

**ARTICLE 89-10
SOVEREIGN LANDS**

Chapter
89-10-01 Sovereign Lands

**CHAPTER 89-10-01
SOVEREIGN LANDS**

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89-10-01-01. Authority.

These rules are adopted and promulgated by the department under North Dakota Century Code chapter 61-33 to provide consistency in the administration and management of sovereign lands. These rules do not apply to the state of North Dakota's interests in oil, gas, and related hydrocarbons on sovereign lands.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective April 1, 2008; April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-02. Prohibition on permanent relinquishment.

Sovereign lands may not be permanently relinquished, but must be held in perpetual trust for the benefit of the citizens of the state of North Dakota. All structures permitted or otherwise allowed for private use on sovereign lands are subordinate to public use and values.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-03. Definitions.

The following definitions apply to this article:

1. "Authorization" means a permit, easement, lease, or management agreement approved and granted by the department after application; and the authority granted in sections 89-10-01-10 and 89-10-01-19.
2. "Boardwalk" means a walk constructed of planking.
3. "Department" is defined in North Dakota Century Code section 61-03-01.2.
4. "Director" is defined in North Dakota Century Code section 61-03-01.2.
5. "Domestic use" means the use of water as defined by subsection 4 of North Dakota Century Code section 61-04-01.1.
6. "Grantee" means the person, including that person's assigns, successors, and agents who has authorization.
7. "Livestock" means bison, cattle, horses, mules, goats, sheep, and swine.
8. "Navigable waters" is defined in North Dakota Century Code section 61-33-01.
9. "Ordinary high water mark" is defined in North Dakota Century Code section 61-33-01.
10. "Project" means any activity that occurs either partially or wholly on sovereign lands.
11. "Riparian owner" means a person who owns land adjacent to navigable waters or the person's authorized agent.
12. "Snagging and clearing" means the removal and disposal of fallen trees and associated debris encountered within and along the channel.
13. "Structure" means something that is formed from parts, including equipment, boat docks, boat ramps, and water intakes.
14. "Watercraft" means any device capable of being used as a means of transportation on waters.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; April 1, 2008; April 1, 2009; April 1, 2010; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-04. Authorization.

Each project requires an authorization from the department before construction or operation, except as otherwise provided by these rules. Any department authorization may be modified at the department's discretion.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; April 1, 2008; April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023; July 1, 2024.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-05. Application for permit, easement, lease, or management agreement.

Applications for authorization must be on forms prescribed by the department.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-06. Application review.

Upon receipt of a completed application, the department must initiate a review as follows:

1. Comments must be requested from the following entities:
 - a. The state game and fish department;
 - b. The department of environmental quality;
 - c. The state historical society;
 - d. The state department of trust lands;
 - e. The state parks and recreation department;
 - f. The United States fish and wildlife service;
 - g. The park district and planning commission of any city or county where the proposed project will be located;
 - h. Any water resource district where the proposed project will be located; and
 - i. Other agencies, private entities, or landowner associations as appropriate or required by law.
2. Each entity must submit all comments in writing to the department. The department is not bound by any comment submitted. The department must receive comments within thirty days of the date requests for comments were mailed.
3. Upon completion of the review and any public meeting held under section 89-10-01-07, the department may grant, deny, or condition the application.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; April 1, 2008; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-06.1. Record - Official notice.

Unless specifically excluded by the director or the hearing officer, the record in each sovereign land permit application proceeding or adjudicative proceeding under North Dakota Century Code chapter 28-32 includes the following:

1. United States department of agriculture natural resources conservation service reports, including the North Dakota hydrology manual, North Dakota irrigation guide, and county soil survey reports.
2. United States geological survey and department streamflow records.
3. National oceanic and atmospheric administration climatological data.
4. Topographic maps.
5. Department sovereign land permit files.
6. Information in department and state water commission files, records, and other published reports.
7. North Dakota sovereign land management plan.
8. Ordinary high water mark delineation guidelines.
9. Aerial photos.

History: Effective July 1, 2014; amended effective January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-07. Public meeting.

An information-gathering public meeting may be held by the department before final action on a project. The procedure for notice and meeting must be as follows:

1. The department must publish a notice of meeting in the official newspaper for each county where the project is located. The notice must be published once each week for two consecutive weeks.
2. The meeting date must be at least twenty days after the date of last publication.
3. The meeting must be conducted by the department and the meeting may be held in Bismarck.
4. The meeting is not an adjudicative proceeding hearing under North Dakota Century Code chapter 28-32.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-08. General permit standards.

