

DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE

Description of Proposal: The La Center Wetlands Habitat Restoration Project includes two sites "Site 43" to the north and "Site 43B" to the south. Construction at site 43 will consist of excavating an existing backwater channel to create a meandering channel with easier fish access at a higher range of flow conditions. A weir will be removed at the outlet of the floodplain into this channel, and a roughened channel will be installed to maintain grade control where the fish ladder is removed. Three new connection channels between the East Fork Lewis River and the floodplain wetlands at site 43 will increase floodplain connectivity, and prefabricated bridges placed over the breaches will allow continued recreational opportunities on the pedestrian and equestrian trail that runs along the existing levee. Construction at site 43B entails re-grading steep side slopes of an existing backwater channel and removing an existing culvert to increase fish passage. A prefabricated bridge will replace the existing culvert to allow light vehicle traffic to continue to pass. A new connection channel will be created at the east (upstream) end of site 43B to increase floodplain connectivity. Native riparian revegetation will occur throughout the area.

Proponent: Clark County Department of Environmental Services

Location of proposal, including street address, if any: The project is located directly adjacent to the city of La Center. The closest addresses to the main entry points to the site are: 31096-31652 NW Timmen Rd, Ridgefield, WA 98642 and 189 NW Pacific Hwy, La Center, WA 98629.

Site 43: T4N R1E Section 3 SE Quarter; 45.857493, -122.667476 Tax Parcels: 62646000, 62693000, 209483000, 62659000, 62727000, 62728000, and 209296000

Site 43B: T4N R1E Section 10 NE Quarter; 45.849678, -122.666965 Tax Parcel: 21147400, 211723000

Lead Agency: Department of Environmental Services, Clark County, Washington

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

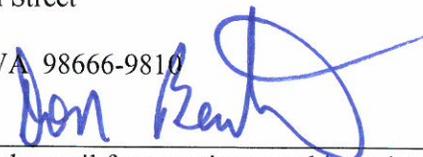
The lead agency has determined that the requirements for environmental analysis, protection, and mitigation measures have been adequately addressed in the development regulations and comprehensive plan adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW, and in other applicable local, state, or federal laws or rules, as provided by RCW 43.21C.240 and WAC 197-11-158. Our agency will not require any additional mitigation measures under SEPA.

This DNS is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 15 days from the date below.

Comments must be submitted by **July 22, 2015**

Responsible Official: Don Benton
Position/title: Director, Clark County Department of Environmental Services
Address: Clark County Environmental Services
1300 Franklin Street
PO Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98666-9810

Date: July 6th, 2015

Signature: 

The staff contact person, telephone number, and e-mail for questions on this review is Jennifer Taylor, 360-397-2121 ext. 4227, jennifer.taylor@clark.wa.gov

**SEPA DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE
DISTRIBUTION LIST**

PROJECT: La Center Wetlands and Habitat Restoration Project

Notice Date: **June 29, 2015**

Please find enclosed an environmental Determination of Non Significance (DNS) issued pursuant to State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Rules (Chapter 197-11, Washington Administrative Code). The enclosed review comments reflect evaluation of the environmental checklist by the lead agency as required by WAC 197-11-330(1)(a)(i).

Written comments may be submitted on this determination within fifteen (15) days of its issuance, after which the DNS will be reconsidered in light of the comments received.

Please address all correspondence to:

Clark County Department of Environmental Services
Jennifer Taylor, Environmental Coordinator
PO Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98666-9810

DISTRIBUTION

Federal Agencies

US Army Corps of Engineers

State Agencies:

Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

Department of Ecology

Dept. of Natural Resources SW Washington

Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Regional Agencies:

SW Washington Health District

Fort Vancouver Regional Library

Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation

Local Agencies:

City of La Center

Clark County Conservation District

Clark Public Utilities - Water

Clark Public Utilities - Electric

Clark County Board of Councilors

Clark County Community Development
Administration

- Development Services

- Fire Marshall's Office

- Clark County Sheriff's Office

Clark County Department of Environmental Services

La Center School District

Special Purpose:

Clark County Fire District No. 12

Other:

The Columbian

The Reflector

Neighborhood & Homeowner Assoc.

