

the VA files and for resolving any discrepancies or inconsistencies on an individual basis. VA will initiate actions to obtain an election by the individual of which pay he or she wishes to receive and will be responsible for making final determinations as to positive identification, eligibility for, or amounts of pension or disability compensation benefits, adjustments thereto, or any recovery of overpayments, or such other action as authorized by law.

The annual electronic file provided by the VA will contain information on approximately 2.5 million pension and disability compensation recipients.

The DMDC computer database file contains information on approximately 827,000 DoD and 8,300 USCG reservists who receive pay and allowances for performing authorized duty.

VA will furnish DMDC the name and SSN of all VA pension and disability compensation recipients and DMDC will supply VA the name, SSN, date of birth, and the number of days drilled by fiscal year of each reservist who is identified as a result of the match.

F. Inclusive Dates of the Matching Program: This computer matching program is subject to public comment and review by Congress and the Office of Management and Budget. If the mandatory 30 day period for comment has expired and no comments are received and if no objections are raised by either Congress or the Office of Management and Budget within 40 days of being notified of the proposed match, the computer matching program becomes effective and the respective agencies may begin the exchange at a mutually agreeable time on an annual basis. By agreement between VA and DMDC, the matching program will be in effect for 18 months with an option to renew for 12 additional months unless one of the parties to the agreement advises the other by written request to terminate or modify the agreement.

G. Address for Receipt of Public Comments or Inquiries: Director, Defense Privacy Office, 1941 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 920, Arlington, VA 22202-4502. Telephone (703) 607-2943.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the C-7 (North Dade) Canal General Reevaluation Report (GRR)

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), along with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), intends to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the feasibility phase of the C-7 (North Dade) Canal General Reevaluation Report (GRR).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions about the proposed action and DEIS can be answered by: Paul Stevenson, Planning Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 4970, Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019; Telephone 904-899-5049/Fax 904-232-3442.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

a. Authorization: Construction of the C-7 (Little River) canal and associated water control structure, S-27 was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1948, which provided for construction of the first phase of a comprehensive plan for flood control, fish and wildlife preservation, regional groundwater control, salinity control, and navigation.

The Energy and Water Development Act of 1995 authorized preparation of a GRR to review conveyance capacity of existing canal, document the quality of local maintenance, and to make recommendations for sufficient solutions to flooding problems within the C-7 drainage basins.

b. Study Area: The C-7 basin is located in northeastern Miami-Dade County, Florida; the canal and associated control structure S-27 are previously constructed Corps' projects. The C-7 basin comprises 35 square miles, and is approximately 11 miles long. The western portion of the basin lies in Area B, an area of relatively poor drainage, west of the coastal ridge, eastern Miami-Dade County. S-27 is a double gated concrete spillway located in C-7, which permits release of flood runoff and prevents over-drainage and saltwater intrusion through C-7.

S-30 is a gated concrete culvert which prevents excessive seepage losses from Water Conservation Area (WCA) -3A by permitting higher stages in the L-33 borrow canal and supplies water from L-33 borrow canal during dry periods to

maintain stages and satisfy irrigation demands in the C-7 drainage basin. C-7 canal discharges into northern Biscayne Bay, at Miami.

c. Project Scope and Preliminary Alternatives: The primary objective of this project is to develop a total watershed plan, which identifies structural and/or operational modifications to the C-7 canal and the associated water management facilities, to improve flood control. While the project emphasis is to enhance flood control benefits in the project area, the GRR will also document the status and quality of maintenance on the existing project and identify environmental restoration opportunities in conjunction with proposed project modifications.

Alternatives will be developed and evaluated based on the project objectives, environmental studies, flood control feasibility, and economics. Standard Corps' programs and SWMM modeling will be used to develop hydraulic models of the existing and any proposed flood control features.

In addition to the without project and future conditions, four preliminary alternatives have been drafted which may be revised pending model results and public feedback. They include: (1) No action; (2) modifications to existing canal to increase conveyance where appropriate and possible; (3) installation of pumps to pump water eastward to tide, possibly in conjunction with canal cross-section modifications; (4) installation of pumps to pump water westward possibly in conjunction with channel modifications and a water treatment component.

d. Scoping: The scoping process as outlined by the Council on Environmental Quality will be utilized to involve Federal, State, and local agencies, affected Indian Tribes, and other interested private organizations and parties.

A Scoping letter will be sent to interested Federal, State and local agencies, interested organizations and the public, requesting their comments and concerns regarding issues they feel should be addressed in DEIS. Interested persons and organizations wishing to participate in the scoping process should contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the address above. Significant issues anticipated include concern for: maintenance of flood protection for the project area; water quality, particularly in the receiving waters of Biscayne Bay or WCA-3A; wetlands, fish and wildlife; saltwater intrusion into project canal and the groundwater and; threatened and endangered plant and animal species. Public meetings will be held over the

course of the study, the exact location, dates, and times will be announced in public notices and local newspapers.

e. DEIS Preparation: It is estimated that the DEIS will be available to the public about January 2002.

