

**AQUATIC WEED CONTROL  
POLICY NO. 03-01**

**PURPOSE:** To control nuisance and invasive plants in the lakes, rivers, canals, and manmade drainage structures maintained by Hernando County in order to prevent monoculture, enable and maintain navigation, eliminate mosquito breeding and improve drainage.

**POLICY:** Hernando County Mosquito Control/Aquatic Weed Control will be responsible for the elimination and control of aquatic weeds, which cause monoculture, create habitat and breeding sites for mosquitoes, hinder navigation, and obstruct drainage in County maintained water systems.

The need for treating a problematic plant is determined based upon the site conditions, the plant type, management trend, historical and present documentation from water body surveys, and public concern, while taking budget constraints into consideration.

Management activities are conducted in-house and/or by contracted services. The methods include herbiciding, harvesting, biological control, and other means approved by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). Only herbicides registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) are used in the management. Herbicides must be used in accordance with the label instructions.

FDEP regulates aquatic plant management activities in the State. An aquatic plant management permit must be obtained from FDEP for management activities to be conducted, unless activities are expressly exempt.

Hernando County will not provide aquatic weed control for aesthetics. If a citizen or group of citizens living along a County-maintained water body wish to do their own aquatic weed control in such a water body, an Aquatic Weed Control Permit shall be obtained from the FDEP. The Permit specifies the target species, site, and method to be used.

**ELIGIBLE  
WATERS:**

Eligible waters for aquatic plant management activities are defined as follows:

1. Lakes, rivers and access canals which have unrestricted access to the general boating public by way of an established boat ramp or by way of a navigable connection to another eligible water body. There must be a sign at the ramp stating it is public and no intimidating conditions at the boat ramp which could be construed as threatening to the user (i.e., posted signs, pillars with chains, etc.)
2. Primary drainage and flood control canals.
3. Water bodies that have a documented public health hazard. These water bodies must demonstrate a high production of disease vectoring and biting insects secondary to the aquatic plant fauna conditions. Certain aquatic plants are managed in areas such as flood control ditches and storm water retention ponds that may provide a mosquito breeding habitat.
4. Water bodies with a documented aquatic plant problem as determined by trends in historical management activities.

Replaces: Policy No.88-04

Reference: May 25, 1988

Adopted : September 18, 1991

Revised: May 25, 2004