Properties within 500' of project (postcard only)

Special Purpose Agencies:

Comcast Cable Services

Qwest

Northwest Natural

Clark Regional Wastewater District

Cowlitz Indian Tribe

Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation

Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. background

1. *Name of proposed project, if applicable:*

La Center Wetlands Habitat Restoration Project

2. *Name of applicant:*

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership

3. *Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:*

Landowner

Clark County Department of Environmental Services
Patrick Lee
Legacy Lands
1300 Franklin Street, 1st Floor
Vancouver, WA 98660
patrick.lee@clark.wa.gov
360-397-2121x4070

Project Sponsor's Authorized Agent

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership
Marshall Johnson, Principle Restoration
Ecologist
811 SW Naito Parkway, Suite 410
Portland, OR 97204
mjohnson@estuarypartnership.org
503-226-1565

4. *Date checklist prepared:*

May 19, 2015

5. *Agency requesting checklist:*

Clark County Environmental Services

6. *Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):*

Aug 1 2015 to Oct 31 2016

7. *Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.*

No

8. *List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.*

- Wetland Delineation Report (Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership, 2015)
- Erosion and Sediment Control Plan
- Stormwater Pollution and Prevention Plan

- Archeological Report (Willamette Cultural Resource Associates Ltd, 2015)
- No-Net Rise Floodplain Analysis (Estuary Partnership, 2015)
- Rare Plant Survey (Estuary Partnership, 2014)
- Geotechnical Study (GRI, 2014)
- Lower EF Lewis Floodplain Restoration Project-Review of observed groundwater and surface-water interactions at Site 43B (Interfluve, 2013)
- East Fork Lewis River Breeding Bird Monitoring Report (Vancouver/Clark Parks and Recreation, 2010)
- Lower East Fork Lewis River Habitat Restoration Plan (East Fork Lewis River Working Group-April, 2009)
- Seasonal Floodplain Wetlands as Fish Habitat in Oregon and Washington (Cynthia F. Baker, 2008)
- Kalama, Washougal and Lewis River Habitat Assessments (LCFRB, 2004)

9. *Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.*

There are no separate proposals affecting the property covered by this proposal.

10. *List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.*

- Clark County Floodplain Development Permit
- Clark County Grading Permit
- Clark County Shoreline Exemption
- Hydraulic Project Approval (Department of Fish and Wildlife)
- Water Quality Certification (Department of Ecology)
- Aquatic Use Authorization and Right of Entry Permit (Department of Natural Resources)
- Section 404-fill in wetlands/waters (US Army Corps of Engineers)
- Section 106 Cultural Resources Concurrence (DAHP)

11. *Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.*

The purpose of this project is to increase connectivity between the East Fork Lewis River (EFLR) and 453 acres of floodplain while improving fish habitat and access, and maintaining existing recreational opportunities. The project includes two sites "Site 43" to the north and "Site 43B" to the south. Construction at site 43 will consist of excavating an existing backwater channel to create a meandering channel with easier fish access at a higher range of flow conditions. A weir will be removed at the outlet of the floodplain into this channel, and a roughened channel will be installed to maintain grade control where the fish ladder is removed. Large wood will be installed in the channel to increase stability and provide fish habitat. Three new connection channels between the East Fork Lewis River and the floodplain wetlands at site 43 will increase floodplain connectivity, and prefabricated bridges placed over the breaches will allow continued recreational opportunities on the pedestrian and equestrian trail that runs along the existing levee. Native riparian revegetation will occur throughout the area.

Construction at site 43B entails re-grading steep or vertical side slopes of an existing backwater channel and removing an existing culvert to increase fish passage. A prefabricated bridge will replace the existing culvert to allow light vehicle traffic to continue to pass. Large wood will be

placed in the channel to increase stability and provide fish habitat. A new connection channel will be created at the east (upstream) end of site 43B to increase floodplain connectivity.

12. *Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known.*

The proposal site is located directly adjacent to the city of La Center. The closest addresses to the main entry points to the site are: 31096-31652 NW Timmen Rd, Ridgefield, WA 98642 and 189 NW Pacific Hwy, La Center, WA 98629. The project occurs on two natural areas on either side of the lower East Fork Lewis River located immediately upstream from La Center, Washington between River Mile 3.2 and 5.

Site 43: T4N R1E Section 3 SE Quarter; 45.857493, -122.667476

Tax Parcels: 62646000, 62693000, 209483000, 62659000, 62727000, 62728000, 209296000

Site 43B: T4N R1E Section 10 NE Quarter; 45.849678, -122.666965

Tax Parcel: 21147400, 211723000

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

a. *General description of the site (circle one):* **Flat**, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other _____

b. *What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?*

The slope for both sites is <1%.

c. *What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)?*

Approximately 91% of the study area is made up of the following NRCS soil units:

- Puyallup fine sand loam, 0-3% slopes
- Sauvie silt loam, 0-3% slopes
- Sauvie silt loam, sandy substratum, 0-3% slopes.

d. *Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.*

No unstable soils are known in the immediate vicinity.

e. *Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.*

The purpose of excavation/backfilling on Site 43 is to (1) realign a straightened engineered channel to have gentler slopes and meanders to encourage floodplain connectivity and native

vegetation establishment, (2) create three new connection channels from the river into the floodplain to allow more natural hydrologic connection and fish passage into the site (and install bridges for public access over the channels), (3) remove a concrete weir that blocks fish passage, and (4) install large woody debris structures to improve habitat, hydrologic connectivity, and channel stability. River rock will be used to construct the roughened channel, and rock will also be used as backfill for large woody debris placements, to stabilize construction access and to resurface the La Center Bottoms recreational trail as needed post-construction.

