



McNary Shoreline Management Plan

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Overview

McNary Lock and Dam's reservoir (Lake Wallula) on the Columbia and Snake rivers stretches from the dam at Umatilla, Ore., to the Tri-Cities (Pasco, Richland, Kennewick) in Washington. Most of the McNary reservoir shoreline is publicly owned and federally managed. As a good environmental steward, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District, manages public shorelines surrounding Lake Wallula.

The McNary Shoreline Management Plan provides guidance for managing the Lake Wallula shoreline. The plan addresses rules and regulations, shoreline allocations and requirements for permitting private use of public lands managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The lake shoreline at individual private properties adjacent to Lake Wallula is publicly owned and managed by the Corps.

The McNary Shoreline Management Plan was updated by the Corps in 2012 after several years of public involvement including public meetings, several public comment periods, and a series of small group meetings with existing dock owners. The plan was last revised in 1983. Environmental and cultural resource requirements changed significantly since that time, thus necessitating management updates and a review of the permitting process for private boat docks permitted or licensed for use on public land, and modifications to vegetation located on federally managed lands.

The final updated 2012 Shoreline Plan addresses policies and procedures regarding existing and new private docks on public lands and the modification of vegetation on federal property. The updated plan provides criteria for design and construction of existing private docks (including "special status" docks, sometimes referred to as "grandfathered" docks), new community and private docks and vegetation modification. The plan reflects District efforts to balance environmental stewardship and legal requirements of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) with the public's recreation needs.

2012 Shoreline Plan Requirements

The 2012 McNary Shoreline Management Plan allows for most of the 73 existing docks to remain, plus 27 new docks. The number of allowable new docks was established after technical studies were completed by the Corps, public comments were considered by the Corps, and completion of required Corps consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The shoreline allocations in the 2012 Shoreline Management Plan were changed to reflect resource limitations, avoiding disturbance of culturally sensitive areas (sites of tribal significance), and ESA and public safety requirements. All dock construction or modification work must be accomplished during winter seasonal "in-water work windows" from Nov. 1 to Feb. 28 when risk to endangered fish species is lowest.

Dock Permits

There are three types of dock permits available: 1) Existing dock permit renewals; 2) New community dock permits; 3) new individual private dock permits (if existing docks plus new community dock permits issued don't exceed the allowable total of 100 docks). All dock construction or modification work must be accomplished during winter seasonal "in-water work windows" from Nov. 1 to Feb. 28 when risk to endangered fish species is lowest.

Renewals of existing dock permits

According to the 2012 plan, existing docks may be allowed to remain per the conditions of the 2011 dock inspection if the dock is in a safe condition and has not been extensively modified without authorization. Existing dock owners will be allowed to renew their dock permits under these terms and conditions for as long as they own their adjacent property. When replacing a major dock component (such as decking or floats) current dock owners will be required to use materials compliant with the design criteria in Appendix B of the 2012 Shoreline Management Plan. Those purchasing property with an existing dock must upgrade the dock to 2012 design criteria within four in-water work windows after the permit is granted.

New Dock Permits (Community Docks and Individual Private Docks)

New community dock or individual private dock permits will be considered for eligible applicants who have property sharing a boundary with Corps-managed public lands and located in areas designated as "Limited Development Areas" (LDAs). Limited Development Areas are designated where private shoreline use facilities or

vegetation management activities may be allowed when consistent with the shoreline plan and cleared for environmental and cultural resources issues by Corps personnel prior to any development. New dock construction must conform to the ESA design criteria contained in the 2012 Shoreline Plan and must be completed within four in-water work windows after the permit is granted. The Corps encourages multiple property owners to form dock associations to build community docks. This serves a larger group of dock users, allows for a larger dock (larger than an individual private dock) for use by a dock association, and supports sharing of dock construction or maintenance expenses. Individual private dock permits will only be considered after community dock permit applications are considered.

Permit Renewals

Dock permits are valid for five years. A permit holder must apply for renewal. Renewal is not automatic. In the event of a sale or transfer of the property, the new owner must apply for a new permit within 14 days of closing the sale of the property.

Vegetation Modification Permits

Vegetation permits will continue to be issued in areas designated as "Limited Development Areas" under the Shoreline Allocation section of the McNary Shoreline Management Plan. All new and renewed vegetation modification permits must meet the terms and conditions set out in the 2012 shoreline management plan.

Fees

The fee for a new or renewed dock permit is currently \$35. The fee for a vegetation management permit is currently \$10. These fees are set by national policy and may change in the future.

Periodic Inspections

Permitted facilities and activities are subject to periodic inspection by authorized Corps representatives. Docks are to be inspected at least annually to determine compliance with permit conditions. Per the terms of shoreline dock permits, Corps personnel are permitted to access private docks and upland areas for the purpose of inspection without prior notification to the homeowner.

History of Public Involvement

The Corps conducted public meetings about the draft shoreline plan and associated environmental documents in 2006, 2009, 2010 and 2011. Public comments about draft versions of the plan were received after each public meeting. To address 2009 public comments, the Corps conducted a scientific literature review, a bathymetric survey of parts of the shoreline, and worked with other state and federal agencies to craft a new plan that would meet the requirements of federal laws and policies, balanced with public recreation.

Between 2006 and 2011, a technical team of scientists and planners updated the McNary Shoreline Management Plan based on public input, interagency discussions, environmental and cultural requirements, and balanced future management practices. The Corps met with dock owners; local, county, state and federal officials; associations and non-profit organizations; and others to explain the plan and review process. Also in 2011, the Corps completed formal Endangered Species Act consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the federal government's experts regarding endangered salmon, steelhead trout and bull trout.

Additional Information

For information about dock or vegetation permits, contact the Ice Harbor Natural Resources Management Office at 509-543-6062 or 509-543-6060. More information about the McNary Shoreline Management Plan is available on the District website at www.nww.usace.army.mil.

The Corps appreciates adjacent landowners' spirit of cooperation and stewardship of some of the region's most beautiful public shoreline lands – lands managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for everyone to enjoy.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – WALLA WALLA DISTRICT

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