

# MILL CREEK PROJECT O&M SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (SEIS)

## FAQs

**Q.** Why is it better to prepare this SEIS, rather than individual NEPA documents as new Operations and Maintenance (O&M) actions develop?

**A.** This SEIS is intended to help the Corps make O&M decisions which may have potential effects on the environment, particularly ESA-listed species, and to reduce the amount of effort and cost necessary to prepare NEPA documentation for any future O&M changes to the Mill Creek Project. There will likely be some unforeseen O&M actions that are proposed in the future which are not identified in this SEIS. Each of these unforeseen future actions would be evaluated to determine the need for additional NEPA compliance. Some new actions, such as O&M-related actions, would be categorically excluded from NEPA. A record of environmental compliance would be prepared for this type of action. Some new actions may require Environmental Assessments to determine if there would be any significant effects to the quality of the human environment. If it is determined there would be significant effects, or if an action is highly controversial, another SEIS may be prepared.

**Q.** How is the SEIS related to the proposed Mill Creek General Investigation Study?

**A.** This SEIS is not directly related to the proposed Mill Creek General Investigation Study. It is only for O&M of the federally-owned portion of the Mill Creek Flood Control Project.

**Q.** Is the entire constructed channel through Walla Walla included in the SEIS?

**A.** No. The SEIS is only for O&M of the federally-owned portion of the MCFCP. However, the SEIS does consider flood damages downstream.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) proposes to update the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation for operation and maintenance (O&M) of the federally-owned portion of the Mill Creek Flood Control Project (Project) by preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).

The current NEPA document for O&M of the Project is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) published in 1975. Additional Environmental Assessments and other records-documenting activities which are categorically excluded from NEPA have been prepared for various actions at the Project since that time.

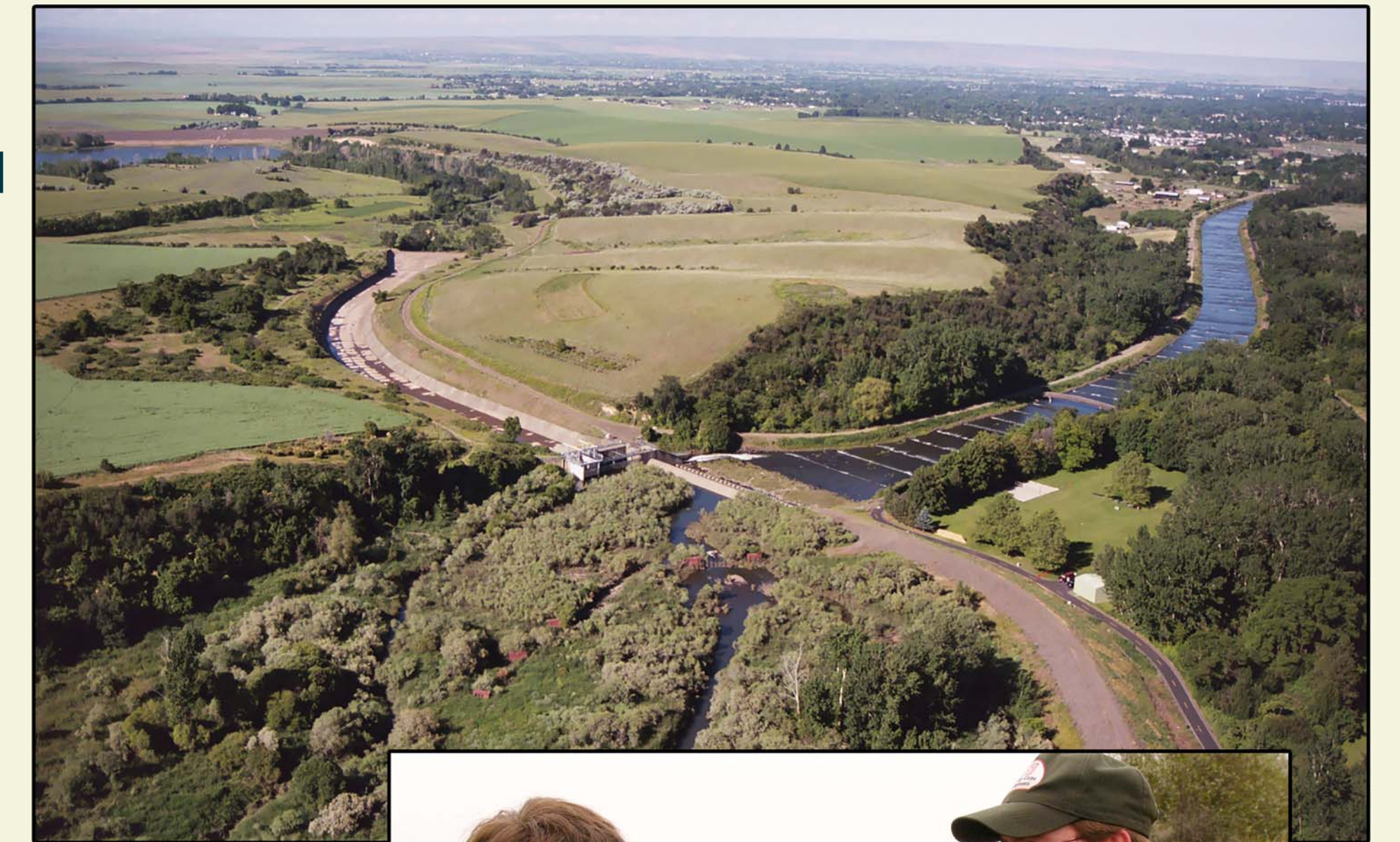
A SEIS is prepared after an EIS has been published and there are modifications to the action or significant time has passed since the EIS was completed to account for changes in the action or surrounding environment.

This SEIS effort is not intended to address all of the fish passage issues present within the entire Mill Creek Flood Control Project through Walla

Walla. It is also not intended to be the final NEPA document needed for changes to the Mill Creek Project.

Public involvement is critical to the development of the SEIS. Input from scoping and draft document review ensures public concerns are part of the official record and are shared with Corps decision makers.

For the scoping stage of the NEPA process, the Corps developed a **Draft Purpose and Need Statement:** The purpose of the action is to operate and maintain the federally-managed portion of the Mill Creek Flood Control Project for the authorized project purposes (flood risk management and recreation), while also considering operational and structural changes to improve conditions for ESA-listed fish. The action is needed because project operations and conditions have changed over time and project modifications have been proposed that require consideration of future O&M actions and associated environmental effects.



### Alternatives Considered Must:

- provide flood risk management for Walla Walla and adjacent lands
- provide for public recreation opportunities
- comply with applicable laws, regulations, Corps policy, and guidance
- be technically feasible