The purpose of excavation/backfilling on Site 43B is to (1) create a new connection channel from the river into the floodplain to allow more natural hydrologic connection and fish passage into the site, (2) replace a culvert that partially blocks fish passage with a bridge, (3) recontour channel banks to encourage floodplain connectivity, and (4) install large woody debris structures to improve habitat, hydrologic connectivity, and channel stability.

Any excess fill material from Site 43 and 43B will be placed in nearby degraded (dominated by invasive weeds) fields which will then be seeded with native grass seed and densely planted with native trees and shrubs. The source of gravel fill will be selected by the Contractor and approved by the Construction Manager. All imported gravel/stone fill will be clean free of invasive species.

Summary of quantities:

Excavation volume: 13,000 cubic yards

Fill volume: 13,000 cubic yards

Total area affected: 15 acres

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

Project plans will incorporate sediment and erosion control measures to reduce the amount of erosion and decrease the amount of turbidity in stormwater runoff. These measures may include but are not limited to silt fence, check dams, straw wattles, and inlet protection. These measures will be monitored for effectiveness during construction and will be repaired or replaced to maintain performance.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

Less than 1% of the approximate 453 acres of floodplain habitat restored to normal riverine and tidal hydrology will be covered with impervious surface by this project. The project actually reduces the amount of current impervious or nearly impervious surface by removing culvert fill and removing a concrete weir. Bridges placed over the new connection channels total 1,200 square feet of impervious surface.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

The contractor will be required to implement an erosion control plan complying with the Clark County Erosion Control Ordinance during construction. The following BMPs may be used to minimize sediment input to EFLR: cofferdams, silt fences, turbidity curtains, and dewatering pumps. From May 1st through September 30th 2015, all exposed soils will be protected from

erosion by mulching, plastic sheeting, hydro seed covering, or other temporary measures. Disturbed soil areas will be permanently stabilized. Spoil piles will be placed on the floodplain side of existing levees to decrease probability of erosion.

2. Air

- a. *What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.*

Emissions from construction worker vehicles and equipment during construction will be temporary and short-term. The project itself will not generate air emissions, since it is designed as a habitat enhancement project. Dust emissions and fuel dispensing/storage are the only known activities that could have the potential to produce an emission or odor nuisance.

- b. *Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.*

The project site is not within Clark County's Ozone or Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Area's .

- c. *Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:*

During construction, the contractor will be required to shut off all idle equipment. Construction equipment is required by law to have in place and functional the emission control devices they were equipped with at the time of their manufacture. Also, common construction dust control practices will be addressed in the plans and implemented by the contractor. Since there are no long-term emissions or impacts to air quality anticipated, no mitigation measures are proposed.

3. Water

- a. *Surface Water:*

- 1) *Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.*

The project area is located on floodplains on the right and left bank of the East Fork Lewis River. These floodplain areas are primarily composed of freshwater emergent wetlands, freshwater forested/shrub wetlands, and freshwater ponds. The backwater channel in site 43 is a straight engineered channel connected to a fish ladder/weir. This fish ladder/weir currently acts as a grade control feature and seasonal fish passage barrier from the backwater channel into the floodplain wetland complex.

The backwater channel at Site 43B connects the EFLR to the river left wetland complex. A perched culvert currently acts as a velocity barrier at higher flows, inhibiting fish passage from the backwater channel into the floodplain at some flows.

- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Please see answer for Section 1.e above.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

Native soil spoil piles will be placed on 2.6 acres of water body 2 on the floodplain side of the levee. Spoil piles will be placed on 2.68 acres of wetland 5. Both of these piles will contain roughly 5,000 cubic yards of material. The table below contains the material quantities:

Item	Unit	Total Quantity	Wetland					Water Body	
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2
Total fill	CY	3,465	0	0	51	0	521	2598	572
Total excavation	CY	12,202	0	50	417	0	1,223	10,028	1,283
Total spoils	CY	9,938	0	0	41	0	1,024	8,413	1,076
Total spoils	AC	5.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.68	2.63	0.00
Total excavation/ fill	AC	2.97	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.69	2.20	0.71

Imported rock and native soil fill will be placed on site during the project. Rock fill will be placed on Site 43 for the roughened channel, as anchoring material for large wood placements and during bridge installation at the three new connection channels. Rock fill will be placed on Site 43B as anchoring material for large wood placements, during bridge installation and in a swale to create a stream ford near the connection channel at levee breach D. Clean rock fill will be imported. All material sources will be provided by the Contractor and approved by the Engineer.

