



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SEATTLE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 3755
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98124-3755

December 21, 2007

CENWS-PM-PL-ER

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Albeni Cove Bank Stabilization Project
Oldtown, Bonner County, Idaho

1. Background. The Corps is proposing the following project under the Flood Control Act of 17 May 1950 (Public Law 516, 81st Congress, 2nd Session) substantially in accordance with Senate Document 9, 81st Congress, 1st Session, which authorized the construction and operation of Albeni Falls, a multi-purpose project. Funds are allocated each year via Congress for Operation and Maintenance of the Albeni Falls Dam.

Operation of the Albeni Falls Dam Project is eroding certain reaches of shoreline around Pend Oreille River and Lake. During full pool elevation of the reservoir, erosion from wave action, primarily caused by boats, has caused incremental bank failure along several hundred feet of shoreline at the Corps of Engineers' Albeni Cove Recreational Area, causing some tree loss and undercutting, and directly affecting two campsites, a swimming beach, and a wetland. The compact clayey sediments at the site are subjected to inundation during full pool elevation of the reservoir and are stricken energetically by large waves caused by high winds or boat traffic during that period. Although water pressure holds the soil in place at high pool, when the pool is drawn down for the winter, the temporarily stabilized soils erode or slough off onto the beach vacated by the receding shoreline, especially when saturated by heavy fall precipitation.

The purpose of the project is to stem further erosion and loss of standing trees and other vegetation along 1,600 feet of shoreline at the Albeni Cove Recreation Area, to prevent erosion of a remaining cultural site, and to prevent loss or relocation of existing facilities.

2. Proposed Action. The proposed action is to build a riprap structure along approximately 1,600 feet of shoreline on the left bank of the Pend Oreille River to stabilize the bank and prevent further erosion at the Albeni Cove Recreational area. Access for the project will be partly by existing park roads and partially over dewatered river substrate, primarily sand and clay, with some gravel. The bank would be protected by placing rock along the affected areas of shoreline between elevations 2055 and 2065 (in some cases the toe would be higher), and would be inserted into bank undercuts a short distance where possible.

Work would be planned to coincide with the lower operating limit of Albeni Falls Dam between mid-January through late April 2008. Construction would be conducted from land on the swimming spit, where no vegetation impedes access. Placement along the vegetated bank to the east of the swimming cove would be from the waterward side, on the dewatered

substrate. This area contains various species of deciduous and coniferous trees with thick undergrowth, and bald eagles have been noted in some of the emergent trees in this area. Bank stabilization material will consist of class III riprap, spalls (rock chips), 3-inch minus crushed stone, and granular fill. Approximately 2,800 cubic yards of class III riprap and 1,200 cubic yards of 3-inch minus crushed stone will be used. Filter fabric will be placed along the shoreline next to the bank to minimize the amount of fine sediment that enters the lake. All trees that have fallen into the river will be removed and coniferous trees, which are resistant to breakdown, will be placed into the bank stabilization project to provide fish habitat. Native plantings would be placed for riparian shade and cover. No permanent maintenance road will be constructed as part of the proposed action.

3. Summary of Impacts and Compliance. Impacts of the proposed work will be minor and temporary. This project will fully comply with the Endangered Species Act; a biological evaluation was prepared as part of the Draft Environmental Analysis and transmitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with a determination of “not likely to adversely affect” western gray wolf. This project will also fully comply with Section 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act. The Corps has prepared a 404 (b)(1) Analysis, and has applied to Idaho Department of Environmental Quality for a 401 Certification. The project will fully comply with the National Historic Preservation Act, as shown by a letter sent to the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and their concurrence with Corps findings.

4. Finding. Based on the attached environmental documentation, coordination and analysis conducted by the Corps environmental staff, I have determined that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. The proposed action is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and therefore does not require preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Date

Michael McCormick
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Commander