



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Conconully Safety of Dams Modification Project Environmental Assessment

Scoping Summary Report



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Columbia-Pacific Northwest Regional Office
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Mission Statements

The Department of the Interior conserves and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, provides scientific and other information about natural resources and natural hazards to address societal challenges and create opportunities for the American people, and honors the Nation's trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities to help them prosper.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym or Abbreviation

Full Phrase

DSM	deep-soil mixing
EA	environmental assessment
ESA	Endangered Species Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
Reclamation	United States Bureau of Reclamation
SOD	Safety of Dams

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Chapter I. Introduction

I.1 INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for the Conconully Safety of Dams (SOD) Modification project. Conconully Dam, located in north-central Washington, is owned by Reclamation and operated by the Okanogan Irrigation District. Although Conconully Dam is performing as designed, Reclamation has determined that a risk of seismic failure exists at the dam. Investigations conducted under Reclamation's SOD Program determined that the dam is potentially at risk of seismic failure associated with liquefaction of embankment and foundation materials, or when loosely packed, water-logged sediments at or near the ground surface lose their strength in response to strong ground shaking. This risk could result in dam failure, which poses unacceptable risk levels to people, property, and the environment. This project is authorized under the Safety of Dams Act (Public Law 95-578).

I.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

The **purpose** of the proposed project is to improve public safety by reducing the risk associated with liquefaction of embankment and foundation materials, maintain water deliveries and flows for irrigators and endangered species, and continue to provide recreational benefits and fish and wildlife habitat.

The **need** for the proposed action is to comply with Reclamation's SOD requirements, and reduce static, seismic, and hydrologic risks at Conconully Dam to acceptable levels based on public protection guidelines, improve control of water flows through the outlet works, and increase reliability and longevity of the dam and water conveyance system.

I.3 BACKGROUND

Conconully Dam and Conconully Reservoir are on Salmon Creek, approximately 17 miles north of Omak, Washington. As a component of the Okanogan Project, the reservoir provides irrigation water to downstream irrigators, water for fish and wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities out of the town of Conconully north of the dam. Conconully Reservoir has a storage capacity of approximately 13,000 acre-feet and a reservoir water surface area of 450 acres at full pool.

Conconully Dam was constructed using hydraulic fill methods between 1907 and 1910 at the confluence of the north and west forks of Salmon Creek. The hydraulic fill construction technique used during the dam's construction consisted of selectively placing soil or other materials using a stream of water to move embankment materials through flumes to the dam site. The resulting puddled-core embankment is currently known to be susceptible to liquefaction and increased risk of failure in the event of seismic activity.

Evaluations of the risk of seismic failure associated with liquefaction of the dam's embankment and foundation materials began in the 1990s. The geotechnical and risk analyses indicated that existing risks were above acceptable levels based on public protection guidelines and justified additional work to better define or understand the risks. Subsequent geotechnical evaluations, field explorations, and risk analyses demonstrated that the embankment requires modifications to reduce the seismic risks to the dam.

Reclamation completed a corrective action study to evaluate alternatives that would reduce the seismic risks to Conconully Dam. The corrective action study developed two structural modification alternatives, a no-action alternative, a reservoir-restriction alternative, and a dam breach alternative. The two structural modification alternatives included an excavate-and-replace alternative and a deep-soil-mixing (DSM) alternative. The excavate-and-replace alternative proposes to excavate and replace foundation materials susceptible to liquefaction. The DSM alternative proposes the use of DSM reinforcement columns to improve foundation materials. Both structural modification alternatives would construct a stability berm on the specified foundation type on the downstream face of the dam.

After evaluating the corrective action study alternatives, Reclamation selected the DSM structural modification alternative as the proposed action to be evaluated in the EA.

I.4 PROPOSED ACTION

Reclamation proposes to reduce the risk of dam failure by constructing a stability berm on a foundation of DSM reinforcement columns on the downstream face of Conconully Dam. To provide improved operational functionality and compatibility with the proposed stability berm, Reclamation also proposes to upgrade the outlet works by extending, lining, and reinforcing water conveyance components and installing contemporary water control systems and facilities (such as multiple state-of-the-art valves and a valve house). These modifications would be performed primarily downstream (dry or streamside) of the dam, with limited activities upstream (wet or reservoir side) of the dam. Fill material would be excavated from a borrow area on the left bank of the reservoir.

I.5 OVERVIEW OF THE SCOPING PROCESS AND SCOPING REPORT

Public involvement is a vital and legally required component of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning process. Public involvement vests the public in the decision-making process and allows for full environmental disclosure. Guidance for implementing public involvement under NEPA is codified in 40 Code of Federal Regulations 1506.6. This guidance ensures federal agencies make a diligent effort to involve the public in the NEPA process.

Scoping is an early and open process that helps Reclamation determine the scope of issues to be addressed and extracts the overarching issues that may be added to those addressed during the planning process. These issues help define the scope of the analysis for the EA; they may also be used to further develop the EA alternatives.

In accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations 1610.2, Reclamation must document the public scoping results. This scoping report summarizes the scoping process and the comments received during the formal scoping period.

I.6 DESCRIPTION OF THE SCOPING PROCESS

As defined in Title 43, Subtitle A, Part 46, Subpart C 46.235(a)(b) of NEPA, scoping is a process that continues throughout the planning and early stages of an EA's preparation. NEPA requires that federal agencies engage the public during preparation of an EA. Scoping is the process that continues throughout the planning and early stages of EA preparation. Agencies use scoping to engage various stakeholders; federal, state, and local agencies; Native American tribes; and the public in the early identification of affected resources, issues to be considered, and potential alternatives.

