

Appendix G.
Draft Finding of No Significant Impact



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

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

CENWS-PM-PL-ER

**WILLAPA RIVER SECTION 1135 ESTUARINE HABITAT RESTORATION
PACIFIC COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

1. Background. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the US Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District (Corps) disposed of dredged material in diked intertidal mudflat and wetland habitat adjacent to the Federal Willapa River Navigation Channel. As a result, several hundred acres of productive estuarine habitat were lost. This reduction in the area and diversity of estuarine habitats has impacted Willapa Bay's capacity to support the variety of fish, bird, and shellfish species that were historically abundant.

2. Authority. Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-662, as amended) allows the Corps of Engineers to modify the structure or operation of a Corps project to restore fish and wildlife habitat. The purpose of this habitat restoration project is to partially offset the loss of intertidal estuarine habitat caused by past Corps dredged material disposal practices.

3. Proposed Action. Major elements of the proposed Section 1135 project include: (1) removing approximately 10,000 linear feet of dikes; (2) backfilling the borrow ditches adjacent to the dikes; (3) filling of farm drainage ditches and borrow ditches along US 101; (4) excavation of remnant tidal channels; (5) construction of two cross dikes; (6) construction of a US 01 pull-out; and (7) control of the nuisance marsh grass *Spartina*. This proposed action is the preferred alternative identified in the Environmental Assessment.

4. Summary of Impacts. Pursuant the National Environmental Policy Act, an Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the proposed work. This document describes the environmental consequences of the proposed work, which are briefly summarized below.

Potential adverse impacts identified in the Environmental Assessment are associated with the construction phase of the project, so they would be temporary in nature. Over the long term, the effects of the project would be beneficial. Impacts should not be significant either individually or cumulatively. The Corps has partnered with State and Federal agencies to assure careful consideration of fish and wildlife resources. No adverse impacts to threatened or endangered species are anticipated. Impacts of the work on salmonids will be reduced and/or avoided through implementation of timing restrictions.

The proposed work complies with the policies, general conditions, and general activities specified in the Pacific County Shoreline Management Master Plan. A Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation has been prepared, and is included as an appendix to the EA.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlining procedures for archaeological monitoring during construction has been negotiated with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the Shoalwater Bay Tribe.

5. Finding. Based on the analysis described above and provided in more detail in the EA, this project is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human or natural environment, and therefore does not require preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Date

Ralph H. Graves
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer