

Regulation
No. 1145-2-XX

XX January 2013

Corps of Engineers Project Operations
MCCLELLAN-KERR ARKANSAS RIVER NAVIGATION SYSTEM
RECREATIONAL LOCKAGE POLICY

1. Purpose. This policy is to establish guidance for the implementation and execution of recreational vessel lockages on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS).
2. Background. The USACE navigation mission is to provide safe, reliable, efficient, effective and environmentally sustainable waterborne transportation systems for movement of commerce, national security needs, and recreation. Faced with the realization of budget constraints and increasing maintenance requirements, USACE must take steps to extend the service life of its locks by optimizing usage and by increasing maintenance. This policy provides guidance to implement these steps related to recreational traffic on the system.
3. Applicability. This policy applies to locks in Arkansas on the MKARNS. The USACE District in Tulsa, OK is establishing an identical policy, excepting for geographic and District-specific references, for the portion of the MKARNS in Oklahoma. These policies are intended to act in tandem and will only be revised or rescinded in tandem with coordination between the two Districts.
4. Authority.
 - a. The use, administration, and navigation of the structures to which this section applies shall be under the direction of the officers of the Army Corps of Engineers, detailed in charge of their District, and their authorized assistants. The Little Rock District Engineer is located in Little Rock, Arkansas, and his/her jurisdiction on the MKARNS extends from the Mississippi River to the Arkansas-Oklahoma State line per 33 CFR 207.275(b), and 33 CFR 207.275(b)(1)(2).
 - b. The lock master shall be charged with the immediate control and management of the lock and of the area set aside as the lock area per 33 CFR 207.275(c).

- c. The term “project” or “water resources development project” refers to the water areas of any water resources development project administered by the Chief of Engineers, without regard to ownership of underlying land, to all lands owned in fee by the Federal Government and to all facilities therein or thereon of any such water resources development project per 36 CFR 327.1(c).
5. References.
- a. 33 CFR 207 – Navigation and Navigable Waters, McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System: use, administration, and navigation, revised 2 July 2011.
 - b. 36 CFR 327 – Rules and Regulations, dated: May 2000.
 - c. OPORD 2012-63 USACE Implementation of Inland Marine Transportation System (IMTS) Process Improvement, Standard Level of Service.
 - d. SWD Operations Order (OPORD) 2012-05, Southwestern Division (SWD) USACE Implementation of Inland Marine Transportation System (IMTS) Process Improvement, Standard Levels of Service, dated: 20 August 2012.
 - e. Little Rock District Regulation, SWLOM 1130-2-12, “Project Operations Special Events Permits”, dated 9 January 1990.
6. Objective. The intent of this policy is to effect measures related to recreational traffic on the MKARNS to (1) reduce the number of gate cycles, thus prolonging the life of the system and (2) increase the number of maintenance hours to address routine and critical maintenance needs (when required) to improve reliability and reduce unscheduled outages at these locations.
7. Definitions.
- a. Pleasure (Recreational) Vessels are pleasure boats engaged in water recreational activities such as but are not limited to: boating, skiing, hunting, fishing, canoeing or kayaking.
 - b. Scheduled Maintenance Outages are times when the lock is taken out of service to perform maintenance and/or repairs. Navigation notices will be issued for these outages. Generally, notices will be issued to announce outages for three cases: 1) for fairly non-routine activities, such as repairs and inspections, 2) for regular, recurring

maintenance periods, such as the ones implemented at Ozark and Trimble Locks, effective 1 October 2012, and 3) to document an outage necessitated by an unexpected breakdown. The navigation notices will define the extent of closure (e.g. full closure, intermittent delays, etc.)

8. Policy. Based on the foregoing, the following will be implemented, related to recreational lockages on the MKARNS:
 - a. At any lock without a scheduled maintenance outage, regular windows of time will be established in which lock personnel will focus on maintenance. For purposes of this policy, these will be referred to as Maintenance Windows. These are windows of opportunity in which lock personnel may make maintenance their top priority if no lockages of commercial or Government vessels are required.
 - b. Maintenance Windows will be scheduled Monday through Thursday, 1000 hours to 1400 hours, excluding Federal holidays.
 - c. Except as described below, no recreational vessels will be locked during a Maintenance Window.
 - d. If Government, commercial, or passenger vessels are locked during a maintenance window, the period that day will not be shifted or lengthened.
 - e. During maintenance windows and to the greatest extent possible, emergency response personnel in watercraft will be locked through to facilitate search and rescue operations.
 - f. Consideration will be given to suspending or shortening maintenance windows at one or more locks due to a special event.
 - g. An annual reassessment of this policy will be conducted to determine if adjustments are required. If adjustments are required, then the District Commander will approve changes to schedules. This annual reassessment will coincide with the annual reassessment of IMTS Levels of Service applicability to the MKARNS locks.

9. Procedures.
 - a. The District will, to the greatest extent possible, advertise Scheduled Maintenance Outages by Navigation Notice, using established distribution method. Relaying of these notices by internet or social media is strongly encouraged.

 - b. The locking of recreational vessels will be accomplished by the swinging of a single gate, rather than both gates. Generally, the right side of the lock chamber in the direction of the lockage will be used. This will ensure the amount of gate swings are evenly dispersed with consistent use by the boat operators.

- c. In accordance with 33 CFR 202.75h, precedence at locks shall be given to vessels owned by the United States, licensed commercial passenger vessels operating on a published schedule or regularly operating in the “for hire” trade, commercial tows, rafts and pleasure craft, in the order named.
- d. Lockmasters may expedite the lockage for recreational vessels by locking them through with commercial vessels, except when vessels carrying volatile cargoes or other substances are likely to emit toxic, flammable or explosive vapors. If the lockage of pleasure craft cannot be accomplished within the time required for three (3) single lockages, a separate lockage of pleasure craft shall be made.
- e. Lockmasters may depart from this procedure to achieve optimum utilization of the lock or in accordance with the order of precedence stated in paragraphs (d)(2) and h of section 207.75.
- f. Consideration will be given to suspending or modifying maintenance periods that occur during Special Events including, but not limited to, tournament fishing, regattas, flotillas and other water based group activities. Special Events are those defined in paragraph 4 of SWLOM 1130-2-12, “Special Events Permits”. When submitting the application for a special event, the sponsor of that event should note any requests to modify or suspend established maintenance periods during the event.
- g. Recreational boaters are encouraged to utilize the public boat ramps to access the upstream or downstream portions of the MKARNS, due to possible extended waiting periods that may be experienced due to scheduled maintenance outages or while a commercial tow progresses through a locks.
- h. Commercial users of the system will be encouraged to adjust their schedules to allow for maintenance windows to occur, where applicable.

10. Enforcement.

- a. Failure to comply with directions given by the lock master pursuant to the regulations in this section may result in refusal of lockage.
- b. All boating laws are in effect, enforceable by Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Wildlife Officers.

11. Responsibilities.

- a. This lockage policy is to be communicated to the public, commercial tow industry, private and state recreation stakeholders to maintain an open forum on this policy’s

guidelines, through respective communications plans developed by Little Rock District Public Affairs Office.

- b. Project Offices with Navigation missions, Public Affairs and Operations Technical Support Offices will be responsible to ensure public availability of information and guidance for the safe and efficient use of locks.

GLEN A. MASSET
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