

# U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Adaptive Management of Lower Columbia River and Estuary Ecosystem Restoration

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# Columbia River Estuary Restoration Program Goal

Implementation of well-coordinated, scientifically sound projects designed to enhance, protect, conserve, restore, and create tidal wetlands and other key habitats to aid rebuilding of ESA-listed salmon populations and native species using the Columbia River estuary.



# Corps authorities for ecological restoration in the LCRE

- Small Project Authorities -- WRDA Sec. 104, 206, 536, and 1135 are restoration authorities intended to be tactical projects, on the ground quickly.
- Lower Columbia River Ecosystem General Investigations Study
  - ▶ a comprehensive, strategic restoration program; current plan is to not slow down, continue more local on the ground projects and allow the GI to catch up and be more all inclusive as funding becomes available.
- The Corps is in transition from large construction & concrete to more of an environmental focus.
  - ▶ For example: In 2003, WRDA Sec 536 was the only “new start” for the Corps in the nation





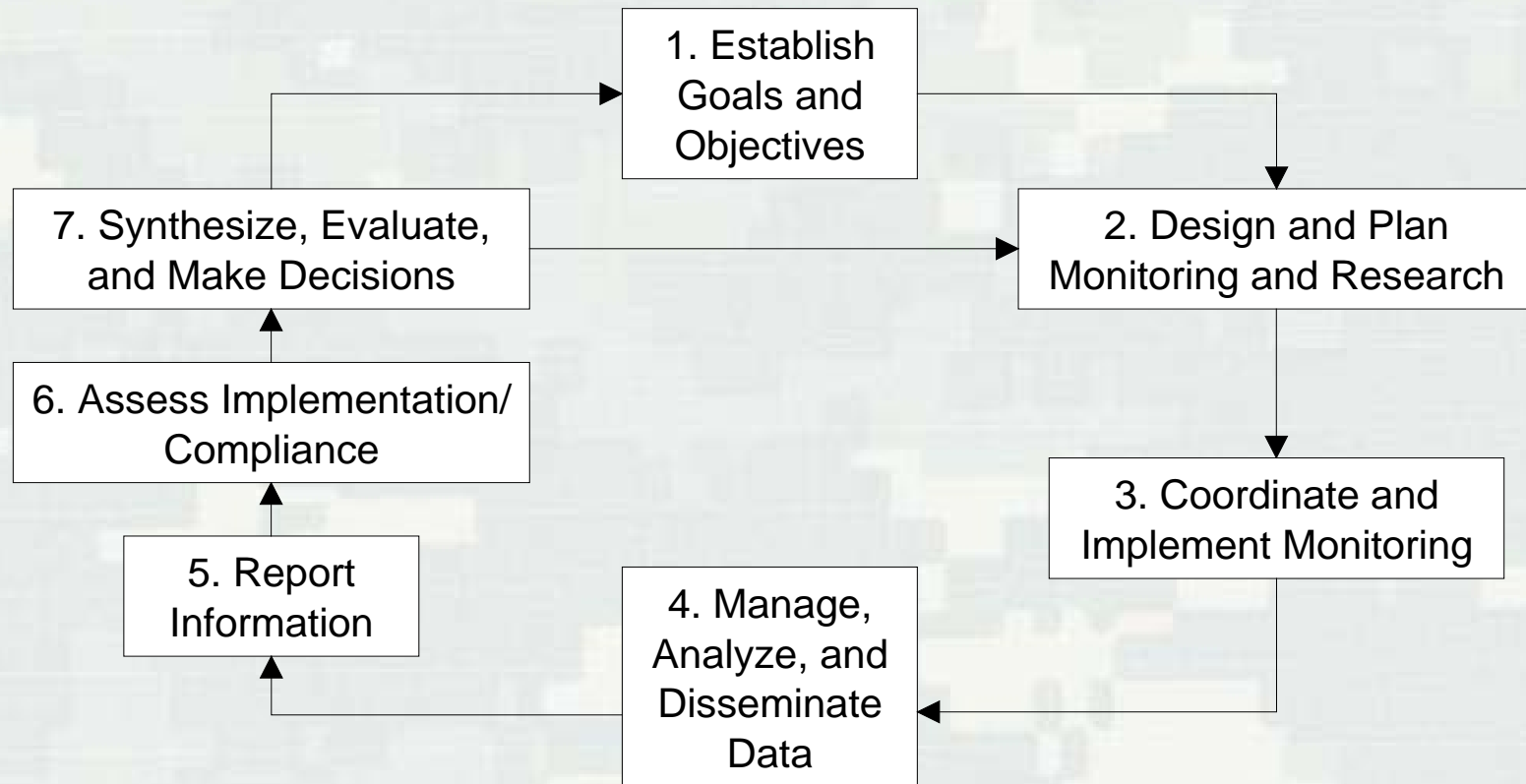


# Additional ecosystem restoration “drivers”

- Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion requirements
- Assist with ESA recovery
- Assist regional partners like the LCREP and the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan
- In reality we have multiple influences



# Corps ecosystem restoration adaptive management approach



# Project Selection and Funding

- A clear Federal interest
- Cost-share partners/sponsors
- FCRPS BiOp requirements
- Action Agencies' project selection guidelines
- ERTG project selection criteria
- Coordination with regional partners





# Adaptive management lessons learned

- The Corps is working with regional partners in the lower Columbia River and estuary to improve process.
  - ▶ We continue working with partners on a regional ecosystem restoration Adaptive Management Plan
  - ▶ Continue to coordinate regional efforts like the LCREP ecosystem restoration.
  - ▶ Need to focus limited funding on action effectiveness research whenever possible.
  - ▶ Insure products like those produced in Corps funded research (like Cumulative Effects) are able to become regional restoration tools.
- For success we need the scientific and restoration communities' advice, input, and support.



# Management implications of the restoration program

- Promotion of regional and local collaboration
- Informed spending of public funds
- Environmental stewardship
- Recovery of endangered salmon stocks