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Temporary dewatering of the two existing side channels will be required during construction. The sections of the channels where work will occur will be isolated with a cofferdam. Pumps will be used to remove the water from the channels. Approximately 28,000 gallons of water will be discharged into vegetated (i.e. with reed canarygrass) field or swale nearby.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

Yes. The project site lies entirely within a 100-year floodplain.

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

The proposal does not involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters. Work will be conducted while diversion systems are in place. Work will occur in dry conditions

and will not require any contact with or discharge into channels, streams or other surface waters. Use of silt fences, turbidity curtains, cofferdams, and dewatering pumps will limit the amount of sediment discharged into the East Fork Lewis River.

b. Ground Water:

- 1) Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.*

No groundwater will be withdrawn from a well for any purposes. No water will be discharged to groundwater.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any.*

No waste material will be discharged into groundwater.

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.*

During construction temporary runoff impacts will be mitigated using coffer dams, sediment screens, and dewatering pumps. Any water removed from the channel using a dewatering pump will be pumped to the floodplain side of the levee to allow sediment to settle out before the water returns to the wetland or stream. All impacted sites will be restored after construction is complete.

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.*

A Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan has been developed and will be followed during construction to ensure waste materials are properly contained. The following BMPs may be used to protect ground and surface waters: coffer dams, sediment screens, turbidity curtains, erosion control fence and dewatering pumps.

- 3) Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.*

The existing engineered channel that leads from the East Fork Lewis River into the wetlands at Site 43 (La Center Bottoms) will be enhanced with more natural meanders and banks will be recontoured to have gentler slopes and encourage connection with the adjacent side channel. The weir at the end of the channel will be replaced with a natural channel that improves hydrologic connection and fish passage. New connection channels will be created to improve the connectivity between the East Fork Lewis River and its floodplain. A culvert (at Site 43B - RM 3.7) is a partial fish passage barrier and will be replaced with a bridge and the areas immediately upstream and downstream of the culvert will be re-graded to eliminate the existing scour pools. The banks of the

channel from the culvert to the EFLR will be recontoured to improve habitat, hydrologic connectivity and stability.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

All exposed soils will be protected from erosion by mulching, plastic sheeting, hydro seed covering, or other temporary measures to prevent sediment from entering EFLR. Sediment curtains, turbidity curtains, cofferdams, and dewatering pumps will be used to reduce risk of sediment input to EFLR and other surface waters during construction. All disturbed soils will be seeded or planted with native vegetation.

4. Plants

a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:

- deciduous trees including: cottonwoods, alder, willow, dogwood, ash, etc.*
- evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other*
- shrubs*
- grass*
- pasture*
- crop or grain*
- Orchards, vineyards or other permanent crops.*
- wet soil plants, including: reed canarygrass, common spike rush, wapato, sago pondweed, etc.*
- water plants, including curly pondweed, coontail, yellow pond-lily, etc.*
- other types of vegetation*

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

The great majority of the site where construction activities will occur is dominated by a reed canarygrass monoculture. Excavation for the connection channels and enhancement of the existing channels will impact approximately 5 acres of reed canarygrass. Smaller patches of blackberry growing in various upland locations, such as along the levee and riparian banks of the river will also be impacted during construction of the channels and enhancements. Collectively these patches of blackberry that will be amount to one acre or less.

Although locations were chosen to minimize impacts to any existing native trees or vegetation, approximately 25 trees (cottonwood, alder and ash) between 2" and 24" DBH will be impacted because they are in the locations of the proposed connection channels. Any trees removed will be incorporated into LWD habitat structures that will be placed in the channels and wetlands as part of the habitat enhancement for the project. The project also includes native grass seeding in all bare soils, followed by dense native tree and shrub planting, as well as a larger reforestation effort throughout the site. Approximately 90,000 new native trees and shrubs will be planted across 50 acres.

c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

None, water howellia (*Howellia aquatilis*) was not found during rare plant surveys.

- d. *Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:*

All disturbed areas will be seeded with a native plant seed mix. Extensive native tree and shrub planting will also occur. Approximately 20 acres in and around the disturbance area for the construction of the connection channels and enhancements, as well as 30 acres in the surrounding areas at the site, will be planted with approximately 90,000 native trees and shrubs.

- e. *List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.*

Invasive reed canarygrass, spotted ladysthumb, blackberry and curly pondweed are contained in site 43. Invasive reed canarygrass, yellow flag iris, spotted ladysthumb, curly pondweed, and bitter nightshade are contained in site 43B. Locations outside of the inundated areas were predominantly in full coverage by reed canarygrass.

Yellow flag iris, reed canarygrass, curly pondweed, and Himalayan blackberry are listed by the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board as noxious weeds.