The NEPA process begins when a federal agency develops a proposal to take a major federal action. Federal agencies may prepare an EA to determine whether a proposed federal action will significantly affect the quality of the resources. If no significant impacts are identified, Reclamation will issue a finding of no significant impact with the final EA. Should significant impacts be identified, Reclamation may begin development of an environmental impact statement.

I.6.1 Schedule for the Decision-Making Process

The public scoping period for the draft EA lasted from August 9, 2024, to September 8, 2024. Reclamation will provide additional opportunities for public participation consistent with NEPA, including a 30-day comment period on the draft EA. The draft EA is anticipated to be available for public review in January 2025. A decision on whether to approve the project and issue a FONSI is expected in July 2025.

I.6.2 Project Websites

Reclamation maintains a project website at <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/sod/conconully/index.html>. Additionally, during the scoping period, a virtual public meeting website was also available as a forum to learn about the project, ask questions of Reclamation, and submit public comments (<https://www.virtualpublicmeeting.com/conconully-dam-safety-ea-providing-comments>).

I.6.3 Public Outreach and Public Scoping Meetings

As part of the ongoing planning for the Conconully SOD Modification project, Reclamation hosted two public meetings during the public scoping period. These two in-person meetings were held on August 21, 2024; one was from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Pacific daylight time, and one was from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Pacific daylight time. Reclamation held the meetings at the 12 Tribes Omak Casino Hotel (Conference Room, 28968 US-97, Omak, Washington 98841). These meetings began with a public open house period where attendees could ask questions of Reclamation staff. Reclamation then provided a PowerPoint presentation describing the planning process, the proposed project, and ways to provide public comment. The presentation was followed by a verbal public comment session.

I.6.4 Cooperating Agencies

Reclamation has invited the Army Corps of Engineers, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Department of Ecology, National Marine Fisheries Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and Okanogan County to participate as cooperating agencies. Cooperating agencies are those that Reclamation has agreed have the requisite jurisdiction by law or special expertise necessary to participate in the preparation of the EA.

Reclamation held a virtual permitting and consulting agency meeting on November 16, 2023, and on February 21, 2024. Reclamation also held one in-person permitting and consulting agency meeting on June 5, 2024, and included a site visit to the project area. During these permitting and consulting agency meetings, Reclamation discussed the proposed project and schedule, National Historic Preservation Act consultation, Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation, water permitting, and potential project alternatives. Reclamation gathered agencies' and Tribe's issues and concerns during these meetings; Reclamation is considering these topics for inclusion in the impact analysis.

I.6.5 Tribal Consultation and Coordination

Reclamation will invite sovereign Tribal nations to consult on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other Department of the Interior policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts on cultural resources, will be given due consideration. The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation participated in the permitting and consulting agency meetings (see **Section I.6.4**); issues and concerns gathered during these meetings are being considered for inclusion in the impact analysis.

I.7 METHOD OF COMMENT COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Reclamation evaluated all written and verbal comment submissions that were received on or before September 8, 2024; these submissions are documented in this scoping summary report. Comments were accepted via the project's virtual public meeting website, postal mail, verbal comment at a scoping meeting, and email.

Comment analysis is used to compile and combine similar public comments into a format that decision-makers can use to identify alternative management actions in a NEPA document. It assists the team in organizing, clarifying, and addressing technical information, in accordance with NEPA regulations. It also aids in identifying the topics and issues to be evaluated and considered throughout the NEPA process.

The process includes five main components:

- Developing a comment coding structure
- Using a comment database for comment management
- Reading and coding public comments into discrete categories
- Interpreting and analyzing the comments to identify issues and themes
- Preparing comment summaries

Reclamation developed a comment coding structure to help sort comments into logical groups by topics and issues. The coding structure was designed to capture all comment content, rather than to restrict or exclude any ideas.

It is important to note that analyzing identical comments as a group does not reduce the importance of the comment. The NEPA regulations on scoping are clear that the scoping process is not a vote; instead, it is an opportunity to determine the scope and the significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the EA and to identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues that are not significant or that have been covered by prior environmental review(s).

During the public scoping period, Reclamation received two letter submissions; both were unique submissions. Three verbal comment submissions were received during the in-person public scoping meetings. Substantive comments were also identified from an internal cooperating agency scoping meeting. In total, 28 unique substantive comments were identified from all comment submissions.

Substantive comments received during the public comment period do one or more of the following:

- Raise issues that Reclamation has not considered or reinforce issues that Reclamation has already identified
- Present information that can be used when Reclamation considers the impacts of alternatives
- Raise concerns, with reasoning, regarding public land resources in the planning area
- Question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information in an existing report

The results of the comment analysis effort are described in **Chapter 2**. In this report, a *comment submission* refers to a unique letter, email, website entry, verbal comment, or hardcopy comment received by Reclamation during the public comment period. A *comment* refers to a substantive statement identified within the comment submission. All substantive comments identified were grouped by similar issue topics; those comments are summarized in **Chapter 3**.

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Chapter 2. Substantive Comment Summary

Table 2-1 summarizes the distribution of substantive comments by issue category. Reclamation developed a more comprehensive list of issue categories to represent the full suite of potential concerns at this stage; however, not all categories received substantive comments. These issue categories are outlined further in **Chapter 3**.

