



Introduction

Traditionally used resources are important because of the role they play in, and their intrinsic value to, tribal lifeways and culture, and in the exercise of tribal treaty rights. The proposed project and wetland mitigation sites are located in areas of special importance for Native American groups, in part, because of ready access to fish and intertidal resources. This fact sheet summarizes the potential impacts the proposed project would have on treaty and traditionally used resources.

What was studied?

The goal of this study was to identify impacts to traditional cultural properties or cultural landscapes, specific hunting and gathering areas, and plants and animals important to area tribes.

What was the study area?

- Proposed project site
- Proposed wetland mitigation site
- Rail corridor (Anacortes Subdivision)
- Surrounding lands and waters that may have been or are currently in use by tribal entities for access to treaty and traditionally used resources

See the Proposed Project Fact Sheet for a map of the site.

How were impacts analyzed?

To determine current and traditional use of plants, fish, and shellfish within the study area, a search of online data and ethnographic literature was conducted. The co-lead agencies also requested input from tribes with lands in the study area as well as tribes who submitted comments during the EIS scoping process.



Orange honeysuckle, a plant used as medicine by Coast Salish groups

What are the potential impacts?

Construction and Operation Impacts

No Traditional Cultural Properties, Cultural Landscapes, specific gathering areas or plants important to tribes, or specific hunting areas or certain terrestrial animals have been identified in the study area to date; therefore, no impacts from the proposed project were identified.

The study area is located near tribal fisheries. Impacts to tribal fisheries could include loss of or changes to riparian habitat, or changes in water quality that could impact fish. Depending on the degree of direct impacts, treaty resources, traditional lifeways, health, and the culture of tribes could be affected.

Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project would not disturb any known Traditional Cultural Properties or Cultural Landscapes; specific gathering areas or plants, or specific hunting areas or certain terrestrial animals important to tribes. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to cumulative impacts on these resources. Tribal fisheries are located near the study area. The cumulative impacts would be the same as described for fish and aquatic resources in Chapter 3.4 – Fish and Aquatic Species and Habitat of the draft EIS.

THE FOLLOWING TRIBES COMMENTED DURING THE SCOPING PROCESS FOR THIS EIS:

- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon
- Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians
- Suquamish Indian Tribe
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
- Tulalip Tribes

In addition, organizations including the Skagit River System Cooperative and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission provided comments during scoping.

What mitigation measures are proposed?

Avoidance and Minimization

Measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts to fisheries are described in Chapter 3.4 – Fish and Aquatic Species and Habitat of the draft EIS. These avoidance and minimization measures would apply to tribal fisheries as well.

The identification of specific Traditional Cultural Properties and Cultural Landscapes important to the tribes require the assistance and knowledge of those tribal governments and members. Receiving additional input from tribes would allow for the identification, proper treatment, and mitigation of impacts from the proposed project. Skagit County and Ecology respect the rights of tribal sovereigns to engage on their terms with local, state, and federal governments as appropriate.

Mitigation

No additional mitigation measures are proposed at this time beyond the avoidance and minimization measures described in Chapter 3.4 – Fish and Aquatic Species and Habitat of the draft EIS. Should any additional tribal resources be made known, Skagit County and Ecology may reassess potential impacts and mitigation.

Are there unavoidable significant adverse impacts?

No unavoidable significant adverse impacts were identified based on available information.



Salmon, a resource that is considered culturally significant by the Swinomish



Dungeness crab, a traditional mainstay of the Swinomish diet

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

Chapter 3.8 – Treaty and Traditionally Used Resources of the draft EIS

The information in this fact sheet summarizes content from the draft Environmental Impact Statement; please review the full document for more detailed and complete information.

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