

Pesticide Use in Conservation and Restoration Policy

Policy No: 24-01

Policy Title: Pesticide Use in Conservation and Restoration

Policy Statement: Freshwater Conservation Canada is dedicated to conserving, protecting, and restoring freshwater ecosystems. Acknowledging the imperative need to manage invasive species threatening ecosystem function and native biodiversity, Freshwater Conservation Canada employs best management practices to control and mitigate their impact. This may include targeted use of pesticides, as part of a comprehensive approach towards a goal of ecosystem rehabilitation.

Principles Applied:

- **Environmental Stewardship:** The preservation of native flora and fauna is paramount. Selection of pesticide products and application techniques shall prioritize minimizing harm to non-target species and ecosystems.
- **Scientific Rigor:** Freshwater Conservation Canada pesticide management strategies are informed by the latest scientific research and best management practices.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Provincial and federal guidelines regarding applicator training, pesticide storage, transport and use are to be adhered to, ensuring legal and ethical compliance.
- **Adaptive Management:** Freshwater Conservation Canada will continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all pesticide applications, adjusting strategies as needed based on outcomes and new information.
- **Community Engagement:** Freshwater Conservation Canada actively engages with local communities, stakeholders, and Indigenous peoples to ensure transparency, accountability, inclusivity, and respect for traditional knowledge and values.
- **Precautionary Approach:** Effective implementation planning will occur and will use a precautionary approach prioritizing the safeguarding of the entire ecosystem, upholding regulatory compliance, and fostering community trust and engagement.

Policy Rationale and Considerations:

Pesticides are substances that are used to control animals, fungi, or plants. This policy has been developed in the context of pesticide use in ecological restoration. Where invasive species management is part of an of ecosystem rehabilitation project and when objectives cannot be achieved solely through mechanical and biocontrol methods, pesticides may be responsibly applied as part of an integrated strategy. Pesticide use will employ strict adherence to product labels and standard operating procedures (SOP). Central to this approach is the establishment of minimum buffer zones of 10 m, aimed at minimizing total product usage and mitigating drift potential.

Objectives of Policy Statement:

Freshwater Conservation Canada, its members, and Chapters are involved in projects that aim to improve ecosystem health and function, including but not limited to recovering species at risk. In some cases, the presence of non-native invasive species threatens the health of ecosystems and native biodiversity. Various tools may be applied to effectively manage and control invasive species. When pesticide use is considered on projects that Freshwater Conservation Canada leads or is involved in, this policy will be applied.

Implications to Organization:

The use of pesticides may enhance the effectiveness and efficacy of invasive species management and control, when required to support conservation and restoration efforts. Transparent and reasonable pesticide management practices support improved stakeholder trust and support. Planning and executing pesticide applications must align with organisational values and mission.

Delivery:

This policy will be disseminated organisation-wide through staff training sessions, online resources, and regular communication channels. All relevant stakeholders, including volunteers, contractors, and partners, will be informed, and expected to adhere to this policy.

Supporting Information:

Provincial and federal regulations governing the use of pesticides, product labels and SOPs are available.

Effective Date: February 27, 2024

Last Board Approval Date: February 27, 2024