



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Portland District

# PUBLIC NOTICE

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

### **Julia Butler Hansen Columbian White-tailed Deer National Wildlife Refuge**

### **Section 536 Habitat Restoration Project Lower Columbia River and Estuary**

CENWP-PM-E-07-03

Issue Date: September 7, 2007

Expiration Date: September 27, 2007

### **20 Day Notice**

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Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Julia Butler Hansen Columbian White-tailed Deer National Wildlife Refuge propose to restore tidal influence via emplacement of new or modification of existing water control structures at eight sloughs located on the Service's refuge near Cathlamet, Washington.

A flood control levee and associated water control structures constructed in the early 1920's cut the eight sloughs off from the tidal and river stage influence of the Columbia River. One water control structure is currently failing, one provides for limited inflow and the remaining two are for discharge only; four sloughs do not have water control structures in place. This action is necessary to restore fisheries habitat and allow for access of juvenile salmonids, including Federally-listed species, to their former habitat while maintaining drainage of the mainland portion of the Julia Butler Hansen refuge to support the secure and viable population of Columbian white-tailed deer. Potential work is detailed in the attached Draft Integrated Implementation Report (IIR) and Environmental Assessment (EA).

In accord with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations [Federal Register, 40 C.F.R. 1508.9(a)], an EA is prepared by a federal agency when a proposed action is not covered by a categorical exclusion or otherwise exempt from NEPA. Federal agencies use the EA to determine whether the proposed action has the potential to cause significant environmental effects. The purposes of the EA are to accomplish the following:

1. Provide evidence and analysis sufficient to determine whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required.
2. Aid a federal agency's compliance with NEPA when no EIS is necessary.
3. Facilitate preparation of an EIS when one is necessary.

For purposes of this proposed project, an IIR and EA are meant to be the primary tool that federal agencies use to determine whether or not to prepare an EIS.

Completion of this IIR and EA will involve consideration of all public comments. Upon completion of the IIR/EA, a determination of significance will be made on the preferred alternative and either a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be made, concluding the NEPA process, or a decision will be made to prepare an EIS. In order to prepare an EIS, it must be determined that the proposed action will have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

This IIR/EA is somewhat general as some details of potential work have yet to be determined. Public input on this IIR/EA is encouraged to promote early involvement in the project planning process.

**Environmental Documents:** The draft IIR/EA addressing the impacts associated with the activity can be viewed on the web at <https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/home.asp>. Click on 'New Information', then click on 'Julia Butler Hanson...' link.

**State Water Quality Certification:** State Water Quality Certification, pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act is required from the Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE). An application was provided to WDOE on August 9, 2007 for the review.

**Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972:** A Consistency determinations was prepared and submitted to the WDOE for concurrence on August 9, 2007.

**Additional Information and Comments:** The draft IIR/EA addressing the impacts associated with the activity can be viewed on the web at <https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/home.asp>. Click on 'New Information', then click on 'Julia Butler Hanson...' link. Questions or comments regarding the enclosed document can be directed to Geoff Dorsey, Environmental Resources Branch, telephone (503) 808-4769 or via e-mail at [geoffrey.l.dorsey@usace.army.mil](mailto:geoffrey.l.dorsey@usace.army.mil) or at the address below. Mailed comments on this notice must be postmarked by the above closing date and sent to:

District Engineer  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineer District, Portland  
Attn: CENWP-PM-E/Geoff Dorsey  
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 postmarked by the above closing date, a "no comment" response will be assumed.