5. **Animals**

- a. *List any birds and other animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.*

Birds: wintering geese, ducks, cavity nesting ducks, and wintering populations of tundra swans
Mammals: beaver, deer, mice, voles, horses, cattle
Fish: Threespine stickleback, chinook, coho, steelhead, cutthroat, chum, carp, yellow perch, crappie, sculpin, and bass.

- b. *List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.*

Chinook, coho, chum, and steelhead.

- b. *Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.*

Yes. Both sites contain priority habitats and species as identified by WDFW. The EFLR and its surrounding floodplain are listed as biodiversity areas, with high quality habitat and multi-layered canopy. These habitats are also identified as supporting high waterfowl concentrations including wintering geese, ducks, cavity nesting ducks, and wintering populations of tundra swans. Fall chum, Chinook, Coho, summer steelhead, winter steelhead, rainbow trout, and residential cutthroat trout all use the EFLR as a migration route and rearing habitat. Chinook salmon spawn in the EFLR.

- c. *Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:*

Removal of the weirs/fish ladders at sites 43 and 43b is expected to increase fish access to the floodplain. Increasing the duration of floodplain inundation is expected to improve habitat conditions for waterfowl and wading birds.

e. *List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.*

The applicant is not aware of any invasive animals at or near the site. However, nutria have not been directly observed, it is likely that they exist on or near this site.

6. Energy and natural resources

a. *What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.*

This project has no long term energy needs. Diesel fuel will be used by construction equipment.

b. *Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.*

Because this project takes place entirely on a floodplain wetland natural area held for conservation purposes, there is no development on the site that would potentially utilize solar power, therefore the project would not affect its potential use.

c. *What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:*

Because this is a habitat restoration project that will enhance fish, wildlife and plant habitat at the site, there are not development energy conservation features, and no impacts on energy use are anticipated from the project.

7. Environmental health

a. *Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.*

The proposed project will increase, in the short term, the potential for environmental health hazards at the project site. The increased risks will result from the presence of hazardous materials (e.g., diesel fuel, gasoline, oil, hydraulic fluid, etc.) associated with equipment and vehicles.

1) *Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.*

The site has been in use for natural habitat conservation in recent years, with past uses including grazing and haying with potentially some agricultural use. There are no known contaminants and it is unlikely that any would exist in the project area.

2) *Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.*

No chemicals or utility lines are known to be in the project area. Because the site is a natural area, there is not expected to be any development or infrastructure that would be associated with hazardous chemicals or conditions.

- 3) *Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.*

Diesel fuel will be used by construction equipment but will not be stored on site.

- 4) *Describe special emergency services that might be required.*

No emergency services are expected beyond basic health and safety situations associated with the construction of the project. Therefore no special services should be required.

- 5) *Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:*

The contractor will be required to prepare a Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) plan to be used for the duration of the project. The SPCC plan shall identify construction-planning elements and recognize potential spill sources at the site. The plan shall outline responsive actions in the event of a spill.

b. Noise

- 1) *What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?*

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no noise issues are expected.

- 2) *What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.*

Construction equipment is expected to be the major source of noise. Noise levels will return to pre-project conditions.

- 3) *Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:*

Noise reduction measures include restricting construction hours to 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM, requiring the contractor to shut down idling equipment and maintaining noise minimizing devices (mufflers) on the construction equipment.

8. Land and shoreline use

- a. *What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.*

The project sites are part of Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation East Fork Lewis River Greenway, an interconnected ten mile greenway. The greenway is open to the public with the only development being light recreational: interpretive displays and equestrian and foot trails. The La Center Bottoms pedestrian and equestrian trail runs along the levee on the east side of

EFLR in site 43 over the three proposed levee breach locations. Bridges will be placed over levee breaches to allow unimpeded pedestrian and equestrian access along the trail.

The culvert removed from Site 43B will be replaced with a bridge to maintain access for pedestrians, horseback riders, and maintenance vehicles.

b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses as a result of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?

No land will be converted from working farmland or forest lands as a result of this project. Although some historic agricultural practices likely occurred on portions of the site, and more recently grazing and haying had occurred, current land use is natural resource preservation and passive recreation because Clark County purchased these lands for these purposes.

1) Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how:

Existing roads will be used to access the site for construction. The site is within a large natural area held by the County for conservation purposes, therefore no actions taken for the restoration project are expected to affect any surrounding farm or forest land activities.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

Two unused cattle feeding stations (15 ft long x 10 feet wide x 7 feet tall) and one information kiosk (10 ft long x 10 ft wide x 10 ft tall) stand within the project site but outside of impacted areas.

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

No structures will be demolished.

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

Site 43 is zoned as a park/wildlife refuge. Site 43B is zoned as agriculture-20, with the southwest corner also zoned as an urban reserve-10.

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

Site 43 is a park/open space. Site 43B is agriculture, with the southwest corner also an urban reserve.

