

Phragmites RFP Questions and EDO Answers

Question:

During periods of high water in the Platte River when access to certain *Phragmites* patches may be a challenge or dangerous, will the Program be able to provide access to these patches via the Program airboat?

Answer:

During periods of high water, we will not use the airboat for our Program river surveys due to the hazards associated with operating the boat during higher flows. Therefore, we would not be able to provide access to *Phragmites* patches with the airboat during high flow conditions.

During the higher flow we encountered last June and July, access to patches was generally not a problem, but required some forethought and planning. We did use a dry bag to store the RTK and electronics when crossing river channels during higher flow. We also used a canoe to cross the channel at the Plum Creek study area on two occasions when crossing was hazardous. The north channel at the Chapman study area requires crossing to access several patches, and those may involve crossing through deeper water during higher flow.

We would first recommend that if access to patches is deemed hazardous due to river conditions, the patches or study areas be surveyed slightly out of order to wait until river flow lessens and crossing conditions improve. In the worst-case scenario of extended higher flow, then we would discuss skipping those patches for that month of surveys. The river flow conditions along the Central Platte River fluctuate greatly, so it is likely you would be able to find a window of opportunity to complete the survey for that month.