



# Sandy River Delta dam removal

## Columbia River Estuary habitat restoration project

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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### Background

The Corps of Engineers and its partners Bonneville Power Administration, the U.S. Forest Service and the Portland Water Bureau will remove an eight foot dam located in the Sandy River Delta, where the Sandy and Columbia rivers meet.

In the 1930s, the Oregon Game Commission redirected the main branch of the Sandy River, also known as the East Channel, in an attempt to improve fish runs. A 750-foot long dam was constructed on the East Channel to direct water flow toward the West Channel of the Sandy River.

Prior to the dam's construction, extensively braided shallow-water habitat in the East Channel and abundant backwater habitat throughout the Sandy River delta provided excellent conditions for rearing juvenile salmon and steelhead. After the dam's construction, the East Channel gradually silted and became a slough. The delta lost much of its hydrologic complexity and now has fewer backwater habitat areas. The dam impedes access and limits cool water flow from the Sandy River to the East Channel, resulting in summer ponding and an increased potential for juvenile stranding and death. Restoration work will begin July 5, 2013, when the Corps' contractor begins mobilizing equipment and preparing the site.

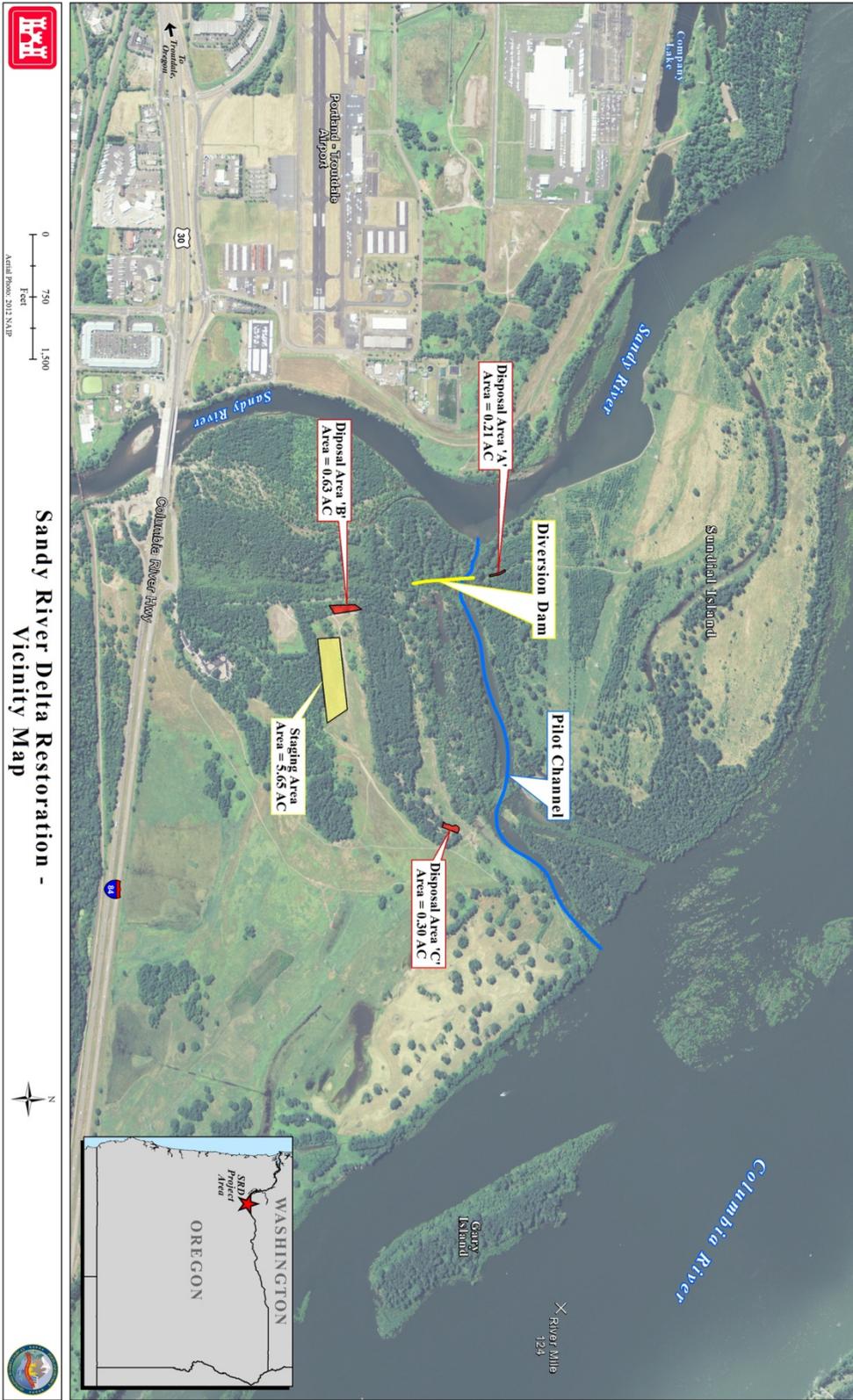


### Current actions

The Corps' contractor began constructing a low-flow pilot channel within the East Channel, connecting the Sandy and Columbia Rivers on July 15, 2013. The dam will be removed by both the Corps and Portland Water Bureau. Beginning August 15, the Corps will start removing the dam and reconnecting the East Channel. Providing yearlong access to the East Channel during a variety of flow conditions will benefit juvenile salmonids spawned in the Sandy River system and fish migrating down the Columbia River. The changes will reduce stranding potential during summer low flow conditions in the East Channel and introduce cool water to the East Channel from the Sandy River during summer. The restoration project is expected to be completed by November 30, 2013.

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Sandy River Delta CAP Section 536



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Portland District

Sandy River Delta Restoration -  
Vicinity Map