FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Columbia River Turning Basin Improvements Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment
Ports of Kalama and Longview, Washington

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District (Corps) has conducted an environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The final Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment (IFR-EA), dated April 2025, for the Columbia River Turning Basin Improvements Project investigates navigational improvements to the LCR FNC from the Port of Longview (RM 64) through the Lower Martin Bar area (RM 77). This reach of the system is impacted by heavy congestion, shoaling, and transportation delays waiting for available berths. This project is needed to improve safety, reduce draft restrictions, increase efficiency by maximizing capacity, and meet the navigation needs of the Columbia River system users. The final recommendation is contained in the Report of the Chief of Engineers, Columbia River Turning Basins Navigation Improvements, Washington & Oregon, dated 26 September 2025.

The Corps has prepared this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) under the authorities as outlined below. Congress authorized this study under Section 201(a), Title II, Division AA, Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, P.L. 116-260:

> *"The Secretary is authorized to conduct a feasibility study for the following projects for water resources development and conservation and other purposes, as identified in the reports titled ''Report to Congress on Future Water Resources Development'' submitted to Congress pursuant to section 7001 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (33 USC § 2282d) or otherwise reviewed by Congress:*
> *. . .*
> *(20) LOWER COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN (TURNING BASIN), OREGON AND WASHINGTON. — Project to improve and add turning basins for the project for navigation, Columbia River Channel, Oregon and Washington, authorized by section 101(b)(13) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 (113 Stat. 280)."*

As described in Sections 4 and 6 of the Final IFR-EA, the Corps evaluated five alternatives, including four alternatives that would address the following study objectives:

- Improve utilization of existing facilities to maximize capacity, vessel loading, and reduce seasonal and tidal restrictions at ports in the Lower Columbia River.
- Maximize transportation cost savings by reducing inefficiencies in the system caused by queuing, transit, and turning times.
- Improve safety in the Lower Columbia River during periods of closure of the mouth of the Columbia River, vessel failure, and high traffic with suitable anchorages and turning locations to avoid congestion and unsafe anchoring in the Federal Navigation Channel (FNC).

- Ensure that system features meet the current and future navigation needs for the Columbia River system and maximize net transportation benefits for the period of analysis.
- Identify measures that would provide positive economic and environmental benefits to communities within the study area.

The alternatives consist of the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1 (deepening the Longview Turning Basin), Alternative 2 (establishing the Lower Martin Bar Turning Basin), Alternative 3 (combined Turning Basins from Alternatives 1 and 2), and Alternative 5 (combined Turning Basins and installation of stern anchor buoys [SABs] in anchorage areas). The Corps has determined that the Final IFR-EA, incorporated herein by reference, has appropriately assessed and disclosed the environmental impacts of the reasonable alternatives considered in the IFR-EA including the Proposed Action.

The recommended plan is Alternative 5, which includes the following measures: deepening and widening the existing turning basin at the Port of Longview, establishing a new Federal turning basin (i.e., USACE assuming Federal operation and maintenance responsibility of the existing dredged area) at Lower Martin Bar, and establishing and maintaining two stern anchor buoys (SABs) in existing U.S. Coast Guard-designated anchorage areas in the study area. The recommended plan is the National Economic Development Plan. Specific measures included in the recommended plan are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Measures included in the Recommended Plan.

No.	Measure	Description
1	Deepen and widen the existing Longview Turning Basin	Deepen and widen the existing turning basin and widen as necessary to accommodate the design vessels. The turning basin will be deepened to -43 ft CRD to match the FNC and elongated to provide access to additional berths. The new turning basin configuration will be approximately 7,000 ft long by 1,300 ft wide.
2	Establish the Lower Martin Bar Turning Basin	Establish a Federal turning basin at RM 77 to accommodate the design vessels. USACE will assume responsibility for an approximately 1,000 ft wide by 2,900 ft long existing dredged area.
4	Upper Longview (SAB 65.2 W) Kalama (SAB 75.2 O)	Install two additional SABs within existing USCG-designated anchorage areas to alleviate congestion. To allow deep draft vessels to access the SAB's, USACE will engage in maintenance dredging in the area surrounding the SAB. The area and quantities dredged for each SAB differ based on river velocities, existing riverbed depth and ease of access.

The Corps also considered the no action alternative, under which the Longview Turning Basin would not be improved, a Federal turning basin would not be established at Lower Martin Bar, and additional SABs would not be constructed. The no action alternative would lead to

navigational congestion and increased transportation costs as ships are forced to navigate upstream to find available turning basins, and the existing vessel fleet would continue to experience indirect transportation delays due to inefficient turning basin dimensions.