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

The shoreline master program designation for both site 43 and 43B is rural conservancy resource land.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

Yes, these sites are classified as critical areas by [RCW 36.70A.030(5)] because they contain wetlands and frequently flooded areas.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

The project is a habitat restoration project, therefore no people will work in or reside in the completed project.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

The project is a habitat restoration project, therefore no people will be displaced.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

Not applicable due to there being no people displaced by the project.

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

The project is a habitat enhancement project within a large natural area held by the County for resource conservation and passive recreation. The project maintains use of the recreational trail by installing bridges wherever new connection channels span the existing trail. Therefore, the project is compatible with the land use.

m. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with nearby agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

The project is a habitat enhancement project within a large natural area held by the County for resource conservation and passive recreation. The project will have no impact on nearby agricultural or forestland. Therefore it is compatible with these lands and uses.

9. Housing

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

The project is a habitat enhancement project and no housing is involved.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

The project is a habitat enhancement project and no housing is involved.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

The project is a habitat enhancement project and no housing is involved.

10. Aesthetics

a. *What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?*

The project is a habitat enhancement project. The existing trail is on the top of the old levee berm. Where the project proposes to construct three new connection channels through the levee berm, trail bridges will be installed at the height of the trail on the levee. These will be the same in height and material as the existing bridge that crosses the existing connection channel on the site. The building material is wood and metal frame and concrete footings (partially buried).

b. *What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?*

Views of the site are from the trail along the old levee berm and other trails throughout the site. Because the project will excavate channels that will be lower than the trails, and all large woody debris will be down in the channels, there is not expected to be any new obstruction of existing views from this habitat enhancement work. Some views will be altered because the connection channels will be created where there are currently a levee berm and reed canarygrass dominated fields. These channels will include attractive trail bridges matching two existing bridges that currently span existing channels at the site along the same trail. New trees and shrub planting of the disturbed soils around the new bridges will be planted with native trees and shrubs, largely screening them from views from the trails and other viewpoints. The majority of current views are of natural areas with trees, shrubs, grasses and open water. The project includes adding more open water (channels) and planting new trees and shrubs. Therefore, although some areas currently in reed canarygrass dominated grasslands will be converted to views of tree/shrub, this is consistent with many other areas currently in the view from the trails and nearby viewpoints, and the new trail bridges will be consistent with existing views.

c. *Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:*

Any logs placed vertically will have snapped ends and be at varying heights to make them appear natural. These structures are not expected to obstruct any views.

11. Light and glare

a. *What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?*

The project is a habitat enhancement project and no light or glare producing components are involved.

b. *Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?*

The project is a habitat enhancement project and no light or glare producing components are involved.

c. *What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?*

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no light or glare issues are expected.

d. *Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:*

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no noise issues are expected and therefore, no reduction measures are required or proposed.

12. Recreation

a. *What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?*

The project sites are part of Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation East Fork Lewis River Greenway, an interconnected ten mile greenway. The greenway is open to the public with the only development being light recreational: interpretive displays and equestrian and foot trails. The La Center Bottoms pedestrian and equestrian trail runs along the levee on the east side of EFLR in Site 43 over the three proposed connection channel locations. Prefabricated bridges will be placed over channels to allow unimpeded pedestrian and equestrian access along the trail.

The culvert to be removed from site 43B will be replaced with a bridge to maintain access for pedestrians, horseback riders, and maintenance vehicles.

b. *Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.*

No. Although the hiking trails will need to be temporarily closed during construction, the existing recreational use will ultimately be preserved and enhanced by installing bridges where the trail is currently in need of maintenance or repair due to levy failure or past breaches by floods.

c. *Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:*

Bridges will be placed over connection channels to maintain trail connectivity in site 43. The culvert to be removed from site 43B will be replaced with a bridge to maintain access for pedestrians, horseback riders, and maintenance vehicles.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

a. *Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers located on or near the site? If so, specifically describe.*

No. Two structures (likely grazer feeding stations) are located within the sites but are not over 50 years old and were not eligible for listing in the national register of historic places. These structures will not be impacted by the proposed actions.

b. *Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.*

A cultural inventory was carried out by Willamette Cultural Resources Associates, Ltd in May, 2015. No recommendations for the National Register of Historic Places were made.

- c. *Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.*

A cultural resources survey was carried out by Willamette Cultural Resources Associates, Ltd in May, 2015. Transects and shovel probing were used to search for cultural artifacts.

Because it is funding the project, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is coordinating the cultural and historic resource assessment for the project. On April 23, 2015 the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) confirmed receipt of the project proposal and concurred with the proposed Area of Potential Effect. On June 4, 2015 BPA submitted the results of the site survey to the Cowlitz Tribe and DAHP for review and seeking concurrence on the determination of no effect to historic properties.

