

# SHAW CREEK FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT

## What is the project?

The purpose of the Project is to mitigate potential flood losses for more than 300 houses in the Cottonwood Grove development which was approved and constructed prior to FEMA flood mapping. The Project would remove approximately 550 acres and 1,000 existing and future residential lots from the floodplain and floodway. The project is needed in order to provide for the safety of the community and to alleviate potential losses due to flooding in the project area. Funding for the project will come from the Pre-Disaster Mitigation-Competitive grant program of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and matching funds from the Yakima County Flood Control Zone and the City of Yakima.

## Why is an Environmental Assessment required?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to review impacts to the natural and human environment prior to undertaking a federal action.

There are two federal agency actions triggering NEPA review for the proposed project:

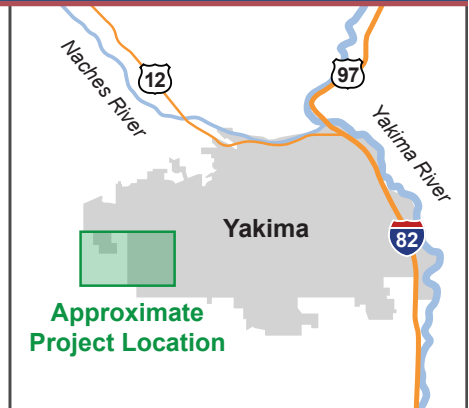
1. FEMA – Providing federal funding to complete the project.
2. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – A permit is required for activities within wetlands.

## What is an Environmental Assessment?

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is completed to determine if the project requires a more in-depth assessment of environmental impacts. The main purpose of the EA is to explain the environmental effects of the proposed action and identified alternative actions, and to identify any mitigation necessary to avoid significant impacts to the human or natural environment. The EA may conclude that the project does not significantly impact the environment.

## What key issues are associated with this project?

- ▶ There is a high potential for residential flooding to a minimum of 48 residences and potentially 300 houses in the Cottonwood Grove Subdivision as a result of flood waters from Shaw Creek.
- ▶ Several residences in the Cottonwood Grove Subdivision below the present location of Shaw Creek have recently been incurring flooding in the crawl spaces and damage to the houses below grade. The source of the flooding appears to be a high water table and wetlands that are located on Shaw Creek above the recent residential development. There is the opportunity to address this problem with this project and funding source.
- ▶ Shaw Creek at its present location is an artificial stream. Relocation of Shaw Creek to its historic location will provide positive benefits to water quality and fish habitat for Wide Hollow Creek.



## Opportunities for Public Comment

The public will have two opportunities to provide comments on the project. The first will occur during the scoping phase where the public is invited to comment on the scope of the EA, the proposed project, and alternatives via e-mail or letter.

A 30-day public comment period will follow the completion of the draft EA. The public can then offer input on the information and analysis provided in the EA.

For more information, contact:

