

Logan River Watershed PLAN-EA

Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ Updated: March 25, 2021

Original FAQ: March 1, 2021

What is the purpose of the project?

The project seeks to address flood control and flood protection, evaluate measures to reduce water loss and increase efficiency in the current irrigation delivery system, and consider improvements to recreational facilities.

How was the project purpose developed & who was involved in developing project goals?

The project sponsor, Cache Water District, and co-sponsors: the cities of Logan, North Logan and Hyde Park, and the Crockett Irrigation Company, jointly identified local water resource concerns and goals within the Logan River Watershed and made application to the NRCS through its Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program to fund a Plan-Environmental Assessment (Plan-EA). Conceptual watershed improvements were included in the application for a preliminary analysis of potential solutions.

What are the project goals?

- Efficiently utilize existing water rights in Cache Valley
- Provide flood protection for Logan City, North Logan City, and Hyde Park City
- Provide pressurized irrigation water distribution for use throughout irrigation season
- Reduce water losses and improve supply to agricultural and residential users
- Improve water management
- Maintain and enhance environmental conditions along the Logan River and within the project area
- Maintain and provide recreational opportunities
- Reduce culinary water infrastructure stress

Who is funding the project?

The project is being funded through the NRCS Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program which helps units of federal, state, local, and tribal governments protect and restore watersheds. The program provides financial and technical assistance for erosion and sediment control, watershed protection, flood prevention, water quality improvement, water management, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, recreation, and hydropower.

What are the proposed improvements?

Currently under consideration are conceptual ideas to control flooding from existing canals and along the Logan River, pressurization of irrigation systems for more efficient water use, and associated recreation opportunities along canals such as trails. Through the NEPA process, input associated with these concepts will be considered during the development of a preferred alternative. Additional ideas presented during the scoping comment period have been shared and will be reviewed as part of the environmental process.

What water resource concerns are being addressed by the project?

FLOOD PROTECTION

- Aging and deteriorating flood channels
- Inadequate flood routing capacity through Logan, North Logan, and Hyde Park
- Poor access to maintain flood channels

WATER SUPPLY

- Limited water resources
- Need to protect water rights through beneficial use
- Water system upgrades needed to address population growth

IRRIGATION

- Inefficient water delivery and measurement systems
- Water loss in open ditches
- Limited irrigation water supply to users at the ends of the system

WATER MANAGEMENT

- Deteriorating and inefficient water control structures

Who will be served by the project?

Residents across Cache Valley may benefit from the project through protection of water rights and conservation of water resources. Enhanced recreation opportunities in the watershed will also benefit the community. Locally, residents may be protected from flooding and benefit from more efficient water delivery systems.

Could there be potential effects on recreational activities, such as kayaking, tubing, or fishing?

One of the project goals is to maintain and to continue to provide recreational opportunities in the Logan River system. The NEPA process will evaluate impacts and benefits to resources, including recreation.

What is an Environmental Assessment (EA) or a Plan-EA?

The Plan-EA is a planning-level study which will follow the guidelines of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The study is expected to take approximately 24 months to complete and will culminate in a decision document from the NRCS. The Plan-EA will evaluate the purpose and need for proposed watershed improvements, potential environmental impacts of those improvements and possible mitigation measures for the identified impacts. Through the evaluation process, a Preferred Alternative will be identified.

Who is preparing the Plan-EA?

Upon award of NRCS program funding, the project sponsor and co-sponsors issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select an engineering consultant to complete the PLAN-EA. J-U-B Engineers and subsidiary The Langdon Group (TLG), Franson Civil Engineers and BioWest were selected as neutral third parties to assist in the development and evaluation of alternatives and to facilitate the public and agency involvement process.

Where are we at in the process?

As part of the preparation of the PLAN-EA, NEPA requires that there be an early and open process for determining the scope of the issues to be addressed by a study. This process is known as “NEPA scoping,” during which an agency will solicit public input. A virtual public scoping meeting was held by the NRCS and project sponsors on January 28, 2021 to introduce the project to the public, explain the Plan-EA and provide context for public comments. The meeting recordings and materials are available on the NRCS website: <http://bit.ly/LoganRiverWatershed>.

How will my comment be addressed and what other opportunities for input are available?

In conjunction with the public meeting, a public scoping comment period was held January 14, 2021 – March 16, 2021. The period was extended 30 days to allow for additional comments to be prepared and received. Comments submitted are documented and taken into consideration in the development and evaluation of the proposed project alternatives and responses are provided. As the PLAN-EA progresses, a Preferred Alternative will be developed and another public meeting and corresponding 30-day comment period, expected to occur in early 2022, will be held to solicit public feedback.

What does “alternative” mean in the PLAN-EA process?

“Alternatives” are different options to meet the project goals that are developed and evaluated during the Plan-EA process.

What does a response mean in context of a Plan-EA?

In a PLAN-EA document, a “response” to comments means that in the Scoping Report, comments are grouped and addressed by categories corresponding to the nature of the comment. Comments received during scoping will be considered in the development of alternatives. The Scoping Report will be posted on the project website once complete.

What tools used will be used to evaluate alternatives?

There are many different tools and criteria that are used to analyze alternatives during the Plan-EA process, including the purpose and need, project goals, funding requirements and cost benefit analyses. For the Logan River Watershed Plan-EA, several tools will be used including the Logan River Conservation Action Plan and the Blue Trail Plan.

Will flows in the Logan River be impacted by potential projects?

The Logan River is a dynamic system with many variables and functions including flood control, water rights and recreation. Therefore, we are not able to determine how flows may be impacted by the project at this time. One of the project goals is to enhance the Logan River system. The NEPA process will evaluate impacts and benefits to a set of resources defined by the Council on Environmental Quality and the NRCS’s regulating guidelines. Resources that will be evaluated include, but are not limited to water rights, wildlife, plants, cultural resources, wetlands, recreational use and land use.

Will additional water be taken out of the Logan River system & diverted into the Crockett Irrigation System through this project?

No additional water will not be taken out of the river system. The project will utilize legal water rights from the Crockett Irrigation Company. Other water rights in the river will remain in the river to meet legal obligations.

How can I stay informed about the project?

During the NEPA process, information can be obtained by:

- Visiting the NRCS project website at: <http://bit.ly/LoganRiverWatershed>
- Emailing: loganriver@utwatershed.com
- Calling: 435-213-2872.

