

**WAC 197-11-960 Environmental checklist.**

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

*Purpose of checklist:*

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), chapter 43.21C RCW, requires all governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions. An environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared for all proposals with probable significant adverse impacts on the quality of the environment. The purpose of this checklist is to provide information to help you and the agency identify impacts from your proposal (and to reduce or avoid impacts from the proposal, if it can be done) and to help the agency decide whether an EIS is required.

*Instructions for applicants:*

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Governmental agencies use this checklist to determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant, requiring preparation of an EIS. Answer the questions briefly, with the most precise information known, or give the best description you can.

You must answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. In most cases, you should be able to answer the questions from your own observations or project plans without the need to hire experts. If you really do not know the answer, or if a question does not apply to your proposal, write "do not know" or "does not apply." Complete answers to the questions now may avoid unnecessary delays later.

Some questions ask about governmental regulations, such as zoning, shoreline, and landmark designations. Answer these questions if you can. If you have problems, the governmental agencies can assist you.

The checklist questions apply to all parts of your proposal, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

*Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:*

Complete this checklist for nonproject proposals, even though questions may be answered "does not apply." IN ADDITION, complete the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (part D).

For nonproject actions, the references in the checklist to the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proposer," and "affected geographic area," respectively.

**A. BACKGROUND**

- 1. Name of proposed project, if applicable: Milltown Restoration Project
- 2. Name of applicant: Skagit River System Cooperative/WDFW
- 3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:  
 SRSC- Jef Parr 360-770-5375  
 11426 Moorage Way, P.O. Box 368 La Conner WA 98257  
 WDFW- Bob Everitt 425-775-1311  
 16018 Mill Creek Boulevard, Mill Creek WA, 98012-1296
- 4. Date checklist prepared: 4-7-06
- 5. Agency requesting checklist: WDFW
- 6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable): 8/15/06-9/30/06
- 7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

No. We expect to be able to complete the primary phase of the project in the allotted time. If for some reason the levy removal isn't completed by the end date indicated, we would want to complete it during the same window the following year.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

Milltown Restoration Project Biological Assessment (attached).

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

No. This is sole project currently slated for the property in question.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

Local Government for shoreline: Exemption; Corp of Engineers-404 consultation;