- d. *Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.*

Monitoring of construction activities was recommended by Willamette Cultural Resources Associates, Ltd. In the event that any archaeological or historical artifacts are found during project activity, work will stop, the site will be protected from further disturbance. The Estuary Partnership will notify the Tribes, and all appropriate County, State, and Federal agencies, including the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

14. Transportation

- a. *Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.*

No paved roads are within the project sites. The La Center Bottoms pedestrian and equestrian trail is located in site 43, and a maintenance road located in site 43.

- b. *Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?*

There is no standard transit system within the city of La Center, however, the regional transit service, C-TRAN, has a system called the Connector that provides the cities of Camas, La Center, and Ridgefield with service to downtown La Center near the project site.

- c. *How many additional parking spaces would the completed project or non-project proposal have? How many would the project or proposal eliminate?*

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no parking spaces are proposed and none would be eliminated.

- d. *Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).*

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no transportation related facilities are associated with the project.

e. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no transportation related facilities are associated with the project.

f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no trips would be generated by the completed project.

g. Will the proposal interfere with, affect or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no issues are anticipated with use of nearby roads or practices.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

No transportation impacts are anticipated, therefore, no measures are required or proposed.

15. Public services

a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

Because this is a habitat restoration project taking place in an existing large natural conservation area, no changes are anticipated to public service needs in the area.

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

Because no changes are anticipated to public service needs in the area no measures are necessary or proposed.

16. Utilities

*a. Circle utilities currently available at the site:
electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system,
other _____*

b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

No utilities are proposed for the project.

C. Signature

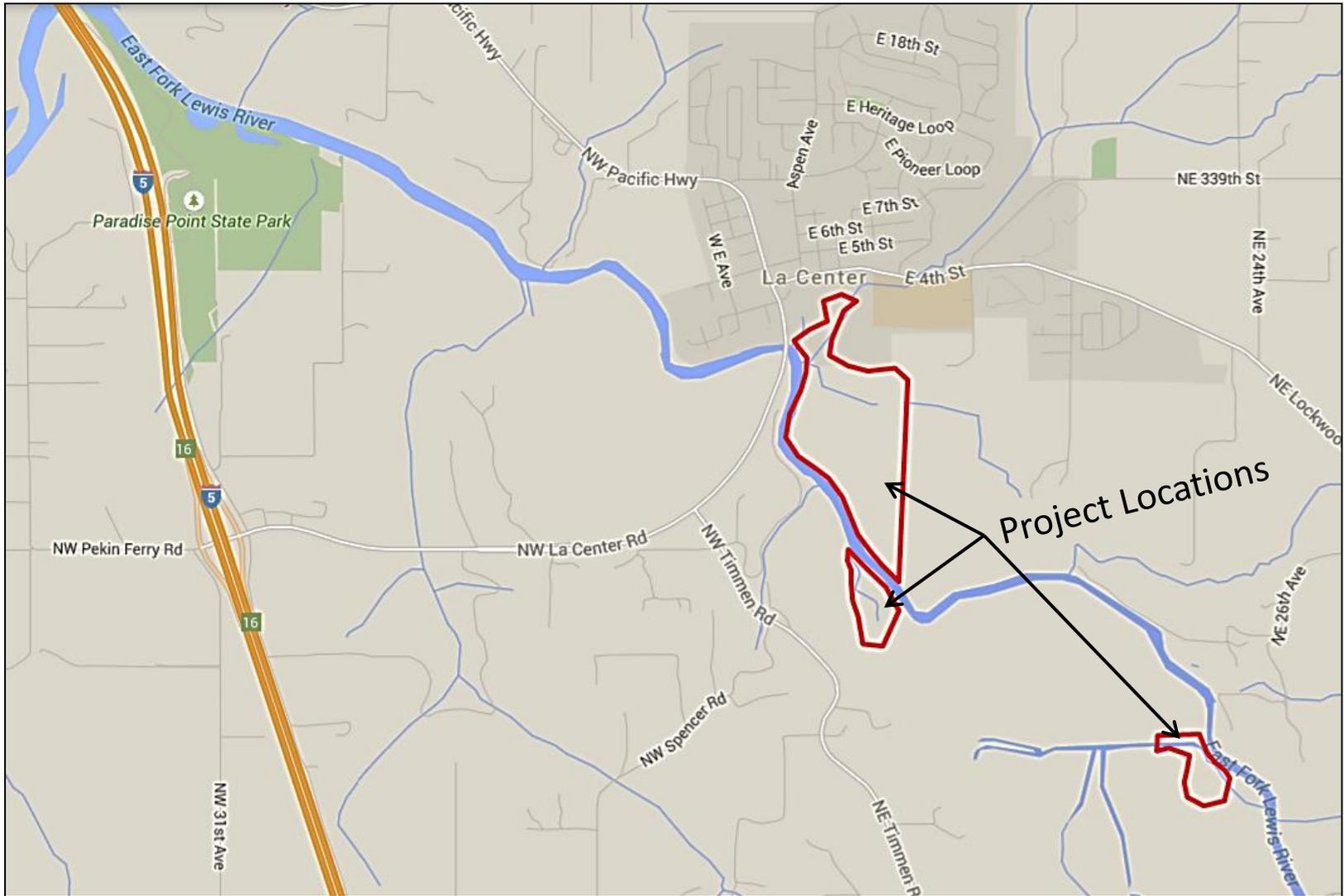
The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: 

