



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Portland District

PUBLIC NOTICE

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**EAST WHITE SALMON TREATY FISHING ACCESS SITE DEVELOPMENT
Klickitat County, Washington**

CENWP-PM-E-04-02
Issue Date: April 16, 2004
Expiration Date: May 17, 2004

30 Day Notice

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Portland District, proposes to construct a treaty fishing access site near the Columbia River in Klickitat County, Washington. Development will occur on an eight-acre parcel of land and the main components of work will include construction of a paved 24-foot wide access road and parking areas, construction of a fish processing building, removal of a house, and construction of two sewage drain fields.

Environmental Documents: A draft Environmental Assessment addressing the impacts associated with the activity is enclosed for public review and comment.

State Water Quality Certification: Not required, as no fill or excavation will occur in-water.

Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972: The project location is outside the Coastal Zone.

Additional Information and Comments: Questions or comments regarding the enclosed environmental documents should be directed to Steve Helm, Environmental Resources Branch, telephone (503) 808-4778, or at the address below. Comments on this notice must be mailed by the above closing date to:

District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineer District, Portland
Attn: CENWP-PM-E
P.O. Box 2946
Portland, Oregon 97208-2946

In your response, please refer to the above public notice number, title and date.

Should no response be received by the above closing date, a "no comment" response will be assumed.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
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INTRODUCTION

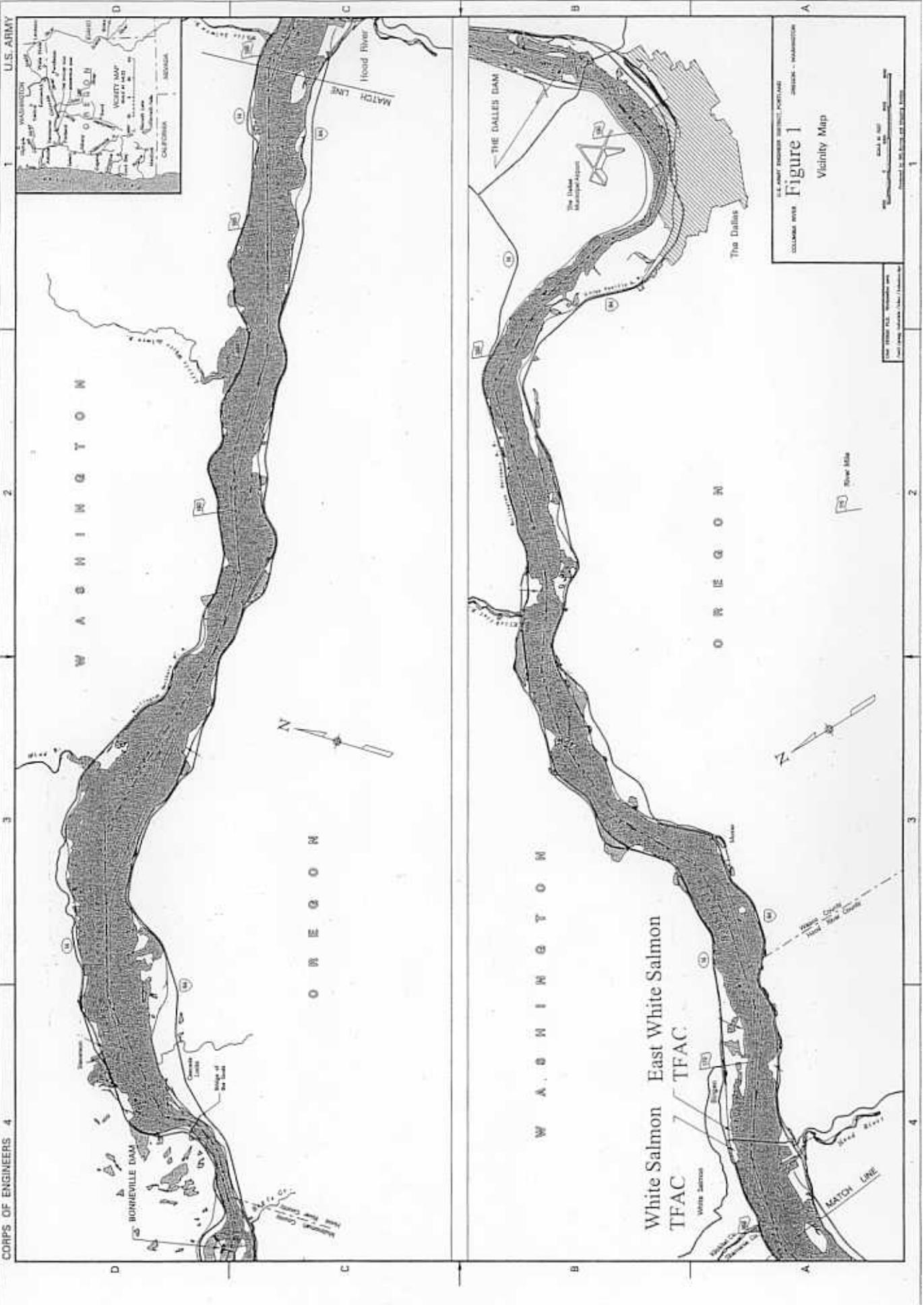
In November of 1988 the Congress passed Public Law 100-581, Review of Tribal Constitutions and Bylaws. Title IV of this law, Columbia River Treaty Fishing Access Sites (CRTFAS), authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to acquire, develop, and transfer lands along the Columbia River on Bonneville, The Dalles, and John Day pools in support of treaty fishing of four Treaty Tribes: The Nez Perce Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Indian Nation. In general, Title IV provides that designated sites shall be administered to provide access and facilities in support of treaty fishing use of these four Treaty Tribes. In addition, the law directs the Corps to identify, acquire, and improve six sites adjacent to Bonneville Pool for treaty fishing access and to conduct facility improvements at five existing in-lieu sites.