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

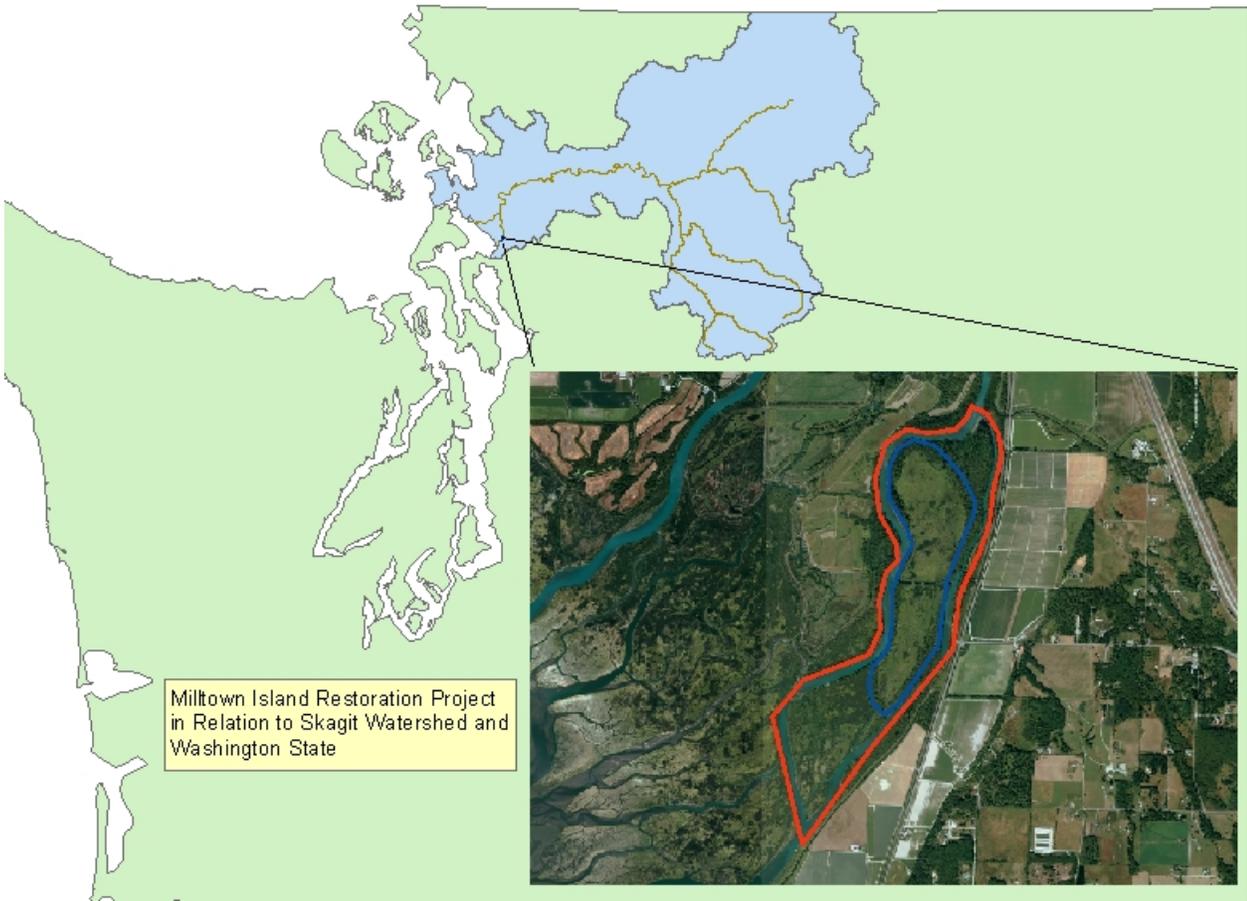
The purpose of this project is to restore natural hydrologic and biological function to the portions of the island that have been isolated by the existing levy system. The interior of Milltown Island has been disconnected from tidal and riverine influences and the area supports fewer tidal channels than are seen in undiked tidal marshes in nearby areas of the Skagit delta. The proposal calls for: 1) the deconstruction of 1320ft of earthen levy from Milltown Island, and 2) the establishment of 1380ft of channel to promote addition water passage into the interior of Milltown Island.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

SW 30 33N 4E: Lat/Long: 48 18'57"N, 122 21'03"W

Milltown Island, Conway, WA

Land Owner: WDFW, 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091 360-902-2200





**B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

**1. Earth**

a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous,  
other . . . . . Flat island surrounded by 3-4ft high levy.

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?  
Does not apply.

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat,  
muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime  
farmland.  
The levee is comprised of alluvial silt and clay.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so,  
describe.  
Do not know.

e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed.  
Indicate source of fill.  
The purpose of the Milltown Restoration project is to deconstruct 1320ft of levee from the island. The material from  
the levee will be relocated back into the barrow ditches that was the original source for the material.

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.  
With the presence of the Skagit River adjacent to Milltown Island, erosion is already occurring at the site.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project  
construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?  
0% will be covered with impervious surfaces.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:  
Our work window occurs during the driest portion of the year, little to no rain is expected during this time. Our  
deconstruction project calls for shaped charges that will direct the displaced material towards the interior of the island to limit the  
amount of material that will enter the water column. The site currently occupied by the levee will be disturbed after  
deconstruction and will be seeded by an appropriate (ie Native) grass seed as ground cover.