Luz D. Ortiz,

Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Upper Columbia Basin Alternative Flood Control and Fish Operations at Libby Dam, Montana; Hungry Horse Dam, Montana; and Grand Coulee Dam, Washington

AGENCY: US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), DoD and US Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau), Department of Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), and the Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) propose to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on operational alternatives for the conservation of threatened and endangered species of fish listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act. (The Corps has responsibility for publishing the notice in the **Federal Register** and for preparing and filing the EIS.) Specifically, this EIS will address those operational actions for Libby, Hungry Horse, and Grand Coulee Dams identified by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives in their Biological Opinions (BiOps) both dated December 21, 2000. Those BiOps call for the Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation to undertake various actions at their 14 main Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) dams to assist in recovery of fish species listed under the Endangered Species Act in the Columbia River basin. Among those actions is implementation of an alternative flood control strategy, called variable discharge (variable Q, or VARQ), required at Libby and Hungry Horse Dams. This strategy has potential impacts in other parts of the Columbia system, and results in different operation at Grand Coulee Dam. All three reservoirs are storage reservoirs,

and Libby and Hungry Horse are on headwater tributaries to the Columbia River, the Kootenai and South Fork Flathead, respectively, while Grand Coulee is on the mainstream Columbia. Libby is a Corps project, and Hungry Horse and Grand Coulee are Bureau projects. VARQ is a flood control operation that reduces wintertime reservoir drawdown at Libby and Hungry Horse for floodwater storage compared to existing operation, and provides better assurance of reservoir refill in summer, to meet multiple water uses. The no-action alternative is called BASE-CRT63, and consists of the existing flood control operation.

In addition, the NMFS BiOp calls for summer flow augmentation from Grand Coulee Dam for juvenile salmon out-migration, as well as provision for fall flows for lower Columbia chum salmon spawning and incubation. The USFWS BiOp calls for reduction of adverse effects of flow fluctuations on bull trout below Hungry Horse and Libby dams, and for maintenance of minimum year-round flows for bull trout.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions regarding the scoping process or preparation of the DEIS may be directed to Dr. Stephen Martin, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District, Environmental Resources Section, PO Box 3755, Seattle, Washington 98124-3755; telephone (206) 764-3631; e-mail stephen.g.martin@usace.army.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Proposed Action

The Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) comprises 14 major dams and a number of smaller ones. Libby, Hungry Horse and Grand Coulee dams are among the 14 large projects. The BiOps from the USFWS and NMFS were both issued on December 21, 2000, under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as amended, in response to a Biological Assessment and supplementary information concerning effects of the FCRPS on listed stocks of white sturgeon, bull trout, salmon and steelhead in the Columbia and tributaries. Libby and Hungry Horse dams store water primarily for hydropower and flood control, as well as for other purposes such as fish and wildlife and recreation. Libby Dam is located at river mile (RM) 222 on the Kootenai River in northwestern Montana; when full, the reservoir (Lake Koocanusa) backs into southern British Columbia, Canada. Hungry Horse Dam is at RM 5 on the South Fork Flathead River, part of the Flathead/Clark Fork/Pend Oreille system, also in northwestern Montana. The two systems

are adjacent to each other. Grand Coulee Dam is at RM 597 on the Columbia River in northeastern Washington State.

In general, flood control using reservoirs involves maintaining the reservoir low enough to impound inflow from high-runoff events such as rainstorms and sudden snowmelts. In multipurpose storage reservoirs, it means drawing down the reservoir beginning in early fall through March or April to a surface elevation appropriate for the runoff forecast for the coming spring and summer (generally based on snowpack readings). Then refill begins, and the reservoir is generally full by the end of July, where it is maintained through August. For Libby, Hungry Horse and Grand Coulee, water passed through the dam is used for power generation, and lowering the reservoir elevation serves to meet increased power needs of the region in fall and winter.

VARQ is an alternative flood control strategy intended to meet other needs by better assuring reservoir refill and higher spring flows, to come closer to natural snowmelt runoff conditions in the rivers. That runoff is impounded by Libby and Hungry Horse dams, which under normal operations released only minimum flows during that period. In the Kootenai River, starting in the 1990s, drawing down the reservoirs for power generation below the required flood control elevation has been curtailed in winter to allow water storage for flow augmentation in spring. In addition to benefiting sturgeon, it also benefits juvenile salmon outmigration in the lower Columbia River. Furthermore, August flow augmentation for Columbia salmon outmigration has also been provided from Libby in response to 1995 NMFS BiOp requirements.

VARQ is related to the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks Integrated Rule Curves (IRCs) as an alternative flood control strategy. In lower and medium runoff-forecast years, compared to VARQ, IRCs allow deeper reservoir drawdown in winter, which benefits power.

As called for by USFWS and NMFS BiOps, the Corps and Bureau are to implement VARQ at Libby and Hungry Horse dams, as well as other actions for benefit of listed fish stocks in the Columbia basin. If remaining studies of system flood control prove VARQ feasible, and other impacts are either not significant or can be mitigated, then it would be implemented the next winter following completion of NEPA documentation.