



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**

Walla Walla District  
Public Affairs Office

# News Release

News Release 05-49

Date: Sept. 09, 2005

Contact: Public Affairs

Phone: (509) 527-7020

## **Corps of Engineers can remove sediment in rivers after reaching agreement with environmentalists; lawsuit dismissed**

**Walla Walla, Wash.** – A federal judge approved a settlement agreement and dismissed a long-standing lawsuit, freeing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to dredge areas of the Lower Snake and Clearwater rivers.

The agreement between the Corps and conservation and fishing organizations was accepted yesterday, by the U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington, in Seattle which consequently dismissed the suit.

The settlement allows the Walla Walla District to proceed with planned winter maintenance dredging in the lower Snake River in five key areas within the navigation channel and port berthing areas that are clogged with sediment.

“We’re glad that a settlement could be reached that was agreeable to all parties and would allow us to proceed with needed channel maintenance this winter,” said Jack Sands, channel maintenance project manager for the Corps.

Transporters shipped 17.4 million tons of products through the Snake River locks in 2004. That included 12.2 million tons of grain products, 2.1 million tons of petroleum and 1.5 million tons of wood products.

“We think this is a win-win for everyone,” Sands said. “This agreement ensures that the efficient flow of products continues, and with appropriate funding, we are looking forward to working with all stakeholders in the region to complete a programmatic plan that will resolve long-term sediment issues within the area.”

In the settlement, the Corps, contingent on funding being made available, committed to study the problem of sediment accumulation in the lower Snake River and prepare a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that develops a plan for addressing sediment build-up issues. The current schedule for the new study and EIS calls for a record of decision on the long-term sediment management plan by late 2009.

-30-

Public Affairs Office, Walla Walla District Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 201 N. Third Ave, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

Phone (509) 527-7020 FAX (509) 527-7824

Website: [www.nww.usace.army.mil](http://www.nww.usace.army.mil)

E-mail: [cenww-pa@usace.army.mil](mailto:cenww-pa@usace.army.mil)