The Corps evaluated the potential environmental impacts of all alternatives including the no action alternative. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the recommended plan is provided in Table 2:

Table 2: Summary of Potential Effects of the Recommended Plan

Section in Environmental Assessment incorporated by reference		Less than significant effects	Less than significant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
5.3	Transportation and Navigation	☒	☐	☐
5.4	River Hydraulics and Hydrology	☒	☐	☐
5.5	Aquatic resources/wetlands	☒	☐	☐
5.6	Water Quality	☒	☐	☐
5.7	Geomorphology and Sediment Quality	☒	☐	☐
5.8	Air Quality	☒	☐	☐
5.9	Fish and Wildlife and Associated Habitat	☒	☐	☐
5.10	Special Status Species and Critical Habitat	☒	☐	☐
5.11	Invasive Species	☒	☐	☐
5.12	Cultural Resources	☒	☐	☐
5.13	Tribal Resources, Rights, and Lands	☒	☐	☐
5.14	Noise Levels	☒	☐	☐
5.15	Visual Quality and Recreation	☒	☐	☐
5.16	Public Health and Safety	☒	☐	☐
5.17	Socioeconomics	☒	☐	☐
	Flood Plains	☐	☐	☒
	Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste	☐	☐	☒
	Public Infrastructure	☐	☐	☒

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the recommended plan. Best management practices (BMPs) as detailed in the IFR-EA will be implemented, if appropriate, to minimize impacts. BMPs were included for these categories: Water Resources/Physical Resources, Air Quality, Noise, Utilities, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Hazardous Materials. A complete list of BMPs is provided in section 5.2.1 of the Final IFR-EA.

No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the recommended plan.

The draft IFR-EA was made available for a 30-day public review period from July 3, 2024, through August 3, 2024. The Corps requested comments from federal and state agencies, as well as interested parties including interest groups and tribes. Five comments were received in support of the recommended plan. As a result of state and agency review, the final IFR-EA was revised to disclose the relevant recommendations of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the Corps determined, that the recommended plan may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the following federally listed species or adversely modify their designated critical habitat: Columbian white-tailed deer *(Odocoileus virginianus leucurus)*, streaked horned lark *(Eremophila alpestris strigata),* Northwestern pond turtle (Actinemys marmorata), and bull trout Columbia River DPS *(Salvelinus confluentus)*. Additionally, the Corps determined that the recommended plan will have no effect to the following species or their designated critical habitat: North American wolverine *(Gulo gulo luscus),* Pacific marten, Coastal Distinct Population Segment (DPS) *(Martes caurina)*, red tree vole, North Oregon Coast DPS *(Arborimus longicaudus)*, Marbled murrelet *(Brachyramphus marmoratus),* Northern spotted owl *(Strix occidentalis caurina)*, yellow-billed cuckoo, Western U.S. DPS *(Coccyzus americanus),* Monarch butterfly *(Danaus plexippus)*, and Kincaid's lupine *(Lupinus sulphureous ssp. Kincaidii)*. Informal consultation with the USFWS was initiated on September 30, 2024, and completed on January 30, 2025, with a letter of concurrence (USFWS File Number 2025-I-0006).

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the Corps determined that the recommended plan will likely adversely affect, but will not jeopardize the continued existence of, the following federally listed species or adversely modify designated critical habitat: Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), coho salmon (*O. kisutch*), chum salmon (*O. keta*), sockeye salmon (*O. nerka*), steelhead trout (*O. mykiss*), eulachon (*Thaleichthys pacificus*), and green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*). The project was determined to meet the terms and conditions of the SLOPES IV Programmatic Biological Opinion. National Marine Fisheries Service concurred with this determination via email on August 24, 2024.

All terms and conditions, conservation measures, and reasonable and prudent alternatives and measures resulting from these consultations shall be implemented to minimize take of endangered species and avoid jeopardizing the species.

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the Corps determined that historic properties would not be adversely affected by the recommended plan. The Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation Office provided a letter concurring with this finding on August 14, 2024. The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office provided a letter of concurrence on August 22, 2024.

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended, the discharge of dredged or fill material associated with the recommended plan has been found to be compliant with the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 CFR 230). The Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines evaluation is found in Appendix B, Annex C of the IFR-EA.

A water quality certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act will be obtained from the Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE) prior to construction. In a letter dated 14 October 2024, the WDOE stated that the recommended plan appears to meet the requirements of the water quality certification, pending confirmation based on information to be developed during the pre-construction engineering and design phase. All appropriate conditions of the water quality certification will be implemented to minimize adverse impacts to water quality.

During the permitting phase of this study, USACE will coordinate with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) about Marine Mammal Protection Act compliance and

will seek an incidental harassment authorization or make a no effect determination. A risk assessment was prepared for this action as required by policy.

All applicable environmental laws have been considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed. A list of other applicable environmental and cultural resources laws and executive orders is included under section 8.1 of the IFR-EA.

All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans were considered in the evaluation of alternatives. Based on this report, the reviews by other Federal, State and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my staff, it is my determination that the recommended plan would not cause significant adverse effects on the quality of the human environment; therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

21 January 2026

Date

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Larry D. Caswell, Jr., PE, PMP
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