**2. Air**

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile,  
odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If  
any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

The project calls for controlled subsurface demolitions to remove the existing levee. As the levee is primarily  
constructed of dense earth and clay, there will be a substantial amount of heavy material kicked up into the air for a brief period  
of time (~10-20seconds) but little to no fine dust. Being dense earth and clay all material displaced by the blast will settle in the  
immediate area, within 50ft of the blast. The demolitions used will produce a negligible amount of smoke.

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

Does not apply.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

Does not apply.

### 3. Water

- a. Surface:

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

Steamboat Slough portion of the Skagit River flows adjacent to the proposed project area.

- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Yes. The levee to be removed runs along the edge of Milltown Island, adjacent to Steamboat slough. There are also large drainage channels on the interior of the island. See attached picture on page 4.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

The project estimates that approximately 1.28 acres of low quality wetlands (the barrow ditch which is primarily occupied by cattails) will be temporarily affected. Without the levee to divert floodwaters from the interior, the next flood event would re-saturate the wetland area. The source of the fill will be the broadcast of the levee material back into the barrow ditch and is expected to average less than 1ft deep.

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Does not apply.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

Yes, the project proposal is on Milltown Island.

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

There is to be no intentional discharge of levee material to surface waters. The project calls for displacing the levee material towards the interior of Milltown Island during a time of low flows. The disturbed area will then be seeded by appropriate grass species as ground cover and erosion control.

b. Ground:

1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Does not apply.

2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals. . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

Does not apply

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow?

Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

The proposed project will be occurring above the water table and occurring during the driest time of the year.

There is no anticipated runoff.

2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.

An out of season rainstorm could potentially move disturbed fill material from the deconstructed levee into the interior drainage ditches.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any:

Despite the project occurring during the driest portion of the year, recommended erosion controls will be established just in case. Disturbed areas will be reseeded with native grass as ground cover.

**4. Plants**

a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site:

\_\_\_\_\_ deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other

\_\_\_\_\_ evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other, spruce

\_\_\_\_\_ shrubs: Many,

\_\_\_\_\_ grass: Reed canary Grass,

\_\_\_\_\_ pasture

\_\_\_\_\_ crop or grain

\_\_\_\_\_ wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other

\_\_\_\_\_ water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other

\_\_\_\_\_ other types of vegetation: Himalayan Blackberry

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

The levee sections to be deconstructed are primarily vegetated by mid-sized alders, riparian shrubs, Himalayan Blackberry. There are adjacent cattail stands that will be impacted by the displacement of levee material.

c. List threatened or endangered plant species known to be on or near the site.

Do not know.

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d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

Disturbed areas previously occupied by the levy will be immediately seeded with native ground cover. Since the purpose of the project is to re-open the interior to yearly floods, any additional plantings will be delayed until after winter flooding. At which point the project site will be examined and a best of course of action for replanting will occur.

Invasive controls will occur along channels already present in the interior. 5 buffer zones will be identified and mowed clear of Reed Canary Grass and Cattails. A light exclusion cloth will be stapled down to prevent regeneration and willow and cottonwood stakes will be punched through the ground cloth. These fast growing plants will rapidly establish a canopy cover to inhibit adjacent invasive plants and to provide a seed bank for expansion. Sweetgale and spruce will also be used but on a more selective scale. An additional 5 buffer zones will be establish after the winter floods along sites that demonstrate potential new channels.

**5. Animals**

a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

- birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:
- mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:
- fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

b. List any threatened or endangered animal species known to be on or near the site.

Bald Eagle, Bull Trout, Marbled Murrelet, Puget Sound ESU Chinook, Puget Sound DPS Steelhead

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

The project has been set to a work window that will occur after bald eagle nesting and minimize impacts to juvenile and adult salmonids. Actual demolition detonations will occur during the lowest available tides.

**6. Energy and natural resources**

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

Does not apply.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties?

If so, generally describe.

Does not apply.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal?

List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

Does not apply.

