



**Washington State Department of Enterprise Services
Determination of Significance and
Request for Comments on Scope of EIS
Capitol Lake/Lower Deschutes Watershed Long-Term Management Project**

What is the Capitol Lake / Lower Deschutes Watershed Long-Term Management Project?

Capitol Lake/Lower Deschutes Watershed includes the 260-acre Capitol Lake Basin, located on the Washington State Capitol Campus, in Olympia, Washington. The Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (Enterprise Services) is responsible for the stewardship, preservation, operation, and maintenance of the Capitol Lake Basin. This waterbody is an important recreational resource and valued amenity; however, it suffers from numerous environmental issues including water quality standards violations, inadequate sediment management, and the presence of invasive species, all of which have restricted active community use for more than 20 years. Long-term management strategies and actions are needed to address these issues in the Capitol Lake basin and surrounding watershed.

The Capitol Lake/Lower Deschutes Watershed Long-Term Management Project is the Enterprise Services-led effort to:

- Identify common goals for long-term management of the resource (Phase 1)
- Evaluate potential alternatives and identify the preferred alternative for long-term management (Phase 2)
- Select and implement a long-term management alternative (Phase 3)

In 2016, stakeholders, in collaboration with Enterprise Services, identified common goals that should be satisfied by any long-term management alternative. The project is now in Phase 2, where an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared to evaluate potential alternatives and to support the selection of a preferred alternative for long-term management of the Capitol Lake/Lower Deschutes Watershed.

Where is the project located?

The Capitol Lake Basin is located within the area extending from the south end at Tumwater Falls in the City of Tumwater to the north end at the Fifth Avenue Dam in the City of Olympia. The Capitol Lake Basin is part of the larger Lower Deschutes Watershed. While the limits of the Capitol Lake/Lower Deschutes Watershed Long-Term Management Project are focused on the area that Enterprise Services maintains (the Capitol Lake Basin), it is recognized that the interconnectedness of the system requires coordinated agency efforts.

Map of Capitol Lake/Lower Deschutes Watershed and Surrounding Area



What alternatives are being evaluated?

Enterprise Services, as the lead agency under SEPA, has identified a minimum of four primary alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS. The fundamental concepts for these four primary alternatives are summarized below. Several options or variations of the primary alternatives have also been proposed. A screening process will be used to identify the range of alternatives that move forward for detailed technical review in the EIS. Options and concepts will be screened for their ability to meet project objectives and their feasibility.

The four primary alternatives under consideration are summarized as follows:

Managed Lake Alternative. The Managed Lake Alternative is similar to existing conditions, with additional strategies to manage sediment accumulation and future deposition, including maintenance dredging within the North and Middle Basins and selective dredging within the South Basin. The Managed Lake Alternative would retain the Fifth Avenue Dam and tide gate in its current configuration to maintain the historic reflecting pool and the Capitol Lake Basin.

Restored Estuary Alternative. Under the Restored Estuary Alternative, full tidal hydrology would be restored throughout the entire basin. An opening in the Fifth Avenue Dam would be constructed sufficient in size to allow tidal exchange within newly formed mudflats. This opening would allow tidal flow (saltwater) within North Basin during approximately 75 percent of tidal elevations. Sediment would be managed through initial dredging in the Capitol Lake Basin and recurring maintenance dredging in Budd Inlet.

Hybrid Alternative. The Hybrid Alternative allows management of the basin by establishing a tidal estuary in the western portion of the North Basin, and throughout the Middle and South Basins. An opening at the Fifth Avenue Dam would be constructed to allow for tidal flow. A retaining wall also would be constructed, at approximately the centerline of the North Basin, to develop a 39-acre saltwater reflecting pool adjacent to Heritage Park in the North Basin. Construction and maintenance of the smaller reflecting pool, in addition to restored estuarine conditions in part of the basin, gives this option its classification as a hybrid. Sediment would be managed through initial dredging in the Capitol Lake Basin, and recurring maintenance dredging in Budd Inlet.

No Action Alternative. A “no action” alternative must be evaluated in accordance with SEPA. The No Action Alternative is intended to represent the likely future for the project area if the project is not implemented. Operations and maintenance activities to retain the existing Fifth Avenue Dam and tide gate in its current configuration would continue. Enterprise Services would continue to implement invasive species management strategies. Sediment management strategies, like maintenance dredging, would not occur. The No Action Alternative would also include planned and funded actions that have been identified by the Washington State Department of Ecology and approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as part of a water-quality improvement strategy.

Enterprise Services acknowledges that these alternatives may be modified, changed, or replaced during the EIS scoping process or preparation of the EIS.

Who is the Proponent and Lead Agency?

The Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (Enterprise Services) is the project proponent and is serving as the SEPA lead agency.

What will be in the EIS?

Enterprise Services, as the SEPA lead agency, has determined that this proposal may have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c) and will be prepared.

Enterprise Services has *preliminarily* identified the following natural and built environment elements for analysis in the EIS:

Natural environment *and* built environment

- Water Resources
- Earth Resources
- Air Quality
- Plants and Animals
- Energy and Natural Resources
- Land and Shoreline Use
- Recreation
- Aesthetics
- Transportation
- Historic and Cultural Preservation

Additional environmental topics were discussed in coordination with various stakeholders during Phase 1. These topics, which are expected to be analyzed in the EIS due to the potential for significant adverse impacts, include:

- Sediment Transport and Geomorphology
- Invasive Species
- Economics
- Sea Level Rise and Climate Change

What is Scoping?

Scoping is the first step in the EIS process, as mandated by SEPA (WAC 197-11-408) and includes a public comment period. The purpose of scoping is to determine the range, or “scope,” of issues to study in the EIS. Pursuant to SEPA, Enterprise Services is notifying the public of the intent to prepare an EIS so that agencies, tribes, communities, organizations, and members of the public have an opportunity to comment on the scope of the impacts to be analyzed.

How can I comment?

Enterprise Services invites agencies, tribes, communities, organizations, and members of the public to comment on the scope of the EIS, including elements of the environment, alternatives, probable

significant adverse impacts, mitigation measures, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. Methods for presenting your comments are described below. All comments are due no later than **5:00 PM, November 13, 2018**, and may be submitted:

- **Online** at: CapitolLakeWatershedEIS.participate.online
- **Via e-mail** to: comment@CapitolLakeWatershedEIS.org
- **In writing** to: Department of Enterprise Services, c/o Bill Frare – Capitol Lake/Lower Deschutes Watershed EIS, PO Box 41476, Olympia, WA 98504
- **In writing and/or verbally at the EIS Public Scoping Meetings:** These meetings will provide an opportunity to learn more about the project, and to provide input on the environmental review process.

Date: Wednesday, October 10, 2018 (Scoping Meeting 1)

Time: 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm: Open House
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm: Public Comment

Location: Hotel RL (formerly, Red Lion Olympia)

Address: 2300 Evergreen Park Drive SW; Olympia, WA

Date: Monday, October 22, 2018 (Scoping Meeting 2)

Time: 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm: Open House
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm: Public Comment

Location: Washington Center for the Performing Arts

Address: 512 Washington Street SE; Olympia, WA

Project-related information can be reviewed on the project website at: CapitolLakeWatershedEIS.org.

For questions about the project, or the scoping process, please email info@CapitolLakeWatershedEIS.org

Date: September 26, 2018

SEPA Responsible Official:



William J. Frare, P.E.
Enterprise Services