

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mill Creek Project was authorized under the Flood Control Act of 1938 and operational by 1942.

The primary authorized purpose of the Project is to reduce the risk of flooding to the City of Walla Walla and adjacent downstream areas bordering Mill Creek, Yellowhawk Creek and Garrison Creek. The Project, which encompasses a 612-acre area, also provides a variety of recreational opportunities in a scenic setting. Recreation was added as an authorized project purpose in 1944.

The Mill Creek Project consists of a diversion dam, a storage reservoir (Bennington Lake) and a division works structure that was historically used to route floodwater to Yellowhawk and Garrison Creeks, where few homes existed when the Project was constructed.

The Corps also operates and maintains about 1-mile of the associated Mill Creek Levee System ~ from the diversion dam to the western end of the Project Office parking lot.

Walla Walla County's Mill Creek Flood Control Zone District manages about 7 miles of the levee system downstream of the Mill Creek Project boundary, from the Mill Creek Project boundary to the Gose Street Bridge.

Mill Creek Project requires continuous operation and maintenance (O&M) to effectively manage the risk of potential flood damages during seasonal high flows. During the decades since construction, O&M activities have been updated as technologies improved and new laws and regulations were enacted.



Additions include ADA-compliant restrooms, playground and picnic tables, a paved trail on the north levee, fish ladders, low-flow fish passage weirs in the Mill Creek Levee channel, fish screens, wildlife habitat, ADA-compliant sidewalk access to Rooks Park, a pedestrian bridge crossing Mill Creek and more. These features and facilities also require continuous O&M to keep them in good working order to serve the public.