The East White Salmon Treaty Fishing Access Site is part of the CRTFAS project and will be utilized by the four above-mentioned tribes. CRTFAS is an authorized project for the mitigation of lost tribal fishing access resulting from flooding of historically used fishing sites from construction of Bonneville Dam and the resulting creation of an extensive pool environment. The East White Salmon site is one of the land acquisition sites.

The site is located in Klickitat County, Washington within the city of White Salmon about ¼ mile east of the Hood River Bridge and ½ mile west of the city of Bingen along the Columbia River at approximately river mile 169 (Figure 1) upstream of Bonneville Dam, which is located at river mile 145. The White Salmon Treaty Fishing Access Site is nearby, located west of the Hood River Bridge. A Finding of No Significant Impact for acquisition of the East White Salmon Site, along with two other sites, was signed on January 29, 2002. This site was known as the Kim site at that time and was in private ownership prior to acquisition. The property is currently zoned Light Industrial. Eventual administration of this site would be the responsibility of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

NEED AND PURPOSE FOR ACTION

The need and purpose for this action is to develop a treaty fishing access site as directed by Title IV of Public Law 100-581, as amended. This law, signed in 1988, provides authority for construction of treaty fishing access sites to the four Treaty Tribes (the Nez Perce Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Indian Nation) whose usual and accustomed fishing access sites were inundated by construction of dams on the Columbia River.



ALTERNATIVES

Proposed Action Alternative:

This alternative is the development of the East White Salmon Treaty Fishing Access Site in accord with Public Law 100-581.

This alternative would result in the following (refer to Figure 2):

- 1) Removal of the house and outbuildings at the north end of the property.
- 2) Construction of a paved 24-foot wide access road and parking areas.
- 3) Construction of a fish processing building with loading dock, hydrolysate equipment, and fish delivery area.
- 4) Removal of some non-native shrubs and blackberries.
- 5) Excavation and fill in upland areas to create a more level surface for construction of the access road, parking areas, and fish processing building.
- 6) Construction of two sewage drain fields (one for fish processing and one for a restroom). Construction of these two drain fields will not occur if Congress approves the expansion of the City of White Salmon municipal sewer system.

