

Levee Ready Columbia Technical Advisory Subcommittee

FINAL Levee Environmental Conditions Assessment (LECA) Scope of Work

Background and Approach

The Levee Environmental Conditions Assessment (LECA) is part of a series of assessments to be conducted for the Levee Ready Columbia project to inform alternatives development and analysis in Phase II. The LECA will be developed to inventory natural resources and contextualize cumulative impacts within the broader landscape as follows:

- Develop a series of maps in conjunction with a geodatabase and summary report to document current conditions including natural resource characteristics such as land cover, open space, wetlands, terrestrial and shallow-water habitat, etc.
- Synthesize environmental baseline¹ condition information from existing biological opinions, data and technical reports as a preliminary information gathering activity to inform cumulative impacts of the levee system. For example, calculate the total amount of floodplain lost over time and include information around flyways and migration corridors to show the importance of habitat connectivity in relation to the project.

The LECA intent is to obtain information as may ultimately be needed to determine an environmental baseline for PEN 1, PEN 2, MCDD, and SDIC in the event an ESA Section 7 consultation or other state or federal regulatory action is warranted.

The LECA will begin with a review of previously completed studies as conducted by Oregon Solutions Team partner organizations to build on existing information and assessment tools. Known resources and tools are listed below. The contractor will work with representatives from partner organizations to access data sources that are relevant to documenting the baseline². The contractor will then synthesize these existing studies and tools to provide a holistic assessment of resources within the study area. This assessment will also include an analysis of information gaps to identify the need for additional studies, field work or data collection.

Deliverables, Budget, and Timeline

The final product shall consist of a written report and a series of maps that graphically portray the conditions and findings as synthesized from information obtained from previously completed/existing studies, reports, and other documents. An estimated budget of \$50,000 has been projected to cover the LECA³. The timeline is intended to mirror the 4-5 month timeframe of the Economic Inventory Study being conducted by NERC and Metro but may be adjusted based on forthcoming information.

¹ In the federal agency context, The “environmental baseline” includes the past and present impacts of all Federal, state, or private actions and other human activities in the action area, the anticipated impacts of all proposed Federal projects in the action area that have already undergone formal or early section 7 consultation, and the impact of state or private actions which are contemporaneous with the consultation in process (50 CFR 402.02).

² Authors or organizations of any documents used in developing the environmental assessment shall be invited to review the draft report to ensure their findings and conclusions are properly represented.

³ Based on initial inquiries from MCDD to several private consultants who were provided a basic overview of the nature and scope of the proposed assessment.

Study Area

The LECA product is to focus on the area of the four districts lying within the outer toe of the ring levee. For those sections of the ring levee adjacent to water, the area will include shallow water habitat (defined as water up to 20 feet in depth) out to a distance of 100 feet from the levee toe.

For purposes of context, the area from which existing studies are to be drawn are the floodplains associated with PEN 1, PEN 2, MCDD and SDIC districts. The boundaries for this area are as follows:

- East to the eastern edge of the Sandy River delta
- West to the west bank of the Willamette River
- North to the Oregon border with Washington
- South to the southern Columbia Slough watershed boundary, generally along Alameda ridge

Limitations

The LECA will not include the modeling of:

- Future conditions
- Potential impacts (since alternatives development has not yet occurred)⁴
- Assessment of anticipated federal, state or local requirements for permitting⁵

List of Existing Resources (Known)

Qualitative, contextual documents for purposes of establishing an environmental baseline:

- [East Columbia Neighborhood Natural Resource Management Plan](#)
- [Environmental Baseline FEMA Biological Opinion](#)
- [State of the Slough](#)
- MCDD Natural Resource Inventory
- [Port of Portland Green Side](#)
- [Lower Columbia River Recovery Plan for Salmon and Steelhead](#)
- [Oregon Conservation Strategy](#)
 - Strategies for conserving Oregon fish and wildlife species and priority habitats including location specific information on Conservation Opportunity Areas. A number of COA's exist within or near the Columbia Levees project area.

