



® Watercraft Inspection Stations in Columbia River Basin

Project Summary: The Corps, in collaboration with the Pacific Northwest States and other stakeholders, is working to develop decision documents which will recommend the best locations for watercraft inspection stations, intended to prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) into the Columbia River Basin. The watercraft inspection stations would be located within the Columbia River Basin in the States of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. The proposed action would be part of a larger, comprehensive strategy to protect waterbodies in the Columbia River Basin. In addition to establishing watercraft inspection stations, the Corps may also engage in monitoring and contingency planning which may include development of risk assessments, establishing watershed-wide plans, and monitoring water quality. Congressional funding for watercraft inspections stations may be cost shared with the States listed above at 50/50. Separate funding is appropriated for monitoring and contingency planning and is not authorized to be cost shared.

Authority: Section 104(d) of the River and Harbor Act (RHA) of 1958, as amended by Water Resources and Reform Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014 (Public Law 113-121).

Project Delivery Team: The Corps team is working with AIS coordinators from the States, Representatives from the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Pacific Northwest Economic Region, and Northwest Power and Conservation Council, and members of the Corps vertical team, including Headquarters USACE and Northwestern Division.

Implementation Guidance: The Letter Report will document the required analysis identified in the Implementation Guidance. The major categories of the evaluation are: 1) the costs and impacts of AIS infestation to Corps reservoirs and facilities; 2) the watercraft inspection stations locations; 3) the costs to establish, operate, and maintain watercraft inspection stations; and 4) recommendations on further action, including potential additional authorization. WRRDA 2014 authorized the establishment of watercraft inspection stations in the Columbia River Basin. However, based on an interpretation of the WRRDA 2014 language and guidance from Corps Headquarters, the Corps cannot fund existing stations without additional authority.

Watercraft Inspection Stations and Costs: The Letter Report will describe the establishment of a typical station, hours of operation, personnel, and the inspection process. The Letter Report will identify, by state, inspection station locations inside and outside of the CRB, and include costs which will be separated by state and station locations. Table 1 lists the 2016 estimated costs by state.

Table 1. Watercraft Inspection Stations Cost by State

State	Outside the CRB	Inside the CRB	Total
Idaho	\$240,643.00	\$941,647.00	\$1,182,289.00
Montana	\$390,895.00	\$450,835.00	\$841,730.00
Oregon	\$407,869.00	\$276,738.00	\$684,607.00
Washington	\$409,597.00	\$183,240.00	\$566,437.00

Federal Interest: The introduction and establishment of certain AIS have the potential to cause millions of dollars in damage and operation and maintenance costs to water-related infrastructure, recreation and the ecosystem. AIS present a direct threat to Corps authorized purposes, including hydropower, navigation, and fish and wildlife mitigation. The Letter Report analysis focuses on the Federal facilities, which includes 37 hydropower facilities, 18 fish ladders, 9 navigation locks, and 21 hatcheries. The Letter Report will also acknowledge impact costs to the non-federal facilities in the Columbia River Basin. If this program is implemented, the cost to the Corps would be 50% of the total station operating costs, or roughly \$1.6 million per year based on the 2016 estimated costs. There is a clear benefit to invest in the Watercraft Inspection Program in order to delay or prevent the potential impacts of an infestation.

Recommendations: The draft report recommends developing partnerships with state and regional AIS interests to cost-share the establishment of watercraft inspection stations as part of a regional defense strategy to stop the spread of AIS into the Columbia River Basin. Within the authority of WRRDA 2014, the Corps is limited to stations inside the Columbia River Basin. However, if the geographic boundaries of the authority broadened in the future, stations outside the Columbia River Basin could be incorporated.

Upcoming Milestones:

The Letter Report, Programmatic Environmental Assessment, and Biological Assessment are currently under internal review. A second Agency Technical Review will be conducted in October 2016. The decision document is scheduled for policy review and approval in winter 2016.

Next Steps: Upon review and approval of the Letter Report and after additional Federal funds are made available, the Corps will work with State AIS coordinators to draft a scope of work for each state that contains inspection stations locations, and estimated costs to establish, operate and maintain the stations. After the scope of work is finalized and approved by the State AIS coordinator and the Corps, a Project Partnership Agreement will be drafted for signature by each State and the Corps. This will execute the agreement and commit available funds for reimbursement. The States' cost-share obligation will include provision for all lands, easements, right-of-way, relocations, and dredged material disposal areas required for establishment of inspection stations.

Funding:

FY16 Funds Available: \$250,000
Expenditures through August FY16: \$135,000