Table 2-1: Substantive Comments by Issue Category

Issue Category	Number of Comments	Percentage of Total Comments
NEPA	—	—
Public outreach	1	3.6
Purpose and need	1	3.6
Range of alternatives	8	28.5
Best available science and baseline data	1	3.6
Cumulative impacts	1	3.6
Mitigation and best management practices	2	7.1
Consultation and Coordination	—	—
Clean Water Act	1	3.6
ESA	5	17.8
National Historic Preservation Act Section 106	1	3.6
Resource Topics	—	—
Fish and aquatic species	1	3.6
Recreation	3	10.7
Terrestrial wildlife	1	3.6
Vegetation	1	3.6
Total	28	100

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Chapter 3. Issue Statements and Comment Summaries

For the purpose of Reclamation's NEPA analysis, an "issue" is a point of disagreement, debate, or dispute with a proposed action based on some anticipated environmental effect. Reclamation will use the issues and other information collected in the early planning and scoping phases to help formulate a range of reasonable alternatives for the EA that will be analyzed during the NEPA process.

The issue statements and concerns presented below are preliminary and are based on the best information known to date. Issues are separated by which resource areas, uses, or processes Reclamation should consider. Reclamation has also developed a summary of the comments received that apply to each issue or concern.

The process of developing the EA will afford opportunities for collaboration with local, state, federal, and Tribal governments; land management agencies; public interest groups; and public land users. As a result, Reclamation may need to refine these issues and concerns to reflect additional public input.

The substantive comments identified in the submissions received during scoping are summarized in the sections below. The substantive comments have been grouped into issue categories and summarized to reflect how they become part of Reclamation's issues or concerns to address during the NEPA process.

3.1 NEPA

3.1.1 Public Outreach

Issue 1: How will Reclamation ensure the public receives information throughout the planning process?

Comment Summary

One commenter corrected the address on a postcard that advertises the in-person public scoping meeting.

3.1.2 Purpose and Need

Issue 1: How will the proposed project fulfill the purpose and need of stabilizing the Conconully Dam in the event of an earthquake?

Comment Summary

One commenter expressed concern regarding the ability of the proposed dam improvements to withstand a seismic event.

3.1.3 Range of Alternatives

Issue 1: How will Reclamation consider recreational uses and public access in its planning of the proposed project?

Comment Summary

Commenters recommended that Reclamation consider recreational uses and public access. One commenter asked Reclamation to consider incorporating a hiking trail into designs for the proposed project. Other commenters remarked that portions of the project area, such as the borrow area, should

be open to the public for recreational purposes. One commenter suggested that Reclamation construct a boat launch in the project area.

Issue 2: How will Reclamation address flow management issues when designing the proposed project?

Comment Summary

One commenter expressed concern regarding flows in Salmon Creek downstream of the dam. The commenter noted the importance of maintaining perennial flow in Salmon Creek, as well as flexibility on both flow quantity and timing. The commenter remarked that a reduction in seepage from the dam under the proposed action may impact the availability of year-round flow.

Issue 3: Will Reclamation consider the inclusion of power generation when designing the proposed project?

Comment Summary

One commenter asked Reclamation if there was any possibility of the inclusion of a power. They expressed that since the dam is being updated, the inclusion of a power plant could provide benefit to the town of Conconully by providing the town with their own power.

3.1.4 Best Available Science and Baseline Data

Issue 1: How will Reclamation ensure the use of best available science and baseline data in its analysis?

Comment Summary

One commenter recommended that Reclamation use the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation project planning tool to identify wildlife species in the project area that may be impacted by the proposed action.

3.1.5 Cumulative Impacts

Issue 1: How will Reclamation consider cumulative impacts of the proposed project in combination with other past, present, or future projects implemented near the project area?

Comment Summary

One commenter asked Reclamation to consider the cumulative impacts of the proposed project with respect to the planned installation of fish screens by the Okanogan Irrigation District, as well as operations and maintenance actions on Salmon Creek. The commenter noted that interagency consultation for these projects is currently ongoing.

3.1.6 Mitigation and Best Management Practices

Issue 1: How will Reclamation monitor and mitigate impacts on resources by the proposed dam modification actions?

Comment Summary

One commenter recommended that Reclamation monitor impacts on water quality that may occur as a result of compaction and grouting under the proposed action. Another commenter asked whether Reclamation would revegetate the borrow area following completion of the proposed project.

3.2 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

3.2.1 Clean Water Act

Issue 1: How will Reclamation ensure compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act?

Comment Summary

One commenter inquired whether the proposed project would incorporate wetland mitigation measures, as required by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and consider impacts to wetland buffers.

3.2.2 Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Issue 1: How will Reclamation identify and mitigate impacts on endangered species' populations and critical habitat in the project area?

Comment Summary

Multiple commenters expressed interest in how Reclamation would address impacts on endangered species under the proposed action. They asked Reclamation how the agency would assess and mitigate impacts on critical habitat for species listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA. Several species were mentioned, including lynx, wolverine, western ridged mussel, and monarch butterfly.

Commenters pointed out that the ESA requires mitigation of impacts on populations and critical habitat. One commenter acknowledged that Reclamation is currently coordinating with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to fulfill the requirements of the ESA. Another commenter noted that Reclamation should coordinate with other agencies to design mitigation measures for impacts on endangered species and critical habitat.

3.2.3 National Historic Preservation Act Section 106

Issue 1: How will Reclamation ensure compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act?

Comment Summary

One commenter remarked on the need for Reclamation to evaluate impacts on historic resources in the project area, per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Specifically, the commenter stated that Reclamation should consider the potential for nine or ten cultural resource sites that could be impacted in the borrow area and around the dam. The commenter remarked that evaluations and determination of impacts, as well as the mitigation and treatments for adverse impacts, should be part of the Section 106 review process.

3.3 RESOURCE TOPICS

3.3.1 Fish and Aquatic Species

Issue 1: How will Reclamation address the presence of and potential impacts on fish species in the project area?

Comment Summary

One commenter expressed concern regarding potential impacts on salmon and steelhead trout populations in Salmon Lake¹ and Salmon Creek. The commenter requested that Reclamation disclose the density of salmon and the types of salmon impacted.

3.3.2 Recreation

Issue 1: How will Reclamation address impacts on recreation and public access in the project area?

Comment Summary

Commenters remarked on a range of issues related to recreational uses and public access in the project area. A commenter also pointed out that the project area would be separate from Conconully State Park.

3.3.3 Terrestrial Wildlife

Issue 1: How will Reclamation evaluate the presence of and impacts on terrestrial wildlife species in the project area?

Comment Summary

One commenter asked Reclamation to evaluate the presence of western gray squirrels within the project area.

3.3.4 Vegetation

Issue 1: How will Reclamation evaluate the presence of and impacts on vegetation species in the project area?

Comment Summary

One commenter noted that they have observed *Spiranthes*, a type of rare orchid, grows around the area.

3.4 NON-SUBSTANTIVE AND OUT-OF-SCOPE COMMENTS SUBMITTED DURING THE SCOPING PERIOD

3.4.1 Non-substantive Comments

Comment Summary

Reclamation received multiple comments that were determined to be non-substantive or out of scope. These comments pertained to fishing rights, and the funding and staffing of Reclamation projects. These issues are beyond the scope of the proposed project and SOD Program.

Reclamation also received comments to consider the inclusion of fish passage. The SOD Act does not provide Reclamation the authority to plan, develop, or implement fish passage. An amendment to the

¹ There is some uncertainty in the term, "Salmon Lake," provided here as the commenter may be referring to Conconully Reservoir since Conconully Dam was referenced; however, the commenter could have also been referring to the waterbody above the town of Conconully, which is sometimes referred to as, "Salmon Lake," by local residents.

SOD Act allows partners to pay for new developments that provide additional benefits at SOD projects. However, without partners to fund additional benefits, e.g., fish passage, Reclamation is not authorized to include in SOD risk reduction modifications. Since the Conconully Safety of Dams Modification Project does not have partners that are funding fish passage, Reclamation is not authorized to include fish passage and comments related to fish passage are considered out of scope.

Commenters also raised general clarifying questions regarding the logistics of specific actions or components of the project during scoping meetings that were deemed non-substantive since the information was covered in the project presentation, see **Appendix B**.

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Chapter 4. Future Steps in the NEPA Process

The next phase of Reclamation's EA process is to formulate and refine the alternatives based on the issues presented in **Chapter 3**. These alternatives will address issues identified during scoping and will meet the goals and objectives to be developed by Reclamation's interdisciplinary team. In compliance with NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality regulations, and Reclamation regulations and guidance, alternatives should be reasonable and implementable.

The analysis of the alternatives will be documented in the draft EA. Although Reclamation welcomes public input at any time during the environmental analysis process, the next official public comment period will begin when Reclamation publishes the draft EA, which is anticipated in January 2025. Reclamation will announce the availability of the draft EA via a press release, and a public comment period of at least 30 days will follow. Reclamation will hold public meetings during the draft EA comment period.

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Appendix A

Comments Received During Scoping

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Appendix A. Comments Received During Scoping

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/12/2024	test test	—	Website	testing	Non-substantive	N/A
8/19/2024	Sam Martin	Town of Conconully	Website	While completing the project, a recreational use that probably hasn't been considered, is that the Town would like to have, at some point in the future, a hiking trail around the Town, and to include around the reservoir. If possible to incorporate that idea into the project would be a benefit for recreational use in the future.	NEPA	Range of Alternatives
8/28/2024	Justin Yeager	National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	I would like to bring to your attention some [things that] have been talked about, but the first one is a fish passage above Conconully reservoir. Since you're maintaining the dam for another 50 to 100 years and this is going to maintain the existence of the dam structurally, there should be some consideration of of fish passage upstream and downstream of anadromous fish.	Non-substantive	N/A

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/28/2024	Justin Yeager	National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	<p>Jason talked about flow management downstream of the dam that is really important to [NFMS].</p> <p>It's only been a few years since we've had perennial flow in Salmon Creek.</p> <p>We want to obviously maintain that and and maintain flexibility on both flow quantity and timing [and be] able to have that option in the winter. I'm just highlighting the winter here because sometimes there that can be challenging for maintaining flow because of icing and challenging conditions with maybe reservoir levels.</p> <p>So I just want to make sure that if seepage is reduced that there are assurances that there will be the availability of flow year round in both quantity and timing.</p> <p>[We would like Reclamation to be] able to have flexible flow quantities and flexible timing of that quantity.</p>	NEPA	Range of Alternatives
8/28/2024	Justin Yeager	National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	<p>[NMFS] will need a adequate assessment of impacts to critical habitat.</p> <p>In addition, [NFMS will need] any existing rearing and spawning habitat that may be in non critical habitat.</p> <p>The spillway channel may not be considered critical habitat, but it could still be used for rearing and spawning for listed fish, including Upper Columbia River steelhead.</p> <p>So both those would have potential mitigation requirements under the ESA.</p>	Consultation and Coordination	Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/28/2024	Justin Yeager	National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	<p>[NFMS has] been coordinating with the Bureau of Reclamation on two different projects. One is the OID Okanogan Irrigation District fish screen. At River Mile 4, there's been a value planning process for that as well and we're looking into opportunities to replace the fish screen in the Weir there.</p> <p>[T]he other project is the the Salmon Creek operations and maintenance consultation with the Bureau. This [project] has to do with reservoir management, flow management and umm, how the irrigation water withdrawal and Shell Rock operate.</p> <p>[For that project], consultation is not complete. It will require some flexibility in the quantity of timing and water flows.</p> <p>So we want to keep our options open. It does sound like this project will maintain that or or actually increase the flexibility.</p> <p>So although I don't see that as an issue, I certainly think that is important to recognize that a future consultation on the OEM will be forthcoming at some point.</p> <p>And that's all I have.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	NEPA	Cumulative Impacts
8/28/2024	Stuart B. Fety	US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	<p>I would encourage kind of folks to continue to use the IPAC interface web tool to identify potential impacts to species. That system is, or rather should be, continually updated with kind of the most recent information and the list generated [from the system].</p> <p>That tool also has an expiration date for how long they can be used to inform consultations. So [I would encourage] checking in on that system.</p>	NEPA	Best Available Science and Baseline Data

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/28/2024	Stuart B. Fety	US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	There [have been] changes to lynx critical habitat. Wolverine critical habitat is currently being written. There [are] also listing decisions anticipated for Western Ridge mussel and monarch kind of this fall. I would encourage [Reclamation to] continue coordinating with [USFWS] on your anticipated impacts to species.	Consultation and Coordination	Endangered Species Act (ESA)
8/28/2024	Stuart B. Fety	US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	I've been in contact with [Reclamation] about some of the species like bull trout in the area. [When Reclamation has the analysis] or something for anticipated impacts on species, [USFWS would] encourage [Reclamation] to share those in draft so [USFWS] can provide more comment and also start [to] come up with a mitigation proposal that could fit in with the the proposed action early.	Consultation and Coordination	Endangered Species Act (ESA)
8/28/2024	Guy Moura	Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	[When Reclamation] had the images up [in the presentation] and talked about the borrow area and the dam, both the borrow area and the dam have previously been surveyed for cultural resources. [One concern is that there are] 9 or 10 sites within the area that [are going to be] be impacted. Will it be follow up survey and standards section 106 identification and evaluation and determination of impacts? If there are adverse impacts to those resources, will there be mitigations and treatments that are forwarded?	Consultation and Coordination	NHPA Section 106

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/28/2024	Ryan Anderson	Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	[It is] good to see that the the overlap where the project will impact wetlands has been identified and with thinking about the necessary mitigation. I don't know if we've discussed impacts to wetland buffers and how they would be placed as well. That's part of that mitigation for the wetlands that are unimpacted by the project, but would have buffer impacts, would that be considered going forward?	Consultation and Coordination	Clean Water Act (CWA)
8/28/2024	Elianna Y. Rosenthal	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	I'm just kind of reiterating what [Ecology], [NFMS] and [USFWS] have said. It would be nice to know just the estimated impacts you know closer to when we have a more accurate reading. [WDFW] like to kind of review [the planting plan] and have considerations for both upland and terrestrial species and aquatic species. I think once we know kind of the better estimated impacts just the agencies coming together to figure out mitigation.	Consultation and Coordination	Endangered Species Act (ESA)
8/28/2024	Damon Roberts	Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	[I]s [the] material [for the concrete soil amendment] from a viscosity standpoint similar to compaction grouting or is it compaction grouting?	Non-substantive	General clarifying question
8/28/2024	Damon Roberts	Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)	Verbal, Internal scoping meeting	I would definitely recommend making sure that [deep soil mixing is] part of the monitoring plan because I have seen projects where compaction, grouting moved a lot further than people were expecting it to. If [the concrete soil amendment from deep soil mixing is] more encased then [it would not be] an issue, but if it's literally compaction, grouting it can move around quite a bit and being that close to the lake it would be something that should be monitored for while it's being done.	NEPA	Mitigation and Best Management Practices

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/21/2024	Joe Berney	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	So how far down do you have to let the water out to get to this project? Do you have to lower the lake quite a ways?	Non-substantive	General clarifying question
8/21/2024	Joe Berney	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	So the dirt is coming from the left side of the bank or the right side of the bank?	Non-substantive	General clarifying question
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	I have three areas that I'd like to cover. The first one was, your address in the meeting this afternoon was wrong. You got 989 instead of 689.	NEPA	Public Outreach
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	And you guys are from Boise, Idaho? Why aren't we referring to Washington state people instead of Boise, Idaho, people? Are there any Washington state people here from Reclamation? But nobody is here from them. Okay. Why is Idaho doing a Washington thing? Nobody from Washington is here. So when you hold a meeting in Boise, do Washington people represent Boise then? Well, this is a meeting about Washington's stuff, but you guys are from Idaho. Ask them why they weren't here? That's my question to them.	Non-substantive	N/A
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	Number two is, lower lake is referred to as Salmon Lake, flows into Salmon Creek, and I want an answer to this and I -- and I don't know is not an acceptable answer. How many salmon come up Salmon Creek and are at the dam of this dam you're going to repair? Or steelhead, yeah. Steelhead or salmon. How many salmon, though, come up there? Two? Two hundred? Two thousand? Okay. Summer run? Whatever run? Spring run?	Resources	Fish and Aquatic species

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	Spring run. Okay. Now, there's also been -- I don't know if you're familiar with that or not, there's the same thing where salmon come up the bottom of the dam, can't go any further and there's been -- they wanted to repair the dam, they wanted to pull the dam out, they wanted to make it into a power plant. They don't know, They spend millions of dollars and nobody knows anything what they're going to do, and it's the same thing with this. You're spending millions of dollars but no salmon are allowed to go past that dam, Conconully Dam. There's an obstruction. Is it going to be removed so salmon can get up creek, gonna put a fish ladder up there? No fish ladder. Is that in the process at all? So is there any chance in the future, the feds will say, "Hey, there's salmon in that creek. They got to go up to their spawning grounds. You got to remove that dam and put in a fish ladder."	Non-substantive	N/A

