# Inproving the LOWER WALLA WALLA RIVER

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Approaches to Stream Restoration and Habitat Enhancement for Landowners and Fish A Summary of the Geomorphic Assessment and Action Plan This publication summarizes the efforts undertaken by various private and public entities toward addressing landowner and fisheries concerns by identifying potential improvement opportunities along the Lower Walla Walla River.

It touches on how these improvements bring positive changes to landowners as well as fish and wildlife.

The work accomplished in identifying these potential improvement opportunities would not have been possible without the valuable input and assistance provided by the following agencies:



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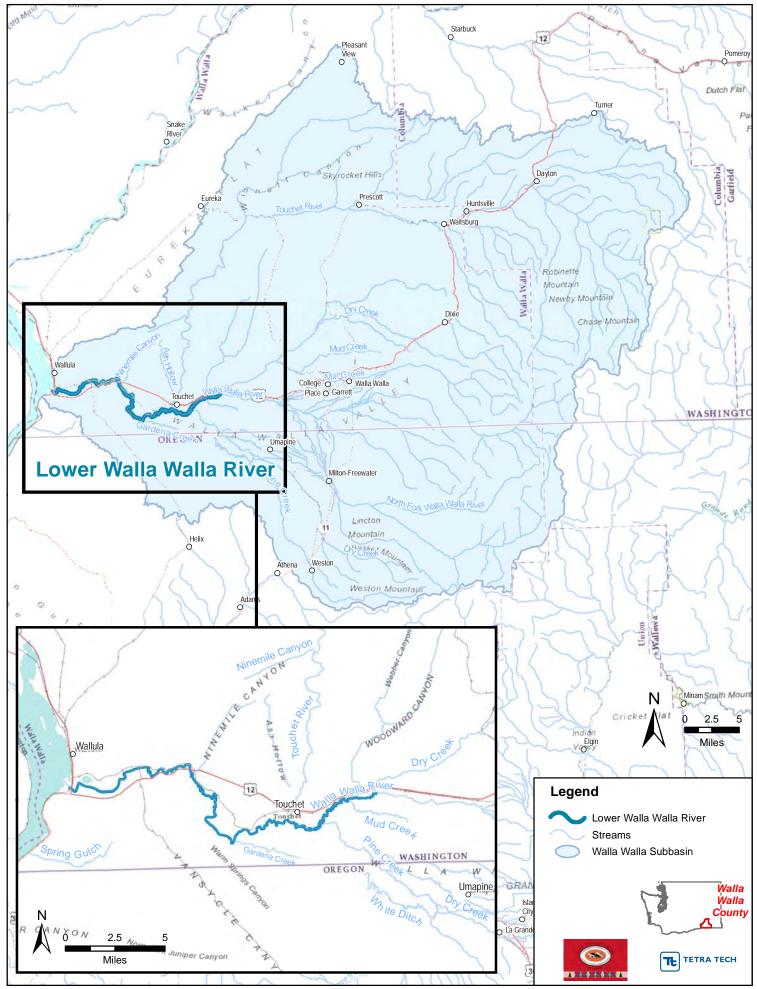
Geomorphic Assessment

Action Plan

Conceptual Drawings and Outcomes

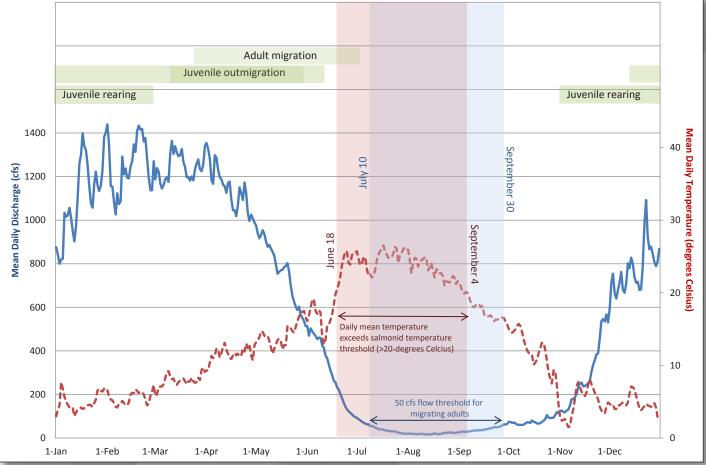
# Introduction

- More than four decades of fish and wildlife assessments and plans in the Walla Walla Subbasin
- Instream flows, surface and ground water quality, riparian vegetation, fish screens and passage, and habitat restoration actions have been implemented throughout the Subbasin, with most actions occurring in the Upper Subbasin
- However, the Lower Walla Walla River has ranked among the highest for improving fish and wildlife habitat
- Overwintering holding and rearing habitat in the Lower Walla Walla River have been identified as critical for survival
- Beyond fish and wildlife, assessments and plans have identified channel stability and bank erosion concerns for landowners along the Lower Walla Walla River
- Combined, improvements in the Lower Walla Walla River are critical for both landowners and fish and wildlife



Lower Walla Walla River





#### Spring Chinook Salmon Use of the Lower Walla Walla River Assessment Area Relative to Discharge and Stream Temperature

As described in more detail in the Geomorphic Assessment and Action Plan and illustrated in this figure, focal fish species (i.e., salmon and trout) predominantly use the Lower Walla Walla River in the winter months, outside the periods with harmful low flows and high stream temperatures.