Fish waste matter after processing through the hydrolysate equipment would be removed from the site, and likely sold as fertilizer.

No docking or unloading of boats will occur on-site. All fish will be trucked to the site.

Construction is scheduled to begin in fall of 2004 and completed by fall of 2005.

No Action Alternative:

Under the No Action Alternative, no development would occur and the property would remain unused.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This stretch of the Columbia River above Bonneville Dam is located within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, administered by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Additional information on the resources of the region can be found in the Corps' "Land Acquisition Study Main Report" (1994). Other government publications such as the "Mid-Columbia River Projects Master Plan for Resource Use" (1988) by the Corps and the "Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan" (1990) prepared by the USFS and the Columbia River Gorge Commission are useful resources. Pertinent Corps' publications are available upon request.

The property proposed for development occupies approximately eight acres that slopes from Washington State Highway 14 at the north end at an elevation of about 155 feet mean sea level (msl) and loses elevation to about 110 feet msl at the south end near the Columbia River. The majority of the site is upland and much of the land is grassy, former

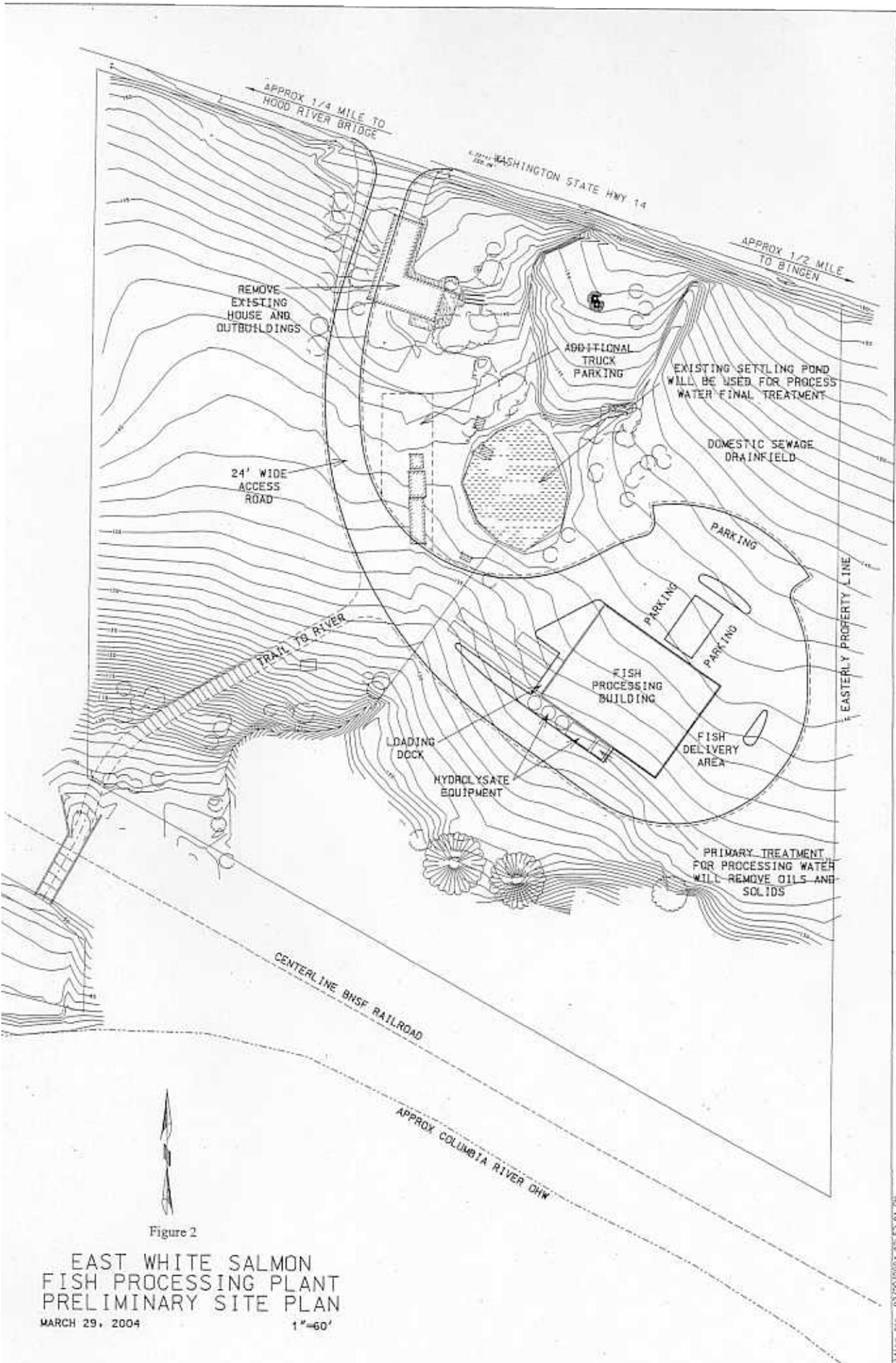


Figure 2

EAST WHITE SALMON
 FISH PROCESSING PLANT
 PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN
 MARCH 29, 2004 1"=60'

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pasture land. Non-native Himalayan blackberry is prevalent in the southern and northwestern portions of the property. Large Douglas fir trees and riparian trees and shrubs are present near the southern end of the property. A landscape buffer of ornamental row shrubs is present along the western and eastern edges of the property. A pond is present in the north-central part of the property. The pond is about 40 feet wide with riparian trees along its eastern edge. Native deciduous and Douglas fir shrubs are scattered east of the pond amid blackberries. Ornamental trees and shrubs are scattered about the property. One seep was noted near the southwest corner of the property. A railroad and ditch occur near the southern end of the property and a house exists at the northern end of the property along Washington State Highway 14.