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	There's kokanee in the lower lake there, Salmon Lake. And they can't go downstream for sure and this year is running low again and there's a little channel that goes up west. I've got some property up there and in past years, the salmon can't get up there, kokanee are trapped because that channel is so narrow and so low, they can't go up and spawn in that area. And that should be another area you should dredge out those areas, especially from the upper lake, to the lower lake, so the salmon can go somewhere. They did try and go up the north fork, but I don't know how far they made it. And it flooded.	Non-substantive	N/A
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	You mentioned endangered species. Could you list, have a list of those? Or which ones are you dealing with? Do you have a list with you right now of endangered species you--?	Consultation and Coordination	Endangered Species Act (ESA)
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	Spiranthes, too, grows up there.	Resources	Vegetation
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	One you didn't mention that I've seen actually in Conconully is the western gray's squirrel.	Resources	Terrestrial Wildlife

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	You mentioned the salmon in there. The salmon in Salmon Creek have been- whatever - extirpated. They're no longer there, so they're planted fish. They're not native fish. They're hatchery fish. We should be given the opportunity to fish for those hatchery-raised fish but the Washington state came in here and took away our fishing rights. You cannot fish the Okanogan River. It ruined the Methow. You can't fish for the steelhead or salmon in there. Not catch and release. You can do that. They're not protecting our salmon. Once they leave Okanogan, they can be netted, they can be fished for sport and they don't know how many of our salmon are caught below once they leave Okanogan. But we're not allowed to fish for them up here. I think you guys should address that and give us back some of our fishing rights. Especially for salmon. If there's going to be salmon coming up there, and they're planted, not native salmon, they're hatchery salmon, we should be able to fish for those.	Non-substantive	N/A

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	How come there's no bull trout going up river in the west fork and north fork? But there's bull trout up Tryst River. They're in there. I don't know why they couldn't put some in west fork and north fork. Well, you know, it's fishermen. They come in here and destroyed our fishing rights over here, because of dams that block the salmon coming up and spawning and they keep telling us they're endangered up here in Okanogan County. Only in Okanogan County, you can't fish up there. But like I'm saying, once those salmon, steelhead leave Okanogan County, it's fair game. Net, hook -- they don't know how many fish they caught that come up here. There's no study on that. There's no reliable data. And so we've lost our fishing rights here, basically is what I'm saying and I'd like to see fishing open on Salmon Creek and the Okanogan River. I've contacted them, and they said they don't do fish counts on (inaudible) Creek, on Salmon Creek and the stream that goes into Riverside where they tore up the highway, because the fish couldn't go through a culvert, but they can go through a box culvert. I'd like to see the study on that one.	Non-substantive	N/A
8/21/2024	Joe Berney	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	What size earthquake are you talking about that we should have -- we had a 4.2 seven years back. If we should have something like that, like a massive earthquake, this is supposed to hold the dam -- your improvement should absolutely hold the dam. So you're talking a massive earthquake. So what about the upper dam coming up the lake? If that should shake loose, it'd come down through town, your dam will hold? Now we have two different dams here. I don't think that would hold through a big earthquake. It will? Okay. That's quite alarming how that's coming up (inaudible).	NEPA	Purpose and Need

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	When the dam was constructed, was there any possibility of them putting in or are you currently putting in a power plant up there? That way the town of Conconully could provide their own power. I'm sure there's no representative of PUD here, because they don't want stuff like that going on taking power away from them. Are you going to put any power plant in there at all? Are you going to put one in when you redo the dam? It'd be great to have a power plant up there. And the upper lake, too.	NEPA	Range of Alternatives
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	Your borrow area, there, what kind of plants are you going to put in there? Or is that just going to be a desert? Make it into a park? You know, a botanical area? Are you going to plant some -- some endangered plants in there? Or what's going to be up that borrow area? So that will be open to the public, the borrow area?	NEPA	Mitigation and Best Management Practices
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	So that will be open to the public, the borrow area? How about below the dam? Will that be open to the public? There's a gate now you can't go across the dam. It says keep out. Like, you can't be in there. So you don't know whether we're going to be allowed below the dam.	Resources	Recreation
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	So in the future, are we going to be able to fish off the face of the dam?	Resources	Recreation
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	Well, they got signs up, no trespassing, keep out, federal land, and what they've got up there now, but it's not like -- they don't want you there. You're not allowed there. Don't even look at the signs down there. Stay away. It's their land. It's not greetable area. That's why I'd like to have this open to the public, so the public can see what's going on.	NEPA	Range of Alternatives

Submitted On	Name	Organization Name	Method of Delivery	Scoping Comment	Code	Sub-code
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	So the borrow area, how many feet down are you going on the hill?	Non-substantive	General clarifying question
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	You're not going to make that part of Conconully State Park, so you'd have to have a DNR parking permit to go in there	Resources	Recreation
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	The borrow area, and the area around there, free and open to the public. I don't know if you're going to be allowed to camp overnight in there or what the story is.	NEPA	Range of Alternatives
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	[The borrow area and the land around here...] It'd be a good picnic area.	NEPA	Range of Alternatives
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	Is there any plans at all to put a boat launch in that area? If you're going to lower that to the lake level, it'd make sense you can put a boat launch there.	NEPA	Range of Alternatives
8/21/2024	Ernie Buchanan	N/A	Verbal, public scoping meeting	That is why I commented on that, to make a record, hey maybe they're going to put a boat launch in there. Maybe they're going to put some exotic plants and not native plants, but some endangered species in that park there, photographers come in there, naturalists come -- hey, I haven't seen this plant before. And it's right here in front of me.	NEPA	Range of Alternatives

Appendix B

Scoping Meeting Presentation

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— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Conconully Safety of Dams Modification Project Environmental Assessment

