



**FEMA**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
Rainbow Falls State Park Entrance Project  
Washington Parks and Recreation Commission  
Lewis County, Washington  
FEMA-1734-DR-WA

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) has applied for funding, through the Washington State Emergency Management Division (EMD), to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Public Assistance funding to redevelop an existing service access road for use as the primary public access to Rainbow Falls State Park. The purpose of the Public Assistance program is to award financial grants to assist state and local governments, federally recognized Tribal governments, and certain private nonprofit entities with response to and recovery from disasters.

Heavy rains in December 2007 caused severe landslides, mudslides, and flooding in western Washington. Flooding of the Chehalis River destroyed a vehicle bridge that served as the public entrance to Rainbow Falls State Park, located near the town of Dryad in Lewis County, Washington. State Parks determined that it was not feasible to meet Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) design requirements for replacing the damaged bridge due to site constraints. State Parks proposed an alternate project to widen and improve an existing service access road to serve as the public entrance to the park. The alternate project will include constructing a new welcome center and parking.

The alternate project is located within Rainbow Falls State Park, approximately 30 miles west of the city of Chehalis, in Lewis County, Washington. The project area is located on the border of Sections 6 and 7 of Township 13 North, and Range 4 West, Willamette Meridian. The project coordinates are latitude 46.63443 N and longitude -123.23362 W.

The project would include widening and improving the existing gravel entrance road (designated entrance and exit lanes, new surfacing, and parking areas), constructing a landscaped center island and welcome center (with restrooms and Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] parking), constructing tapers along the south side of Leudinghaus Road on both sides of the park entrance, and installing a metal service gate at the park entrance.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500 through 1508), and FEMA's implementing regulations (44 CFR 10.9), FEMA prepared a Draft EA to identify and evaluate potential environmental impacts resulting from the alternatives presented in the EA, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Alternatives evaluated in the EA include the No Action Alternative, and the Preferred Alternative (or Proposed Action) toward which FEMA would contribute funding. Other alternatives were also considered but not carried forward. After comparing the potential impacts from the alternatives, Alternative B (the Proposed Action) is also the environmentally preferred alternative because it would necessitate considerably less construction than the alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for evaluation in the EA; the Proposed Action also would have a beneficial impact on transportation, access, and public safety compared with the adverse impacts that would result under the No Action Alternative.

The Draft EA was available for public comment for 42 days. FEMA received two comment letters on the Draft EA. One comment pertained to the loss of a connection between overnight and day-use areas of the park and trails across the Chehalis River due to the storm-related destruction of the vehicle entrance bridge and damage to a pedestrian bridge within the park. The Final EA clarifies that the Proposed Action does not include reconnecting these two areas of the park, and that State Parks has no foreseeable plans to re-establish this connection due to a lack of funding. A second comment, from the Washington Department of Ecology, made recommendations regarding the use of drought-resistant native plantings, discussed requirements for fill material and the need for the project to comply with local solid waste handling regulations, and discussed regulations regarding water resources for the park. The Final EA notes that State Parks plans to landscape with native plants around the new welcome center. State Parks will select native species based on the surrounding plant community and appropriate to site conditions. The Final EA also states that State Parks will adhere to all federal, state, and county regulations, permit conditions, and applicable best management practices (BMPs).

### **CONDITIONS**

The following conditions apply, and failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize the receipt of federal funds:

1. If construction occurs during the Migratory Bird nesting season, State Parks will conduct preconstruction surveys for migratory birds, nests, and eggs within the construction footprint of the project and any adjacent areas that could be impacted by construction activities and, if any special status species and/or species covered under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) are nesting in these areas, Parks will coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and WDFW to determine appropriate avoidance and minimization measures and ensure compliance with the MBTA.
2. The applicant shall obtain all required local, state, and federal permits and approvals prior to implementing the Proposed Action and comply with any and all conditions imposed.
3. Any change to the approved scope of work will require re-evaluation for compliance with NEPA and other laws and Executive Orders.
4. An archaeological monitoring plan shall be submitted to FEMA for review and approval and submittal to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Monitoring shall be conducted in

accordance with the plan. A report documenting the results of the monitoring shall be submitted to FEMA and SHPO for review and approval.

5. The applicant shall notify the cultural resources directors at the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and the Yakama Nation 10 working days in advance of ground disturbance in the event that they would like to be present during ground disturbance monitoring.
6. In the event historically or archaeologically significant materials or sites (or evidence thereof) are discovered during the implementation of this project, the project shall be halted and all reasonable measures taken to avoid or minimize harm to the property until such time as FEMA, in consultation with SHPO determines appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that the project is in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

### **FINDING**

Based on the Public Assistance grant application and Final EA; and in accordance with FEMA's regulations in 44 CFR Part 10 for environmental consideration, including Executive Orders (EO) addressing floodplains (EO 11988), wetlands (EO 11990), and environmental justice (EO 12898), FEMA determined the proposed project will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.8) and the project as described in the Public Assistance grant application and Final EA may proceed.

### **APPROVALS**



Mark G. Eberlein  
Regional Environmental Officer  
FEMA Region 10

4-10-12

Date