Quantitative data and/or maps of existing conditions:

⁴ DSL permits require a pre and post impact functions and values assessment. This SOW does not cover these requirements.

⁵ The TASC has indicated interest in engaging the City of Portland's Permitting Streamlining Committee in the future to understand the application of regulatory requirements once the development of alternatives begins.

- [DEQ Soil Contamination Data \(ECSI\)](#)⁶
- [Local Wetlands Inventory \(LWI\)](#) ⁷
- [National Wetlands Inventory \(NWI\)](#)
- [The City of Portland Columbia South Shore Wellhead Protection Area](#)
- [City of Portland Environmental Plans](#)
 - [City of Portland Natural Resource Inventory](#)
 - [West Hayden Island Natural Resource Inventory](#)
 - [Mapping of the Columbia Corridor](#)
 - [Natural Resources Protection Plan for the Columbia South Shore](#)
- [ODFW Natural Resources Information Management Program \(NRIMP\)](#):
 - This program houses information including the distribution/presence of migratory fish species in Oregon streams, fish habitat, ESA listed species, in-water work timing guidelines for Oregon waterways, wildlife Conservation Opportunity Areas, wildlife habitats, etc.
 - The information is available in various sources including GIS data layers, maps, searchable databases, etc.
 - The data can be accessed and obtained from the ODFW website.
 - The site also has links to other related information sources such as the Bonneville Power Administration GIS Program.
- [Goal 5 Inventory](#) from Oregon’s Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines:
 - Riparian corridors, including water and riparian areas and fish habitat;
 - Wetlands;
 - Wildlife Habitat;
 - Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers;
 - State Scenic Waterways;
 - Groundwater Resources;
 - Approved Oregon Recreation Trails;
 - Natural Areas;
 - Wilderness Areas;
 - Mineral and Aggregate Resources;
 - Energy sources and

⁶ DEQ’s Environmental Cleanup Site Information (ECSI) database includes groundwater contamination, but not Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites. That information is housed in a different database, which is not necessary to list on the SOW.

⁷ State and federal permits with mitigation plans and wetland delineations may help to supplement the LWI and NWI with more current, site-level information.. However, public record requests and other queries may be time-consuming to acquire and review.

- [Terrestrial Ecology Enhancement Strategy \(TEES\)](#) from the Bureau of Environmental Services which focuses on documenting:
 - Plant and animal species for protection, conservation and/or restoration
 - Key habitat types for protection, conservation and/or restoration
 - Key management issues
 - Watershed-specific objectives for biological communities in each of the City’s urban watersheds
 - Guidance to city bureaus and citizens for improving habitat and addressing plant and wildlife management issues
 - Identification and implementation of priority actions
- Monitoring of key species and habitats over time to determine the trends in the health of biological communities

References providing both contextual and quantitative data:

- [Columbia River Crossing Environmental Impact Statement, Biological Assessments and Biological Opinion](#)
- [Intertwine Regional Conservation Strategy](#)
- Local information and knowledge of ODFW staff
 - Staff in the ODFW North Willamette Watershed (located at Clackamas and Sauvie Island offices) possess additional information and knowledge of the area. In many cases the knowledge has been gained from working directly on lands and waters within the Columbia Levees project area. These staff will be available for consultation and product reviews as needed throughout the process.
 - The contractor is free to use other reports or resources as may be found consistent with the intent and objectives of this study provided that the analysis of additional sources shall not affect the project budget or schedule. Issues and findings needing additional research beyond the scope of the LECA shall be identified as such.

Environmental Assessment Subcommittee

The development of this inventory will be supervised by a subcommittee including the following members from the Technical Advisory Subcommittee (TASC).

- City of Portland, Nancy Hendrickson and Kaitlin Lovell
- Metro, Jonathan Soll
- DEQ, Cheryl Grabham
- MCDD, Sara Morrissey
- DSL, Melinda Butterfield
- ODFW, Jeff Boechler
- Audubon, Bob Sallinger

Contractual issues or questions will be resolved by the project’s designated contracting officer.