

GRAND RIVER UPPER REACH REVITALIZATION: SEA LAMPREY CONTROL AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Environmental Impact Statement
Public Scoping Meeting
USACE Detroit District
22 April 2026



US Army Corps
of Engineers®





TONIGHT'S SPEAKERS



 **Katie Bates, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**
Welcome Statement

 **Lisa Walter, Great Lakes Fishery Commission**
Project Background

 **Rebecca Porath, WSP**
NEPA EIS and Project Scoping Overview



WHY ARE WE HERE TONIGHT?

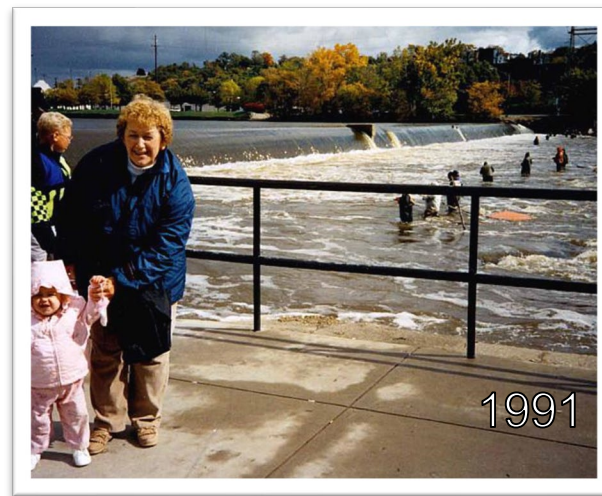
- USACE Detroit District is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate options for removing the 6th Street Dam and invasive sea lamprey in the Grand River.
- We are seeking public input to help shape alternatives and identify potential issues to be evaluated in the draft EIS
- Study Area: Grand River from approximately Ann Street to Bridge Street in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan





HISTORY OF THE GRAND RIVER IN GRAND RAPIDS

- Grand River has been heavily modified through mining, channelization, damming, dredging, and urban development
- These changes constrained natural processes and eliminated historic rapids



