

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE****Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers****Notice of Extension of the Public Comment Period for the Draft Missouri River Recovery Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement**

**AGENCY:** Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** On December 16, 2016 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) issued a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* (81 FR 91151) for the Draft Missouri River Recovery Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (MRRMP-EIS). The original comment period was scheduled to end February 24, 2017. This notice extends the public comment period to April 24, 2017.

**DATES:** Submit written comments on the draft EIS on or before April 24, 2017.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, ATTN: CENWO-PM-AC—MRRMP-EIS, 1616 Capitol Ave., Omaha, NE 68102; or provide comments via an online comment form (preferred method) at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/MRRMP>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The above address or email to [cenwo-planning@usace.army.mil](mailto:cenwo-planning@usace.army.mil).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** None.

Dated: February 6, 2017.

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE****Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers****Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, Mill Creek Project Operation and Maintenance, Walla Walla County, in the State of Washington**

**AGENCY:** Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DOD.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for the continued operation and

maintenance (O&M) of the federally managed portion of the Mill Creek Flood Control Project (Project) at Walla Walla, Washington, and implementation of actions to avoid or minimize potential effects to Endangered Species Act (ESA)—listed fish and/or associated critical habitat. The SEIS will supplement the *June 1975, Mill Creek Project, Walla Walla, Washington, Final Environmental Impact Statement* (FEIS), prepared by the Corps for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the federally managed portion of the Project. The SEIS will identify and evaluate current O&M actions that may not have been adequately addressed in the 1975 FEIS or have been implemented since completion of the 1975 FEIS, and actions that are proposed for the future. It will also identify and evaluate operational and structural measures the Corps has proposed to improve fish passage through the Project. The 1975 FEIS did not adequately address the effects of the Project on fish species, particularly Mid-Columbia River steelhead and Columbia Basin bull trout. These species were listed under the ESA in the 1990's, and both Mill Creek and Yellowhawk Creek (a tributary of Mill Creek) have been designated as critical habitat.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be mailed to Walla Walla District, Corps of Engineers, CENWW-PPL-C, Mill Creek SEIS, 201 North Third Avenue, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876, or submitted via email to [NEPANWW@usace.army.mil](mailto:NEPANWW@usace.army.mil) and inserting "Mill Creek SEIS" in the subject line. Comments may also be submitted at the public scoping meeting.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Questions about the proposed action and SEIS can be answered by Mr. Alex Colter, Project Manager, Walla Walla District, Corps of Engineers, CENWW-PM-PPL-P, 201 North Third Avenue, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876, phone (509) 527-7254; or Ms. Sandra Shelin, NEPA Coordinator, Walla Walla District, Corps of Engineers, CENWW-PPL-C, 201 North Third Avenue, Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876, phone (509) 527-7265; or via email to [NEPANWW@usace.army.mil](mailto:NEPANWW@usace.army.mil) and inserting "Mill Creek SEIS" in the subject line.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Mill Creek Flood Control Project (MCFCP) was constructed to provide flood risk reduction for the City of Walla Walla (City) and adjacent downstream areas. The major structural components of the Project were completed in 1942 with minor components added thereafter. Fish ladders were constructed in 1982. The federally managed portion of the

MCFCP (Project) consists of a diversion dam on Mill Creek to divert flood waters about 1½ miles upstream of the City to an off-stream storage reservoir (Bennington Lake); a dam that impounds Bennington Lake; a division works downstream on Mill Creek to direct flows into two distributaries, Yellowhawk and Garrison creeks; and about one mile of engineered channel extending between the diversion dam to just downstream of the division works. The local flood control district maintains the remaining six miles of engineered channel extending downstream from the federally managed channel through the City to Gose Street Bridge in Walla Walla County. The primary purpose of the Project is to provide flood risk management, but recreation was added as a project purpose in 1944. The Project also provides fish and wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities associated with fish and wildlife. For the purpose of this SEIS, the "Project" consists of only the federally operated and maintained portion of the MCFCP.

The Corps has identified several on-going O&M activities that may not have been adequately addressed in the 1975 FEIS or were implemented after the 1975 FEIS, as well as proposed new O&M actions. These include:

**On-Going O&M**

- Update pest management to address invasive species.
- Perform levee vegetation maintenance.
- Periodically remove accumulated sediment from the diversion dam forebay.
- Periodically remove debris from the Russell Creek Canal (used to drain flood flows from Bennington Lake).
- Perform trail construction and maintenance.
- Install recreation features such as benches and shelters.
- Maintain a conservation pool for fish stocking and recreational use of Bennington Lake.

**Proposed New O&M Actions**

- Plant food plots for pollinating insects.
- Construct an interpretive center.
- Use prescribed burning to manage vegetation.
- Upgrade and improve the water seepage monitoring system at the storage dam.
- Remove accumulated sediment from around the intake tower in Bennington Lake.
- Evaluate the flow level for starting to divert flood flows into Bennington Lake.