGH DENSITY RECREATION (CONT.)

High Density Recreation (additional tips and considerations)

- The type of recreation use proposed or forecast must be compatible with Corps recreation outgrant policy set forth in Chapter 16 of ER 1130-2-550 (recreation outgrant development policy)
- Public and stakeholder needs and interests identified thru the public involvement process shall be given consideration in making High Density Recreation land classifications
- Corps-compatible outdoor recreation needs identified in Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans shall be given consideration in making High Density Recreation land classifications
- Do not create a new definition of High Density Recreation...comply with the definition in Chapter 3 of EP 1130-2-550 and the policy statement in paragraph 16-3 of Chapter 16, ER 1130-2-550.



LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) – Areas where scientific, ecological, cultural, or aesthetic features have been identified. See Chapter 3 of EP 1130-2-550 for a complete definition.

- Most important point...ESAs are not limited to only those areas that may have statutory protection such as endangered species habitat, cultural resource sites, or jurisdictional wetlands.
- Non-statutory considerations include but are not limited to high aesthetic value, high value for wildlife, or fragile shorelines with high potential for wave-induced erosion

LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS (CONT.)

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (cont.)

- Any wetland providing fish and wildlife habitat or that improves water quality should be classified as ESA
- Legally protected endangered species habitats or cultural resource sites certainly qualify as ESA but specific locations should not be shown on maps available to the general public
- Areas with high aesthetic value (dramatic bluffs, waterfalls, fields of wildflowers, areas known for dramatic fall color, etc.), may qualify as ESA
- ESAs are frequently comparatively small areas located within a larger area under another land classification (example: a wetland located within a High Density Recreation area).



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LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS (CONT.)

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (cont.)

- Large tracts or long stretches of shoreline may also qualify if needed for nesting/foraging habitat, shoreline erosion control, or wildlife travel corridors
- Designation of ESAs for non-statutory values/resources, should be justified through scientifically recognized metrics such as the Habitat Evaluation Procedure (HEP) for wildlife habitat, or widespread public interest
- Statewide natural heritage programs may identify regionally important cultural or ecological values that shall be given consideration in making Environmentally Sensitive land classifications
- The type of public use allowable in ESAs should be carefully described
- Public and stakeholder needs and desires identified in the public involvement process shall be considered in making Environmentally Sensitive Area land classifications



LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS MULTIPLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Multiple Resource Management Lands

General Note: This classification will apply to the majority of project fee-owned lands that fall within the Land Allocation of Operations and any lands that have a Land Allocation of separable Fish and Wildlife lands.

Four Subclass choices for Multiple Resource Management Lands:

- Low Density Recreation
- Wildlife Management
- Vegetative Management
- Future or Inactive Recreation Areas

Note: More than one subclass may apply to the same area of land



LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

MULTIPLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT –

LOW DENSITY RECREATION

Multiple Resource Management Lands (cont.)

Low Density Recreation Subclass:

- Appropriate for narrow strips of land between the shoreline and the boundary line that lie adjacent to residential areas
- Suitable for land areas where trails, wildlife observation blinds, nature study areas, fishing platforms that are accessed by pedestrian trails, and other passive forms of outdoor recreation are planned or anticipated.



LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

MULTIPLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT –

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Multiple Resource Management Lands (cont.)

Wildlife Management Subclass:

- Required for lands allocated as separable Fish and Wildlife lands
- Suitable for lands where regular and recurring wildlife management activities are planned or anticipated such as prescribed burning, nesting structure placement or vegetation manipulation with a wildlife management objective
- Suitable for areas where public hunting is allowed

LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

MULTIPLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT –

VEGETATIVE MANAGEMENT

Multiple Resource Management Lands (cont.)

Vegetative Management Subclass:

- Suitable for areas where a specific vegetation management objective is planned or anticipated such as prairie restoration, forest or woodland management, wildflower establishment, etc.
- Vegetative Management subclass areas will often have a second subclassification of Wildlife Management or Low Density Recreation.

LAND CLASSIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

MULTIPLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT –

FUTURE OR INACTIVE RECREATION

Multiple Resource Management Lands (cont.)

Future or Inactive Recreation:

- Suitable for areas with site characteristics compatible with potential future recreational development, or for recreation areas that are closed for an undetermined amount of time
- Prior to active development of these areas, the lands in question should be managed in accordance with a second or third subclass such as Vegetative Management, Wildlife Management, or Low Density Recreation



WATER SURFACE CLASSIFICATION

- Must first determine if the Corps and/or another governmental entity has authority to zone or restrict the recreational use of the water surface via buoy placement, maps, etc.
- Where Corps has control, the water surface may be “zoned” or restricted per the four subclasses listed in EP 1130-2-550, Section 3-6 (change 7 dated 30 Jan 2013)
- Water surface at marina concessions should be classified as High Density Recreation
- Projects with high boating traffic may need to conduct a comprehensive boating capacity study prior to making decisions on water surface restrictions or facilities that would serve to increase boating traffic (expanded boat ramp parking, expanded marina wet or dry slips, etc.)



PROJECT EASEMENT LANDS

- Project Easement Lands generally consist of flowage easement, operational easements (access roads, levees), and rarely, conservation easements as described in Section 3-6 of EP 1130-2-550 (Change 7 dated 30 Jan 2013)
- These easements should be shown on maps or exhibits in the master plan and should be briefly described