A variety of federally listed threatened and endangered species occur in the vicinity of the project area. Bald eagles occur in the vicinity and are listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The closest bald eagle nesting pairs are the Twin Tunnels Pair located in Hood River County, Oregon approximately 2.5 miles from the site and the Catherine Creek Pair located in Klickitat County, Washington approximately 4.5 miles from the site.

Until recently, bull trout were not known to occur in this stretch of the Columbia River. Recent collections of bull trout have occurred in the Columbia River off the mouth of Hood River and Klickitat River as well as in Drano Lake. Hood River fish have been reported behind Bonneville dam in the winters of recent years. Bull trout normally begin migrating upstream to spawning areas in the upper portions of tributaries in late spring or early summer and spawn in fall. Fry hatch the following spring and may either remain in the vicinity of hatching or migrate downstream to rear in lakes or the main stems of the larger tributaries of the Columbia River.

Anadromous salmon (those that spend most of their adult lives in saltwater and migrate to freshwater to spawn) that occur in this stretch of the Columbia River above Bonneville Dam include steelhead (Middle Columbia River; Threatened), steelhead (Lower Columbia River; Threatened), steelhead (Upper Columbia River; Endangered), steelhead (Snake River Basin; Threatened), sockeye salmon (Salmon River tributary to the Snake River, Idaho; Endangered), Chinook salmon (Fall runs in the Snake River; Threatened), Chinook salmon (Spring/summer runs in the Snake River; Threatened), Chinook salmon (Lower Columbia River; Threatened), and Chinook salmon (Upper Columbia River; Endangered). In general, adults use the lower river principally as a migration corridor to spawning areas in the upper basin and tributaries. They are actively migrating and normally do not spend any time in the lower river resting or feeding. Steelhead (Lower Columbia River) spawn in tributaries to the Columbia River and chinook salmon (Lower Columbia River) spawn in the mainstem Columbia River in gravels of appropriate size. Juveniles occur in the lower river during their out-migration to the ocean. Juveniles that have not become smolts such as fall Chinook sub-yearlings spend extended periods of time rearing in the lower river. They normally remain in the lower river or estuary until fall or the following spring when they become smolts and then migrate to the ocean. Rearing occurs primarily in the shallow backwater areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Proposed Action Alternative:

Habitat that would be impacted under the Proposed Action Alternative consists of primarily human-influenced disturbed areas primarily of grassy former pasture land and Himalayan blackberry. A small amount of native shrubs in upland situations may be required to be removed to facilitate development. The rows of ornamental shrubs along the east and west sides of the property will be removed. Planting of native seedlings and blackberry removal may occur. No development in wetlands or the 100-year floodplain will occur. No in-water fill will be placed. Topography in upland areas will be altered slightly with excavation and fill required for development of the access road, parking areas, and buildings. No soil material will be imported to the site or taken from the site. Wildlife habitat quality on-site is moderate and development of the site would not worsen habitat quality.

Bald eagles may forage near the site at times but nest so far away to be affected by implementation of the Proposed Alternative.

No in-water work or changes to riparian vegetation will occur from implementation of the Proposed Alternative. Therefore, the Proposed Alternative would not affect bull trout and their habitat or anadromous salmon and their habitat. No tributaries to the Columbia River that could support fish exist on-site.

As fish will be trucked to the site, minor increases in traffic on Washington State Highway 14 will result. It is estimated that a maximum of 40 vehicles per day could come and go from the site. This will include mainly pick-up trucks. Several semi-trucks could visit the site per day.

No Action Alternative:

No environmental consequences would result under the No Action Alternative, although Himalayan blackberry would likely spread as there are un-shaded areas adjacent to established stands of blackberry that could support this plant.

COORDINATION

This Environmental Assessment was prepared to address the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and was issued for 30-day public and agency review on April 16, 2004 under Public Notice CENWP-PM-E-04-02. This Environmental Assessment was sent to the following for review:

National Marine Fisheries Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area
Washington Department of Ecology

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Klickitat County Commissioners
City of Bingen, Washington
City of Stevenson, Washington
City of White Salmon, Washington
City of Hood River, Oregon
Friends of the Columbia Gorge

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

- a. Clean Air Act of 1970, as amended: The Proposed Action Alternative would not affect clean air standards.
- b. Clean Water Act of 1977 (33 U.S.C. 1344): No wetlands would be impacted. An Oregon Department of Environmental Quality 401 Water Quality Certification is not required for this project; therefore, no 404b1 Evaluation will be produced.
- c. Coastal Zone Management Act: Not applicable.
- d. Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended: No Effect determinations were prepared for bald eagles and bull trout, both listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was informed of these determinations.

No Effect determinations were also made for steelhead (Middle Columbia River; Threatened), steelhead (Lower Columbia River; Threatened), steelhead (Upper Columbia River; Endangered), steelhead (Snake River Basin; Threatened), sockeye salmon (Salmon River tributary to the Snake River, Idaho; Endangered), Chinook salmon (Fall runs in the Snake River; Threatened), Chinook salmon (Spring/summer runs in the Snake River; Threatened), Chinook salmon (Lower Columbia River; Threatened), and Chinook salmon (Upper Columbia River; Endangered). NOAA Fisheries was informed of these determinations.

- e. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act: A Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act report was produced for congressionally authorized treaty fishing access site work in the Bonneville pool. Individual site designs will be coordinated separately. The development of the East White Salmon site is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- f. Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972, as amended: Not applicable.
- g. Natural Historic Preservation Act 36CFR800: This site has potential for cultural resources. Field investigation will be required and coordination will

occur with the Treaty Tribes and the State Historic Preservation Officer of Washington.

- h. Executive Order 11988, Flood Plain Management, 24 May 1977: The Proposed Action Alternative would have no effect on flood plains.
- i. Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands: The Proposed Action Alternative would have no effect on wetlands.
- j. Analysis of Impacts on Prime and Unique Farmlands: Not applicable.
- k. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability (CERCLA) and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). There is no indication that any hazardous, toxic and radioactive waste (HTRW) are in the vicinity. Presence of HTRW would be responded to within the requirements of the law and Corps regulations and guidelines.

In addition to these federal consultation requirements, appropriate State of Washington and/or Klickitat County permits will be obtained as required for such project components as drain field and building construction and house removal.