

SPECIFICATIONS FOR USACE DREDGING CONTRACTS:

1. During the nesting season (May 15 to August 15, although nesting may extend beyond these dates depending on river stage elevations), U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District (SWL) will refer to the most recent information of active Interior Least Tern (ILT) colonies located in the Arkansas River Valley. Personnel monitoring ILT colonies will provide updates for each pool in the Arkansas River Valley during the months of May through August. Information provided to SWL and the Service will include date, pool number, and current locations (e.g., GPS coordinates and tenth of river mile) of known active ILT colonies. SWL will communicate these locations to contractors prior to discharging dredged material to ensure they do not cause mortality of eggs and chicks by discharging dredged material at sites with active ILT colonies.
2. Work with SWL personnel to discharge material at priority sites as much as is reasonable. Priority sites will be established with input from the Service.
3. To reduce frequency of nest failure due to predation, when possible contractor will implement the following specifications:
 - a. Discharge material in areas where river channel is ≥ 2395 ft/730 m
 - b. Discharge material in areas ≥ 200 ft/60 m from mature trees, bridges, bluffs, powerlines, or similar structures located on the bank or within the river channel, which could be used by potential predators to search for and locate ILT nests
 - c. Avoid discharging material on sites with woody vegetation > 6.5 ft/2 m in height and with $> 30\%$ herbaceous vegetation unless vegetation has been removed by mechanical (e.g., mulching) and/or chemical (e.g., application of herbicide) treatments
4. To reduce mortality of eggs and chicks due to flooding, discharge dredged material across area so that site is at least 5 ft above normal flow rate (proxy for elevation) in pools not likely to flood during the nesting season. On sites located in pools likely to flood during the nesting season (e.g., pool 10) discharge dredged material to maximum elevation allowed by discharge pipe. When possible, contractor will vary direction and location of discharge pipe and use equipment (e.g., dozer or spoil-use spreader) and elevation stakes as needed to ensure material is spread across area at specified elevation.
5. Amount of material discharged will be such that size of site is a minimum of one acre with an elevation as described in 4. When possible, material should continue to be discharged at site until it is five to ten acres in size with an elevation as described in 4.
6. When necessary, contractor will use a silt curtain to assist in island construction.
7. Contractor will provide SWL with pool number, current location (e.g., GPS coordinates and tenth of river mile), year, and elevation of site where dredged material was discharged. Use of dredged material to create ILT nesting habitat will be reported in annual summary of conservation actions and monitoring results. Tracking habitat management activities such as use of dredged material to create and maintain habitat and use of this habitat by terns will inform adaptive management and support conservation actions by SWL.