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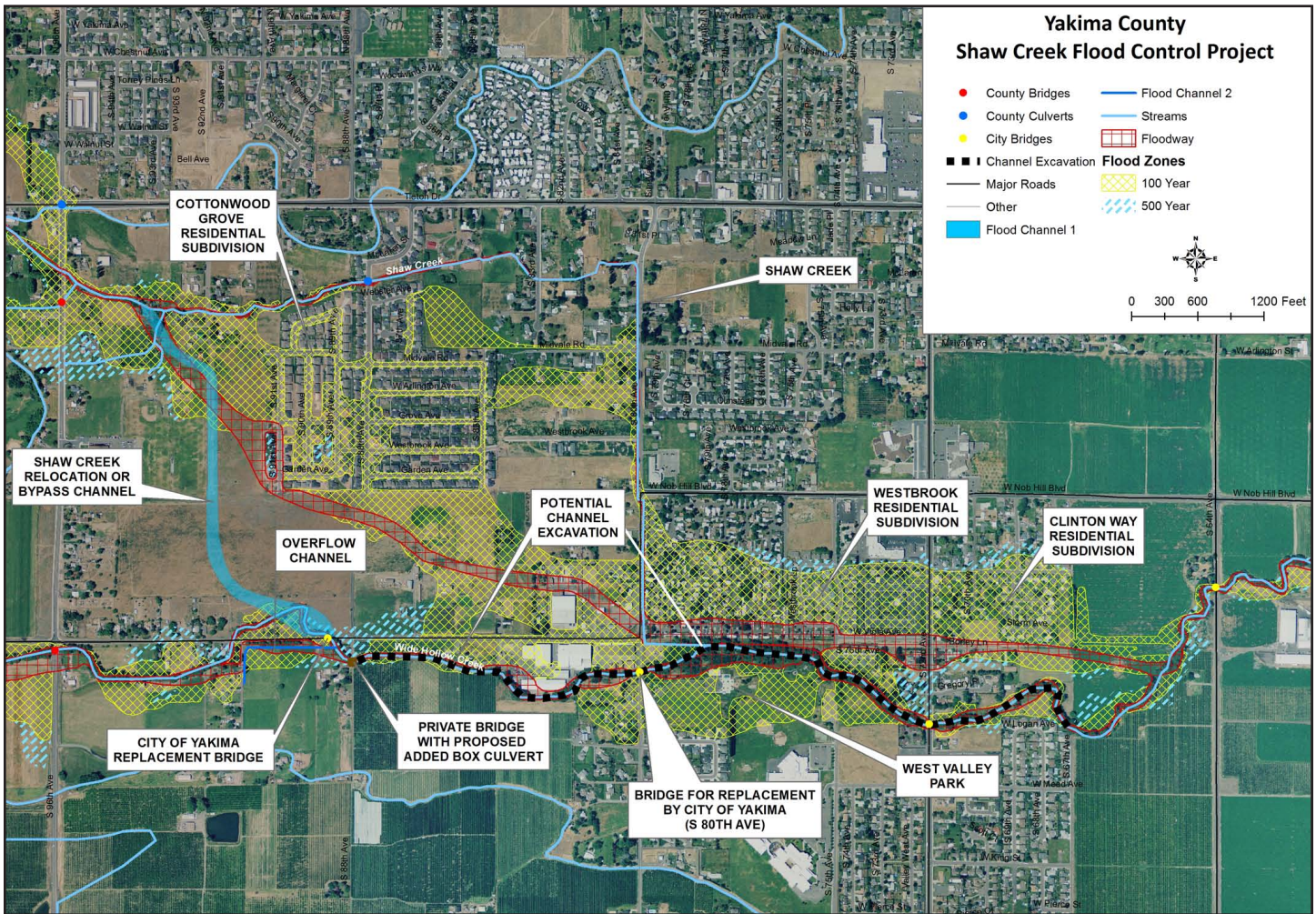
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**FEMA**



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- ▶ Wetlands are present along Wide Hollow Creek and would be affected by the proposed bypass.
- ▶ The project will require acquisition of seven properties, purchase of six easements, and demolition of two structures.
- ▶ Work would occur near potentially historic archaeological resources.
- ▶ Bridge replacement associated with the project has the potential to impact traffic.

### Alternatives Considered

NEPA requires that a range of reasonable alternatives be evaluated. The No Action Alternative is included as a comparison with the other, proactive options.

### Proposed Action

The Proposed Project includes the relocation of Shaw Creek to existing undeveloped lands. Work along Wide Hollow Creek would include construction of a bypass channel south of Wide Hollow Road, improvements to the channel capacity of Wide Hollow Creek, replacement of the South 80th Avenue Bridge and replacement of the bridge at Wide Hollow Road and approximately South 89th Avenue, installation of a box culvert adjacent to the South 88th Avenue Bridge, and acquisition of seven properties and purchase of six easements.

### No Action Alternative

No improvements to Shaw Creek and Wide Hollow Creek would occur. Repetitive flooding and flood losses would continue. No FEMA funds would be received.

### Overflow Channel

This alternative involves construction of an approximately 3,500 foot long overflow channel from Shaw Creek to Wide Hollow Creek. The overflow channel would be located through existing undeveloped lands and would be approximately 100 feet wide and approximately 5 – 7 feet deep. It would be active only when flood waters from Shaw Creek are present.