The department may grant, deny, or condition any permit application. In deciding what action to take on a permit application, the department must consider the potential effects of the proposed project on the following:

1. Riparian owner's rights;

2. Recreation;
3. Navigation;
4. Aesthetics;
5. Environment;
6. Erosion;
7. Maintenance of existing water flows;
8. Fish and wildlife;
9. Water quality;
10. Cultural and historical resources; and
11. Alternative uses.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective April 1, 2008; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023; July 1, 2024.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-09. Specific project requirements.

Repealed effective July 1, 2014.

89-10-01-10. Projects not requiring a permit.

The following projects do not require a permit:

1. Boat docks, if all of the following conditions are satisfied:
 - a. They are constructed, operated, and maintained by the riparian owner for personal use;
 - b. The dock is used only for embarkation, debarkation, moorage of watercraft, water intakes, or recreation;
 - c. Only clean, nonpolluting materials are used;
 - d. The total length of the dock over the surface of the water does not exceed twenty-five feet [7.6 meters] on a river or fifty feet [15.24 meters] on a lake, and there is no unreasonable interference with navigation or access to an adjacent riparian owner's property;
 - e. The dock is connected to a point above the ordinary high watermark by a boardwalk that does not exceed twenty-five feet [7.6 meters] in length and is removed from below the ordinary high watermark each fall; and
 - f. Upon abandonment, the grantee restores the bank as closely as practicable to its original condition.
2. Water intakes if all of the following conditions are satisfied:
 - a. They are constructed, operated, and maintained by the riparian owner for domestic use; and

- b. The intake is removed from below the ordinary high watermark each fall.
3. Watercraft that are temporarily moored.
4. Snagging and clearing, when performed by a federal or state entity or political subdivision.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; April 1, 2009; April 1, 2010; July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-10.1. Boat docks and water intakes.

Boat docks and water intakes not meeting the criteria in section 89-10-01-10 require a permit from the department. Any person who violates this section must pay a two hundred fifty dollar fee per day. The dock will be subject to removal at the dock owner's expense.

History: Effective April 1, 2009; amended effective April 1, 2010; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-03-21.3, 61-33-02, 61-33-05, 61-33-10

89-10-01-10.2. Boat dock registration.

Boat docks that do not require a permit under this chapter and that are located on the Missouri River between the Oliver and Morton County line (river mile 1328.28) and Lake Oahe wildlife management area (river mile 1303.5) must be registered with the department before placement of any such dock. The department must provide registration forms. Any person who violates this section must pay a two hundred fifty dollar fee per occurrence. The dock will be subject to removal at the dock owner's expense.

History: Effective April 1, 2010; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05, 61-33-10

89-10-01-11. Structures.

1. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the construction or moorage of a structure is prohibited on sovereign lands. If a structure is prohibited, the department:
 - a. Shall issue an order to the structure owner identifying the action required to modify or remove the structure and a date by which the ordered action must be taken. Unless an emergency exists, the date by which the ordered action must be taken must be at least twenty days after the order is issued.
 - b. If the ordered action is not taken by the date specified in the order, the department may modify or remove the structure at the structure owner's expense.
 - c. May commence a civil proceeding to enforce its order, or, if the department modifies or removes the structure, the department may assess the costs of such action against any property of the structure's owner or may commence a civil proceeding to recover the costs incurred in such action. If the department chooses to recover costs by assessing the costs against property of the structure's owner and the property is insufficient to pay for the costs incurred, the department may commence a civil proceeding to recover any costs not recovered through the assessment process. Any assessment levied under this section must be collected in the same manner as other real estate taxes are collected and paid.

2. A person who receives an order from the department under this section may send a written request to the department for a hearing. The department must receive the request within ten days of the date the order is issued. The request for a hearing must state with particularity the issues, facts, and points of law to be presented at the hearing. If the director determines the issues, facts, and points of law to be presented are well-founded and not frivolous and the request for a hearing was not made merely to interpose delay, the department must set a hearing date without undue delay.
3. Any person aggrieved by the action of the director may appeal the decision to the district court of the county where the sovereign lands at issue are located under North Dakota Century Code chapter 28-32. A request for a hearing as provided in subsection 2 is a prerequisite to any appeal to the district court.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; April 1, 2008; April 1, 2009; April 1, 2010; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-03-21.3, 61-03-22, 61-33-02, 61-33-05, 61-33-10

89-10-01-12. Public recreational use.

The public may use sovereign lands for recreational purposes except as otherwise provided by these rules or by signage posted by the department.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective April 1, 2008; April 1, 2009; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-13. Vehicular access.