**7. Environmental health**

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

There will be the use of controlled subsurface demolitions to deconstruct the dike, but there is nothing present on site that would result in additional uncontrolled explosions. Demolition charges will be placed into pre-bored holes in the levee, the resulting explosions will not ignite surrounding vegetation.

- 1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

Does not apply.

- 2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

Does not apply.

**b. Noise**

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

Does not apply.

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

There will be a limited amount of noise generated for brief periods during the day by the use of subsurface demolitions.

- 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

The project is set in an isolated area and personnel will be stationed at locations a safe distance away from any blast or noise generated by the demolitions.

**8. Land and shoreline use**

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

Public recreation.

- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

Yes. The site was farmed during the first half of the century. It was purchased by WDFW in the early 1950s.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

There is a remnant levee system that surrounds a large portion of Milltown Island. There are also a few (<10) decaying power poles and fence posts scattered throughout the site.

- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

Yes. The purpose of the project is to deconstruct 1320ft of man-made levee from the island.

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

Recreation Activities-OSRSI

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f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

Rearing and foraging habitat for Chinook.

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

Do not know.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.

Do not know.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

0 Residential. Staff from SRSC or WDFW will be working in the area on an irregular basis.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

Zero people will be displaced by the completed project.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:

Does not apply.

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

## 9. Housing

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

There will be no construction of housing units.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

Does not apply.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

Does not apply.

## 10. Aesthetics

a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

There are no proposed structures to be installed under the Milltown Restoration Plan.

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

Does not apply.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

Does not apply.

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**11. Light and glare**

a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

This project will not produce any light or glare. The project action will be occurring during the day.

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

Does not apply.

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

Does not apply.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

Does not apply.

**12. Recreation**

a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

Waterfowl Hunting. Water recreation.

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

No. Waterfowl will continue to use the area after the proposed project is completed.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

There will not be any impacts on recreation.

**13. Historic and cultural preservation**

a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.

Does not apply.

b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.

Does not apply.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:

Does not apply.

**14. Transportation**

a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

Does not apply.

- b. Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

Does not apply.

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- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?

Does not apply.

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

Does not apply.

- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

Milltown island requires water transportation to reach. During the project, the island will be access via small outboard watercraft.

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.

Do not know. Estimated peak usage would be during waterfowl season when duck hunters are traveling to hunting sites.

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

There is no expectation that transportation impacts within the area will increase because of the proposed project.

### **15. Public services**

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

Does not apply.

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

Does not apply.

### **16. Utilities**

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.

Does not apply.

- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

Does not apply.

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C. SIGNATURE

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: .....

Date Submitted: .....

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

(do not use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

There will be the use of demolitions to deconstruct the dike. There will be short individual increases in noise from the use of subsurface demolitions.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

The use of demolitions will be handled specialist contractors, and will be completely consumed in the blast. The noise produced will be minimal, due to being placed into the ground and covered prior to ignition. The site is also isolated away from the general public.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

By providing an increase in the formation of rearing habitat, this proposal aims to primarily benefit fish, though other wildlife species are likely to benefit as well. A small amount of medium sized alders and shrubs will be adversely affected in the deconstruction of the levee, as well as the removal of several large Himalayan Blackberry patches.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

The proposal calls for covering the disturbed area that was previously the levee with a native grass seed. It also calls for the establishment of riparian zones along the interior channels that are surrounded by invasive species. Fast growing willows and cottonwood will be planted for rapid growth and establishment of a canopy cover.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

Does not apply. This proposal is directed at increasing salmonid rearing habitat (natural resources).

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

Does not apply.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

The primary goal of the proposal is to increase available TES habitat, by removing the levees that restrict natural channel development in the interior of Milltown Island. A secondary goal is the control of invasive reed canary grass.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

Does not apply.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

Existing plans call for Milltown Island and the adjacent Fir Island as recreation zones. Removal of the existing levees will not affect that.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

Does not apply.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

Does not apply

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

Does not apply.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

The proposal should fall in line with requirements for the protection and enhancement of the environment.