Scoping Meeting

Aug. 21, 2024
5 to 7 p.m. PDT



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Conconully Safety of Dams Modification Project Environmental Assessment

Scoping Meeting Agenda

5 to 5:30 p.m. PDT:	Open House
5:30 to 6 p.m. PDT:	Reclamation Presentation
6 to 7 p.m. PDT:	Public Comment Session

Aug. 21, 2024, 5 to 7 p.m. PDT

Staff Introductions

Bureau of Reclamation, Columbia-Northwest Region

- Jesse Poletasio, Project Manager, jpoletasio@usbr.gov
- Jason Sutter, Natural Resource Specialist, jasutter@usbr.gov
- Keenan Arnold, Project Manager, karnold@usbr.gov



Presentation Outline

- Conconully Dam Overview
- Proposed Project
- Project Timeline
- Public Comment Session



Dam Safety Program

- Reclamation Safety of Dams Act (1978) established the Dam Safety Program
- Dam Safety Program created to ensure that Reclamation dams do not pose an unreasonable risk to the public



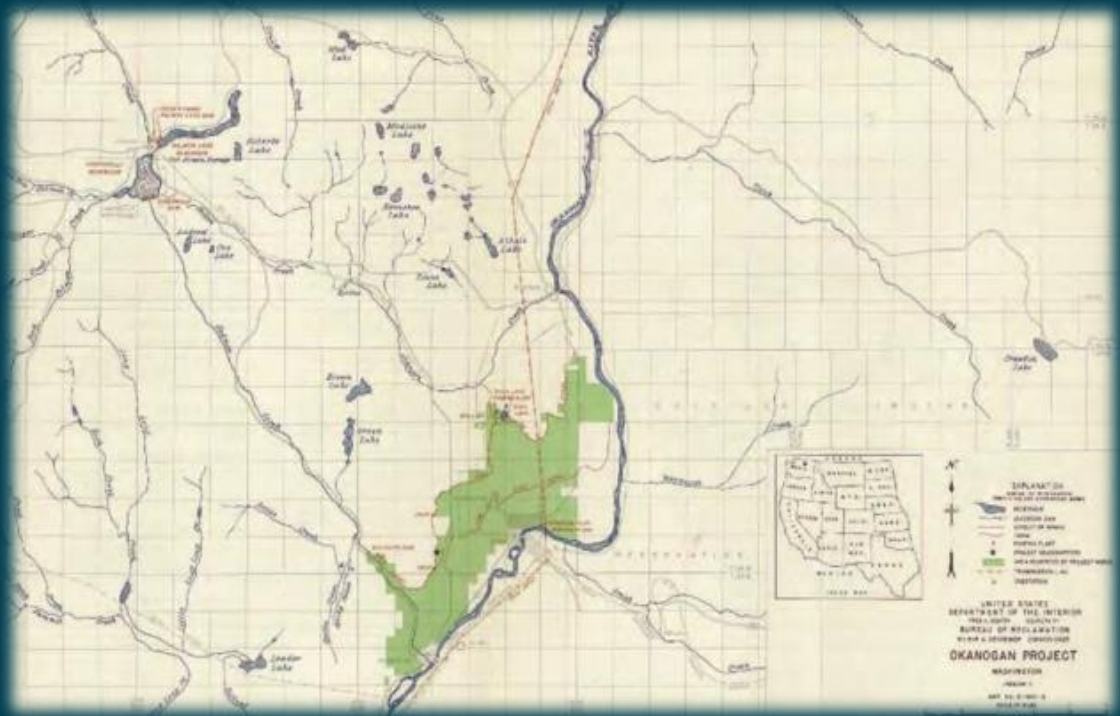
Conconully Dam and Reservoir Okanogan Project

Purpose

- Irrigation

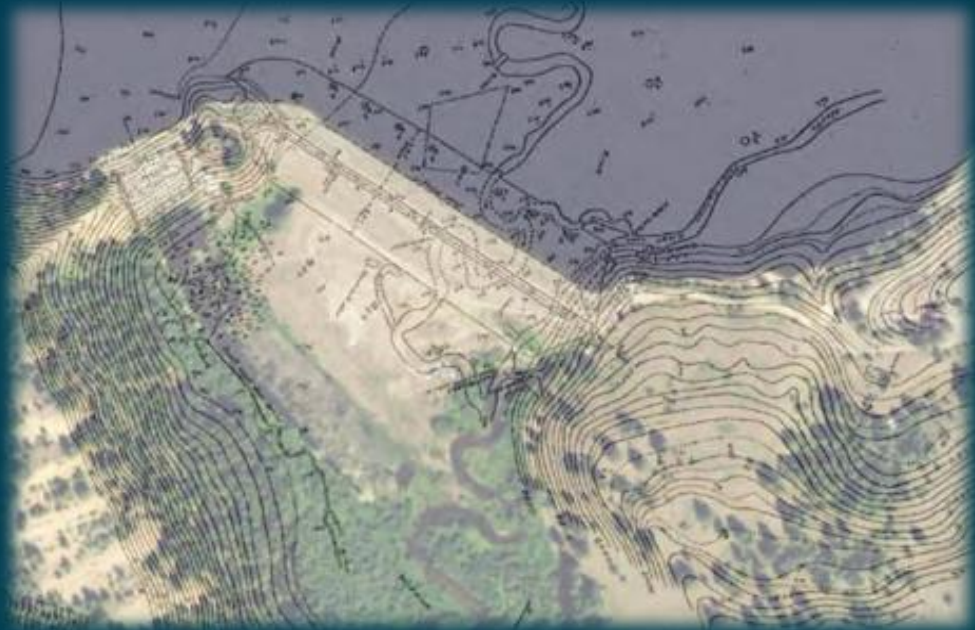
Benefits

- Recreation
- Fish and wildlife
- Flood control



Facility Overview

- Located on Salmon Creek
 - 17 miles north of Omak
- Constructed 1907-1910
- Component of Okanogan Project
- Storage capacity
 - 13,000 acre-feet
- Reservoir surface area
 - 450 acres at full pool



Ownership and Operation

- Conconully Dam ownership
 - Bureau of Reclamation
 - Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region
 - Ephrata Field Office
- Conconully Dam
Operation & Maintenance
 - Okanogan Irrigation District



Conconully Safety of Dams Corrective Action Studies

- Reclamation investigated Conconully Dam and foundation.
- Dam and foundation found susceptible to seismic damage.
- Risk of failure above Reclamation's Public Protection guidelines.
- Reclamation evaluated alternatives to modify the dam to reduce failure potential from severe seismic damages.