The use of motorized vehicles on sovereign lands is prohibited, except:

1. When on government-established trails that have been permitted by the department;
2. When on sovereign lands immediately adjacent to the Kimball Bottoms off-road riding area located in the south half of sections 23 and 24 and the north half of sections 25 and 26, all in township 137 north, range 80 west, Burleigh County;
3. When on state-designated off-road use areas, provided the area is managed and supervised by a government entity, the government entity has developed a management plan for the off-road area that has been submitted to the department, and the managing government entity has obtained a sovereign lands permit for off-road use in the designated area;
4. To cross a stream by use of a ford, bridge, culvert, or similar structure provided the crossing is in the most direct manner possible;
5. To launch or load watercraft in the most direct manner possible;
6. To access and operate on the frozen surfaces of any navigable water, provided the crossing of sovereign lands is in the most direct manner possible;
7. To access private land that has no other reasonable access point, provided that access across sovereign lands is in the most direct manner possible;
8. By disabled people who possess a mobility-impaired parking permit under North Dakota Century Code section 39-01-15 or shoot from a stationary motor vehicle permit under subsection 10 of North Dakota Century Code section 20.1-02-05;
9. When operation is necessary as part of a permitted activity or project;

10. By the riparian owner on sovereign lands that are adjacent to the riparian owner's property when moving or tending to livestock; installing or maintaining a livestock fence; installing, maintaining, or moving an authorized agricultural irrigation structure; or when engaged in other ordinary agricultural practices, provided the listed activities do not negatively affect public use or values; or
11. When being used by government personnel in the performance of their duties.

Any person who violates this section must pay a one hundred dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; April 1, 2008; April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-14. Cancellation by the director.

The director may cancel any authorization granted under these rules. Cancellation does not release the grantee from any liability. If an applicant is named in an active enforcement action ordered by the department, the department may hold any application submitted by the applicant in abeyance until the order has been satisfied.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; April 1, 2008; April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-15. Termination by applicant.

The grantee may terminate any authorization by notifying the department in writing, paying all fees or other money owed to the state, and reclaiming the site under section 89-10-01-18.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-16. Assignments.

Any authorization granted under these regulations may only be assigned with the written consent of the department.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-17. Inspections.

The department may inspect all projects on sovereign lands and enter upon a grantee's land during normal working hours to carry out the inspection.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; April 1, 2009; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-18. Reclamation.

After cancellation, termination, abandonment, or expiration of an authorization, grantee must reclaim the project location within one hundred twenty days. If the permit is for mining, reclamation must be within sixty days after the lease expires or the mining is complete. Upon written request, the department may extend the time period if good cause is shown. If grantee fails to reclaim the site to the specifications in the authorization within the required time frame, the department may enter and restore the project location. The grantee is liable for all reclamation costs.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-19. Maintenance and repair.

Maintenance or repair of authorized projects does not require additional authorization provided the work is in conformance with the original authorization, standards, and specifications provided in this article and the work does not alter the use or size of the project.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective August 1, 1994; July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-20. Areas of special interest.

The department may enter agreements for management of areas of high public value. Examples include parks, beaches, public access points, nondevelopment areas, and wildlife management areas.

History: Effective November 1, 1989; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-21. Organized group activities.

Organized group activities that are publicly advertised or are attended by more than twenty-five people are prohibited on sovereign lands without a permit. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a noncriminal offense and must pay a two hundred fifty dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2008; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-22. Pets.

Pets are not allowed to run unattended on sovereign lands. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a noncriminal offense and must pay a fifty dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2008; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-23. Camping.

Camping for longer than ten consecutive days within a thirty-day period in the same vicinity or leaving a campsite unattended for more than twenty-four hours is prohibited on sovereign lands. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a noncriminal offense and must pay a one hundred dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2008; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-24. Hunting, fishing, and trapping.

All sovereign lands are open for public hunting, fishing, and trapping, except as provided in other rules, regulations, or laws or as posted at public entry points. Posting sovereign lands with signage by anyone other than the department is prohibited without a sovereign lands permit. Any person who violates this section must pay a one hundred dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2008; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05, 61-33-10

89-10-01-25. Unattended watercraft.

Watercraft may not be left unattended on or moored to sovereign lands for more than twenty-four hours except:

1. When moored to authorized docks; or
2. When moored to private property above the ordinary high watermark with a restraint that does not cause unreasonable interference with navigation or the public's use of land below the ordinary high watermark.

Any person who violates this section is guilty of a noncriminal offense and must pay a fifty dollar fee per day.

History: Effective April 1, 2008; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-26. Removal of public property.

Public property, including trees, shrubs, vines, plants, soil, gravel, fill, rocks, fossils, sod, firewood, posts, or poles, may not be removed from sovereign lands without a permit. Firewood may be removed under certain stated conditions from designated firewood cutting plots. Commercial cutting of firewood is prohibited on sovereign lands. Gathering of downed wood for campfires is allowed. A riparian owner may hay or graze sovereign lands adjacent to the riparian owner's property, unless prohibited in writing by the department. Berries and fruit may be picked for noncommercial use, unless prohibited by posted notice. Property may not be destroyed or defaced. Any person who violates this section must pay a two hundred fifty dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2008; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05, 61-33-10

89-10-01-27. Cultural or historical resources.

Artifacts or any other cultural or historical resources found on sovereign lands may not be disturbed or destroyed without formal written approval from the state historical society and a permit from the department.

History: Effective April 1, 2008; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-28. Disposal of waste.

The disposal of refuse, rubbish, bottles, cans, or other waste materials is prohibited on sovereign lands except in garbage containers where provided. Holding tanks of campers or watercraft may not be dumped on sovereign lands. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a noncriminal offense and must pay a two hundred fifty dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2008; amended effective April 1, 2009; July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-29. Glass containers.

Glass containers are prohibited on sovereign lands. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a noncriminal offense and must pay a one hundred dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2009; amended effective July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-30. Abandoned property.

Abandonment of vehicles or other personal property is prohibited on sovereign lands.

History: Effective April 1, 2009.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-31. Firearms.

Use of firearms on sovereign lands is allowed except in a reckless and indiscriminate manner or as otherwise posted at public entry points. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a noncriminal offense and must pay a one hundred dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2009; amended effective July 1, 2014.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05

89-10-01-32. Tree stands.

Construction of a permanent tree stand or permanent steps to a tree stand is prohibited on sovereign lands. Portable tree stands, portable steps, screw-in steps, and natural tree stands may be used. Portable tree stands and portable steps are defined as those that are held to the tree with ropes, straps, cables, chains, or bars. Screw-in steps are those that are screwed into the tree by hand without the aid of tools. Ladder-type stands that lean against the tree are portable stands. Natural stands are those crotches, trunks, down trees, etc., where no platform is used. Tree stands do not preempt hunting rights of others in the vicinity of the tree stand. Tree stands and steps may not be put up before August twentieth and must be removed within three days of the close of the archery deer season. Stands and steps not removed within three days of the close of the archery deer season are considered abandoned property and are subject to removal and confiscation by the department. Any person who violates this section must pay a one hundred dollar fee per tree stand.

History: Effective April 1, 2009; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05, 61-33-10

89-10-01-33. Baiting.

Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, placing or using bait to attract, lure, feed, or habituate wildlife to a bait location for any purpose is prohibited on sovereign lands. Bait includes grains, minerals, salt, fruits, vegetables, hay, or any other natural or manufactured feeds. Bait does not include the use of lures, scents, or liquid attractants for hunting or management activities conducted by the department. Bait may be used to lure and take furbearers when engaged in lawful trapping activities. Any person who violates this section must pay a one hundred dollar fee per occurrence.

History: Effective April 1, 2009; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05, 61-33-10

89-10-01-34. Dredging or filling.

1. Unless permitted by the department, dredging or filling on sovereign lands is prohibited. If prohibited dredging or filling occurs, the department:
 - a. Shall issue an order to the violator identifying the action required to restore the sovereign lands and a date by which the ordered action must be taken. Unless an emergency exists, the date by which the ordered action must be taken must be at least twenty days after the order is issued.
 - b. If the ordered action is not taken by the date specified in the order, the department may take any action to restore the sovereign lands at the violator's expense.
 - c. May commence a civil proceeding to enforce its order if the department takes action to restore sovereign lands, the department may assess the costs of such action against the riparian owner's property where the dredging or filling occurred or may commence a civil proceeding to recover the costs incurred in such action. If the department chooses to recover costs by assessing the costs against the riparian owner's property where the dredging or filling occurred and the property is insufficient to pay for the costs incurred, or if the riparian owner was not the party responsible for the dredging or filling, the department may commence a civil proceeding to recover any costs not recovered through the assessment process. Any assessment levied under this section must be collected in the same manner as other real estate taxes are collected and paid.
2. A person who receives an order from the department under this section may send a written request to the department for a hearing. The department must receive the request within ten days of the date the order is issued. The request for a hearing must state with particularity the issues, facts, and points of law to be presented at the hearing. If the director determines the issues, facts, and points of law to be presented are well-founded and not frivolous and the request for a hearing was not made merely to interpose delay, the department must set a hearing date without undue delay.
3. Any person aggrieved by the action of the director may appeal the decision to the district court of the county where the sovereign lands at issue are located under North Dakota Century Code chapter 28-32. A request for a hearing as provided in subsection 2 is a prerequisite to any appeal to the district court.

History: Effective April 1, 2010; amended effective July 1, 2014; January 1, 2023.

General Authority: NDCC 61-03-13

Law Implemented: NDCC 61-33-02, 61-33-05, 61-33-10