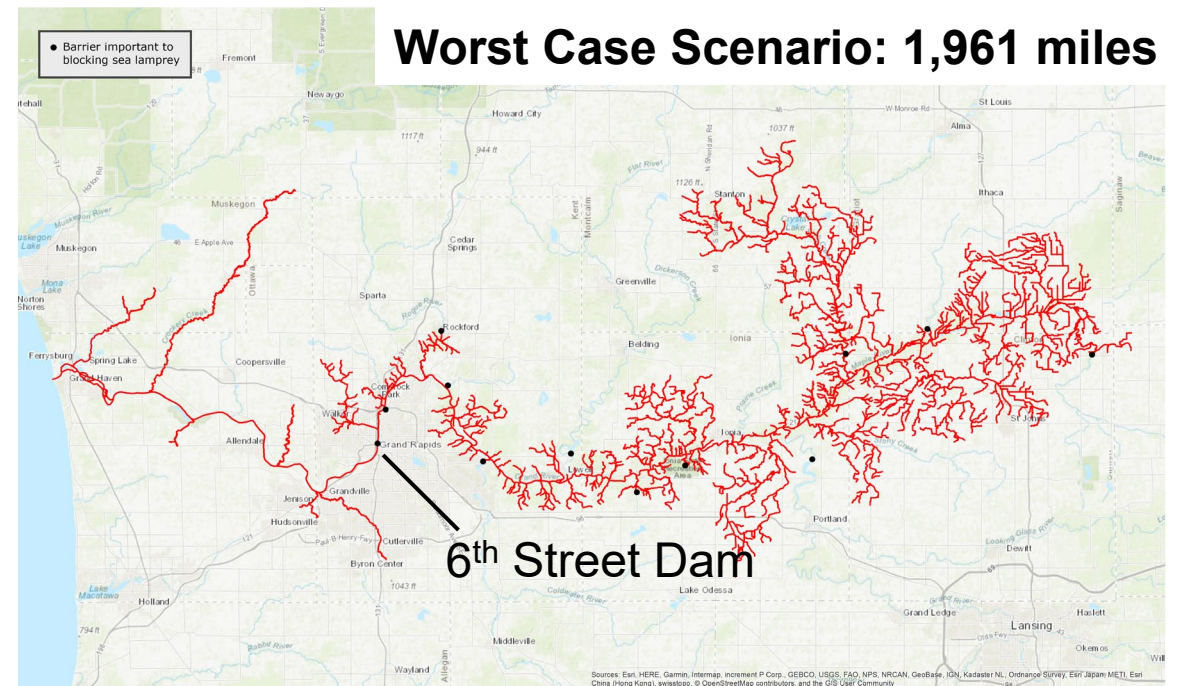
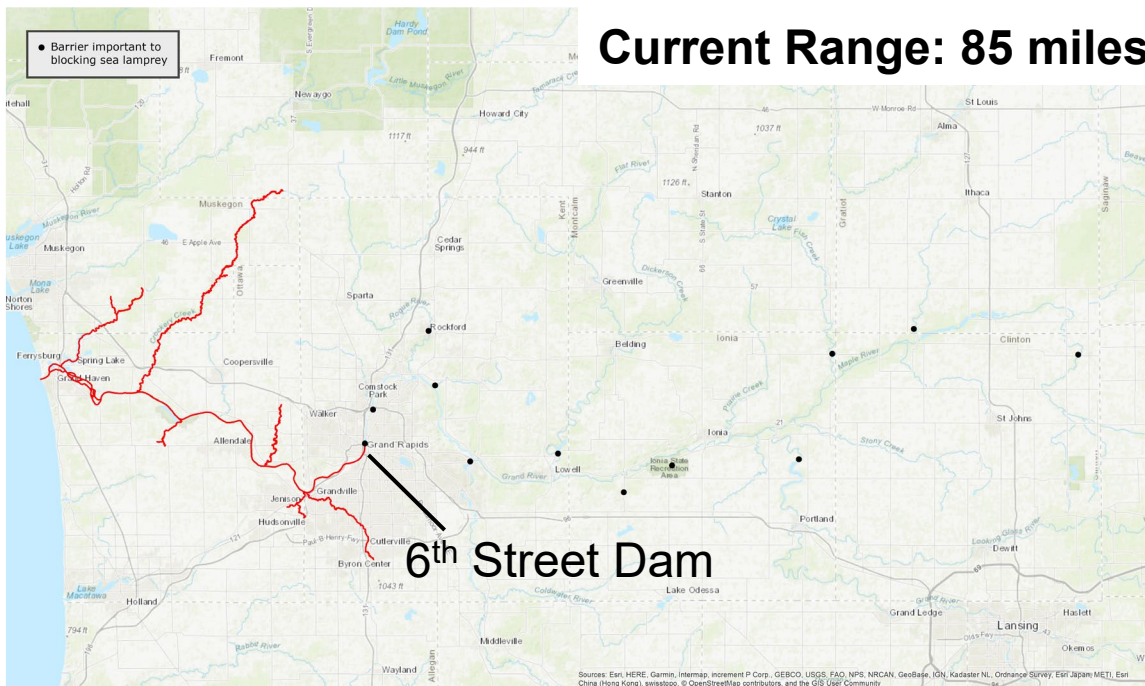
- Multiple partners are exploring ways to maintain invasive species control, restore habitat, and improve recreation
- Project focuses on improving aquatic resources from Ann Street to Bridge Street within an urban setting



WHY SEA LAMPREY CONTROL MATTERS



- Preventing upstream access is critical to protecting Great Lakes Fisheries
- If lamprey gain access to >1,900 miles of river upstream of the 6th Street Dam, lampricide treatment would be needed every 3-4 years and would be financially and logistically infeasible
- Each treatment is estimated at \$6.8 million





THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)



- NEPA requires the identification, analysis, and public disclosure of potential environmental effects of proposed federal actions before those actions take place.
- The USACE, in partnership with the GLFC and the USFWS, is preparing an EIS pursuant to NEPA to assess the environmental impacts associated with the Grand River Upper Reach Revitalization: Sea Lamprey Control and Habitat Improvement Project.
- The EIS will include:
 - Purpose and Need for the proposed Project
 - Alternatives
 - Environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives



PURPOSE AND NEED OF THE PROJECT






- Remove the 6th Street Dam to reduce significant public safety risks associated with the aging structure, hazardous flow conditions near the dam, and potential for structural failure.
- Construct and operate a purpose-built sea lamprey barrier to replace the 6th Street Dam's current function as the first upstream barrier to invasive sea lamprey migration on the Grand River.
- Support broader ecosystem restoration goals by improving aquatic ecosystem connectivity and fish passage, creating bedrock and spawning habitat, and restoring natural sediment transport processes.
- Enhance recreation and the river's natural character in downtown Grand Rapids.



PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES

- **No Action Alternative** – 6th Street Dam would remain in place and continue to operate under existing conditions.
- **Action Alternatives** – Remove the 6th Street Dam and constructing a sea lamprey barrier and associated fish ladder at one of three locations:
 - A. At the current dam site (Location A),
 - B. Approximately half a mile upstream of the dam (Location B), or
 - C. Approximately one mile upstream of the dam (Location C).
- For the barrier itself, two design options are under consideration at each location
 - A fixed crest barrier, or
 - A seasonally adjustable barrier.

Alternative Location Zone

-  Location A
-  Location B
-  Location C





Existing 6th Street Dam (fixed crest)

Seasonally Adjustable Sea Lamprey Barrier





PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES



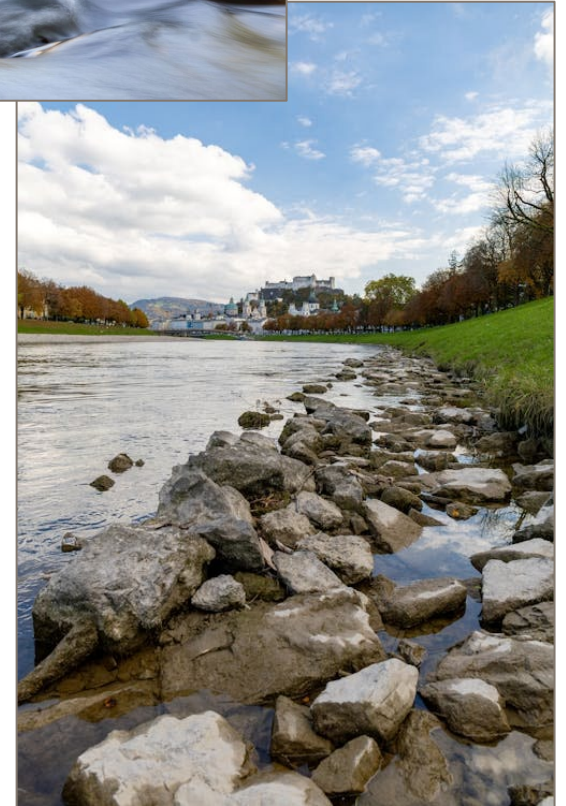
Action Alternatives – Potential In-River Enhancements

- Constructed riffles (set back from bridge piers)
- Boulder arch structures
- Cobble bank vanes to protect mussel habitat
- Grade control structures



Other Alternatives Considered That May Not Meet the Purpose and Need

- Removal of the 6th Street Dam with no associated sea lamprey barrier
- Modification to the existing 6th Street Dam to address structural deficiencies