Name of signee: Debrah Marriott

Position and Agency/Organization: Director, Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership

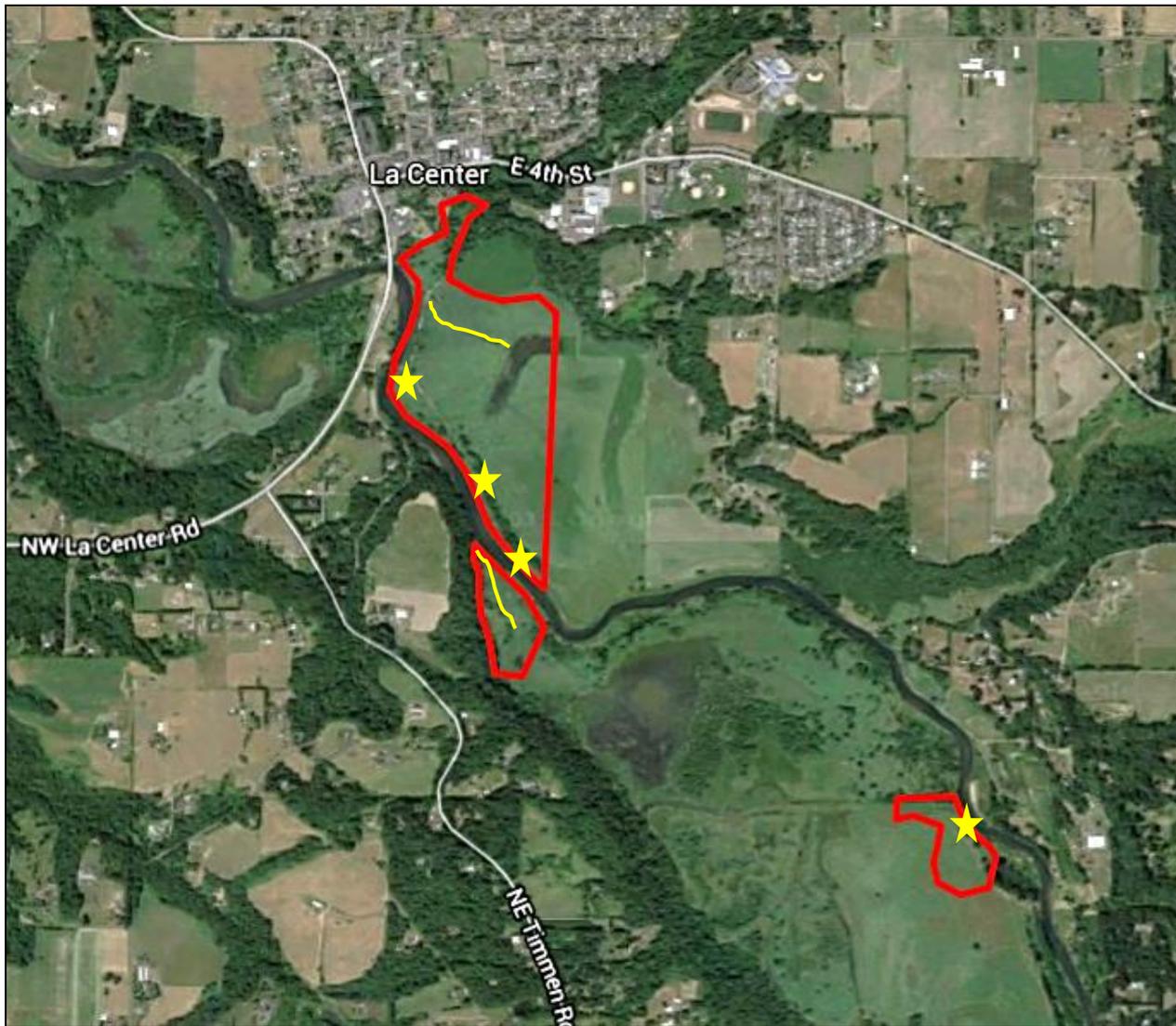
Date Submitted: June 26, 2015



**La Center Wetland
Restoration Project
Vicinity Map**

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership
Clark County, Washington
East Fork Lewis River





Legend

-  Project Areas
-  Connection Channel
-  Channel Enhancements

**La Center Wetland
Restoration Project
Project Areas**

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership
Clark County, Washington
East Fork Lewis River

