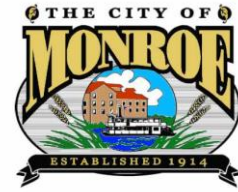


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Press Release

For Immediate Release

City of Monroe Investing in Ecosystem Restoration Project with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Long Tom Watershed Council

Monroe, Oregon (January 17, 2019): The Corps of Engineers was approved for a new start study working in partnership with the City of Monroe, based on the City's request for assistance under the CAP program to investigate an ecosystem restoration project on the Long Tom River at Monroe. Under the authority provided by Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, the Corps may plan, design and build modifications to existing Corps projects, or areas degraded by Corps projects, to restore aquatic habitats for fish and wildlife. Projects conducted in the Southern Willamette Valley have included wetland restoration, wildlife habitat restoration, anadromous fish passage, and river restoration, sometimes with associated benefits such as walking paths and recreation access. Projects must be in the public interest and cost effective for the ecosystem benefit gained and are limited to \$10 million in Federal cost with a 35% cost-share for construction.

On August 8th, 2016, the City of Monroe requested the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to initiate a study under Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act to determine the feasibility of modifications to improve the environment along the Long Tom River at Monroe while maintaining flood risk reduction. This project has been approved for funding for the Feasibility stage, one of only a few new projects starts in the nation this year.

In the Feasibility phase the Corps assesses the project's potential, identifies the project costs, and arranges cost-share with the local sponsor and partner. Based on the results, the City of Monroe and partners could potentially move on to the Construction phase of the project.

There is an opportunity to continue the flood-risk-management mission and also meet the Corps' ecosystem restoration mission to better provide essential habitat native fish need for migration, spawning and rearing. There is a potential opportunity to consider recreation functions of the adjacent City Park and riverfront. Options for river channel design will provide alternatives that will be evaluated in 2019 and 2020. The project will be constrained to ensure the City's water supply will not be impacted.

One issue that has come to light is the most downstream of the three grade control structures — which blocks juvenile spring Chinook salmon from making their way higher into the Long Tom Watershed in their search for winter refugia — is located in the heart of Monroe. On the east bank of the River, on City-owned property, there are historic channel segments that are disconnected from the river and turn into warm, stagnant, ponds in the summer that offer very little habitat or aesthetic value.

The Long Tom Watershed Council (LTWC) has been collaborating with USACE and City of Monroe for many years and will be a formal partner to this project at Monroe. LTWC has over 20 years of experience in successfully implementing watershed improvement projects with private and public partners. LTWC is able to bring grant funds to the community, fundraise, collect and utilize scientific information, engage citizens in learning, and build working relationships to complete shared projects.

Other examples of CAP and 1135 projects include Delta Ponds ecosystem restoration, Fern Ridge marsh restoration, and Amazon Creek/West Eugene Wetlands restoration.

The first public engagement opportunities: Currently LTWC is partnering with Monroe High School students and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to sample native fish use of the river around Monroe. Citizens interested in volunteering to assist may contact Rob Hoshaw at 541-338-7055.

If you have questions regarding the Ecosystem Restoration Project or the work being done with the Riverside, please contact our Community Development Coordinator, Taylor Evans, at taylor.evans@ci.monroe.or.us or call at 541-847-5175.