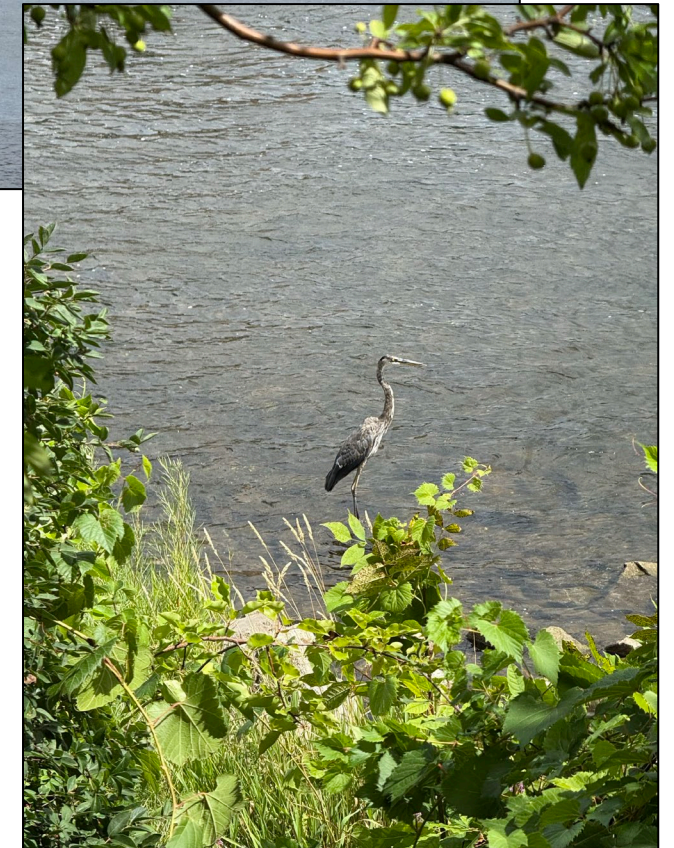


RESOURCES OF CONCERN



The draft EIS will evaluate impacts of the proposed alternatives and a No Action Alternative on affected resources, including:

- Water Quality
- Hydrologic Resources
- Floodplains
- Wetlands
- Sensitive Species (including federally endangered snuffbox and other mussels)
- Aquatic and Terrestrial Ecology
- Geology and Soils
- Recreation
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Community Resources and Facilities
- Transportation and Navigation
- Economic Resources
- Land Use and Real Estate
- Noise
- Aesthetics
- Air Quality and Climate
- Solid and Hazardous Waste





POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACT TO MUSSELS



- This river reach supports healthy mussel populations
- Includes federally endangered snuffbox mussel and 10 state-listed mussel species
- An EIS is required to fully evaluate project impacts
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation with USFWS will occur
- Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation will be considered



Photo by G. Thomas Watters,
Ohio State University



OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS



Flooding and Safety

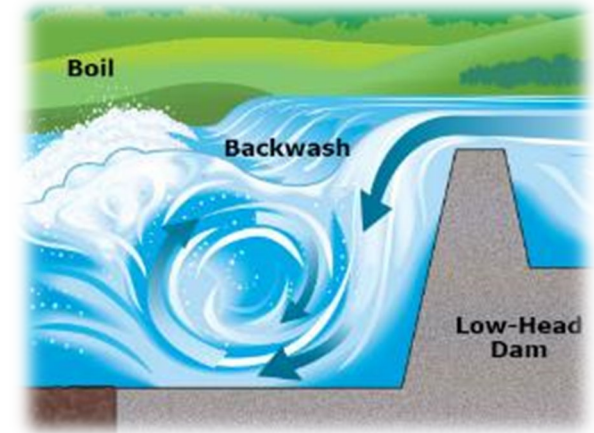
- 6th Street dam has exceeded its design life and is deteriorating
- Low-head dams, like the 6th Street Dam, create dangerous recirculating currents below the dam head

Fish Passage

- Rivers support fish reproduction, feeding, and nutrient cycling
- Barriers limit fish movement
- Alternatives must balance fish passage with sea lamprey control

Other Initiatives in the Area

- Downstream Lower Grand River Habitat Restoration Project (Fulton Street to I-196)
- River for All initiative focused on public access



We want to hear from you! What is important and of interest to you?

The 6th Street fish ladder has been in place since 1975 and allows species such as Coho, Chinook, and Steelhead access upriver.



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SCOPING



- To solicit early input from the public regarding the development of the scope, alternatives being considered, and environmental issues related to the Project.
- What to consider when formulating a public comment:
 - Purpose and Need of the Project
 - Scope and range of alternatives
 - Issues of most concern to you
 - Input regarding potential effects on federally listed species and historic properties



To submit a comment, fill out a comment card today or via email to Comments-Grand-River@usace.army.mil by May 22, 2026



HOW TO STAY ENGAGED AFTER TONIGHT



- Scoping comments will be accepted through **May 22, 2026**
- Submit comments by email or mail:
 - Email: Comments-Grand-River@usace.army.mil
 - Mail: Mr. Hal Harrington
Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Detroit District, Environmental Analysis Section
477 Michigan Avenue
Detroit, MI 48226
- Sign up at the Welcome Table for project updates
- Visit our Website: <https://www.lrd.usace.army.mil/News/>
- Further opportunities to comment will be provided at:
 - Draft EIS – Public Meeting (Summer 2027)