Reasons for Seismic Modifications

- Dam constructed by washing materials into the shell of dam (hydraulic fill) resulting in soft saturated soils in core of dam.
- The foundation soils beneath dam are soft, saturated, sandy and silty.
- Exploration data indicates foundation soils susceptible to liquefaction in event of an earthquake.
- Core materials are subject to slumping in event of an earthquake.



Hydraulic mining method



Material transported via flume to the damsite



Hydraulic fill construction and puddled core



Potential Effect of Dam Failure

- Flows down narrow canyon to Okanogan, WA and Okanogan River 15 miles downstream
- Flows down Okanogan River to Lake Pateros 40 miles downstream
- Quick failure with reservoir at operating pool level
 - Peak flood - 177,000 cubic feet per second
- Slow failure with reservoir 10 feet lower
 - Peak flood - 97,400 cfs



Purpose of the Project

- Reduce the seismic risks of dam failure
- Provide water deliveries and flows for irrigators and endangered species
- Maintain additional benefits for recreation and fish and wildlife habitat



Need for the Project

- Comply with Reclamation's SOD requirements and bring static and hydrologic risks at Conconully Dam below Public Protection Guidelines
- Improve control of water flows through the outlet works
- Increase the reliability and longevity of the dam and water conveyance system



Modification Alternatives

- Excavate and replace foundation materials
- Deep soil mixed grout columns in the foundation
 - Both alternatives include construction of a stability berm



Excavate and Replace Modification Alternative

- Mitigates liquefaction by replacing downstream foundation materials with compacted fill unlikely to liquefy



Excavate and replace implementation at Boca Dam.



Deep Soil Mixing Modification Alternative

- Mitigates liquefaction by grouting downstream foundation materials with overlapping columns creating a block of soilcrete that is stronger than the existing foundation



Stability Berm

- Both modification alternatives include construction of a berm on the downstream face of the dam to increase stability.



Boca Dam
stability berm



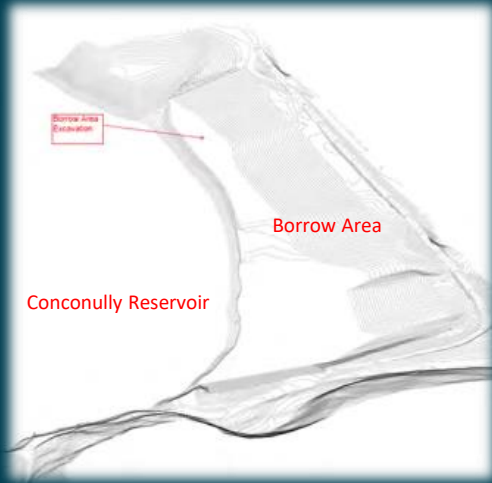
Other Risk Reduction Alternatives

- In accordance with Reclamation standards, consideration of reservoir restriction and controlled breach risk reduction alternatives is required for any dam modification study.
- Reservoir restriction to a reservoir water surface elevation that reduces the probability of failure due to an earthquake
- Controlled breach and removal of the dam



Proposed Action

Material Borrow Area



- Stability berm fill material excavated from 19 acre borrow area
- Excavated to a shallow slope from current ground surface to reservoir full pool



Resources



- Cultural resources
- Endangered-Species Act listed species
- Fisheries and aquatic resources
- Noise
- Public health and safety
- Recreation
- Socioeconomics
- Tribal interests
- Visual resources
- Water resources
- Wetlands



Project Timeline/Next Steps

Early 2025

Draft EA

Mid 2025

Final EA and Decision



Public Involvement Opportunities

Public Scoping

- Aug. 9, 2024 to Sept. 8, 2024

Draft EA Public Comment Period

- Early 2025
- 30-day duration



North Fork
Salmon Creek

Conconully Lake

Thank You!

Conconully

Conconully Reservoir

Conconully Dam

Salmon Creek

West Fork
Salmon Creek



Public Comment Session

Thank you for attending! Your time and participation are greatly appreciated.

Comments can be submitted today (verbally or written) or via:

- Virtual Meeting Room

www.virtualpublicmeeting.com/conconully-dam-safety-ea-scoping

- Email

bor-sha-consod@usbr.gov

- Mail

Attn: Jason Sutter

NEPA lead

Bureau of Reclamation

Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region

1150 Curtis Road

Boise, ID 83706-1234

Comments must be submitted or postmarked by **Sept. 8, 2024**

Please be advised that the entire submission, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time.



Public Comment Session

- Verbal public comments will be accepted in the order listed on the sign-in sheet. We will call out your name when it's your turn.
- Please spell out your full first and last name for the record before providing your comment.
- Comments will be recorded by the stenographer and included in the project record.
- To ensure all participants have an opportunity to comment, there may be a time limit for individual comments.
- Please be respectful of others, refrain from profanity, and stay within your allotted time.