Although restoration and enhancement projects being conducted in the upper portions of the Subbasin are expected to help improve low flows and stream temperatures, in general, the scale of actions necessary to achieve a significant impact on low flow and temperature limiting factors in the Lower Walla Walla River must be Subbasin-wide.

# History

- Lower Walla Walla Working Group (LWWWG) was formed in 2010
  - Blue Mountain Land Trust, The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), Tri-State Steelheaders (TSS), Walla Walla County Conservation District (WWCCD), Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
- Address factors limiting aquatic productivity and landowner concerns
  - Lower Walla Walla River Habitat Improvement Strategy
  - Lower Walla Walla River Geomorphic Assessment and Action Plan
- Identify and prioritize potential project areas and develop concepts that work to address landowner concerns and improve fish habitat

# Geomorphic Assessment

- Separated Lower Walla Walla River into segments/reaches
- Quantified existing processes that impact landowners and fish habitat
- Identified geomorphic function under existing processes
- Identified geomorphic potential if processes were improved
  - Determined potential fish use based on geomorphic potential

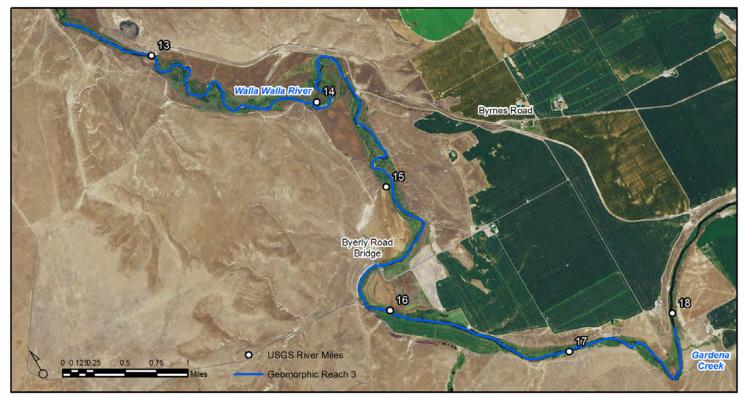
Geomorphology (n): The study of the physical features of the surface of the earth and their relation to its geological structures. In this case, it particularly refers to the in-stream and adjacent topographic features that determine stream channel and floodplain features.



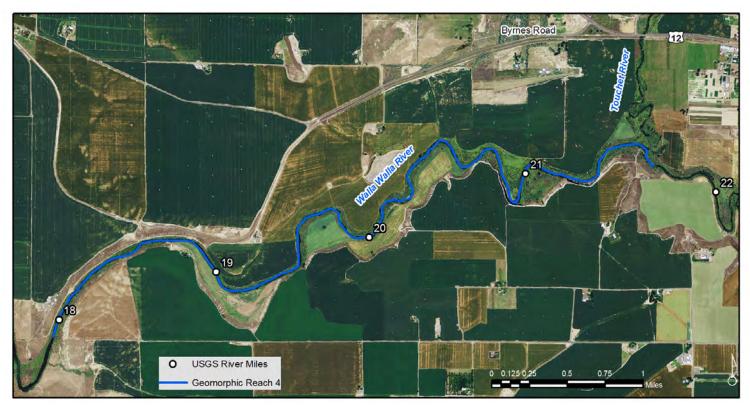
Geomorphic Reach 1 – RM 3.6 to 8.6



Geomorphic Reach 2 – RM 8.6 to 12.5



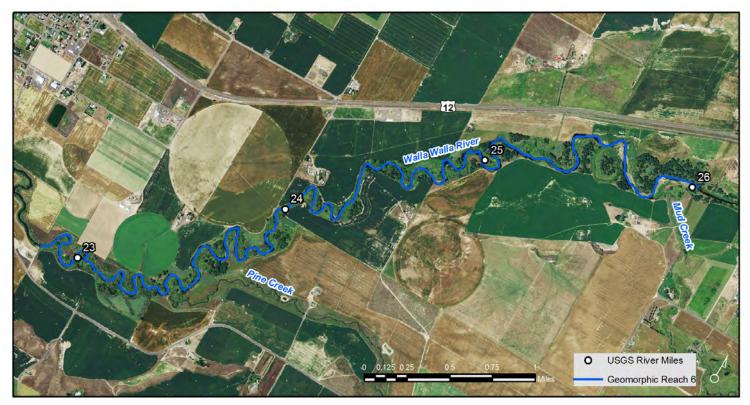
Geomorphic Reach 3 – RM 12.5 to 17.9



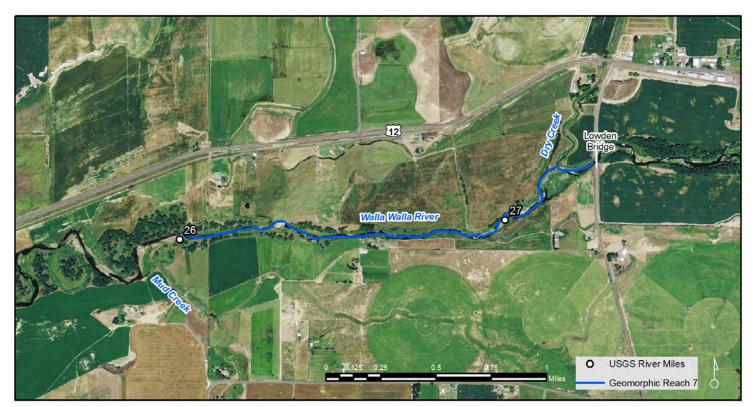
Geomorphic Reach 4 – RM 17.9 to 21.6



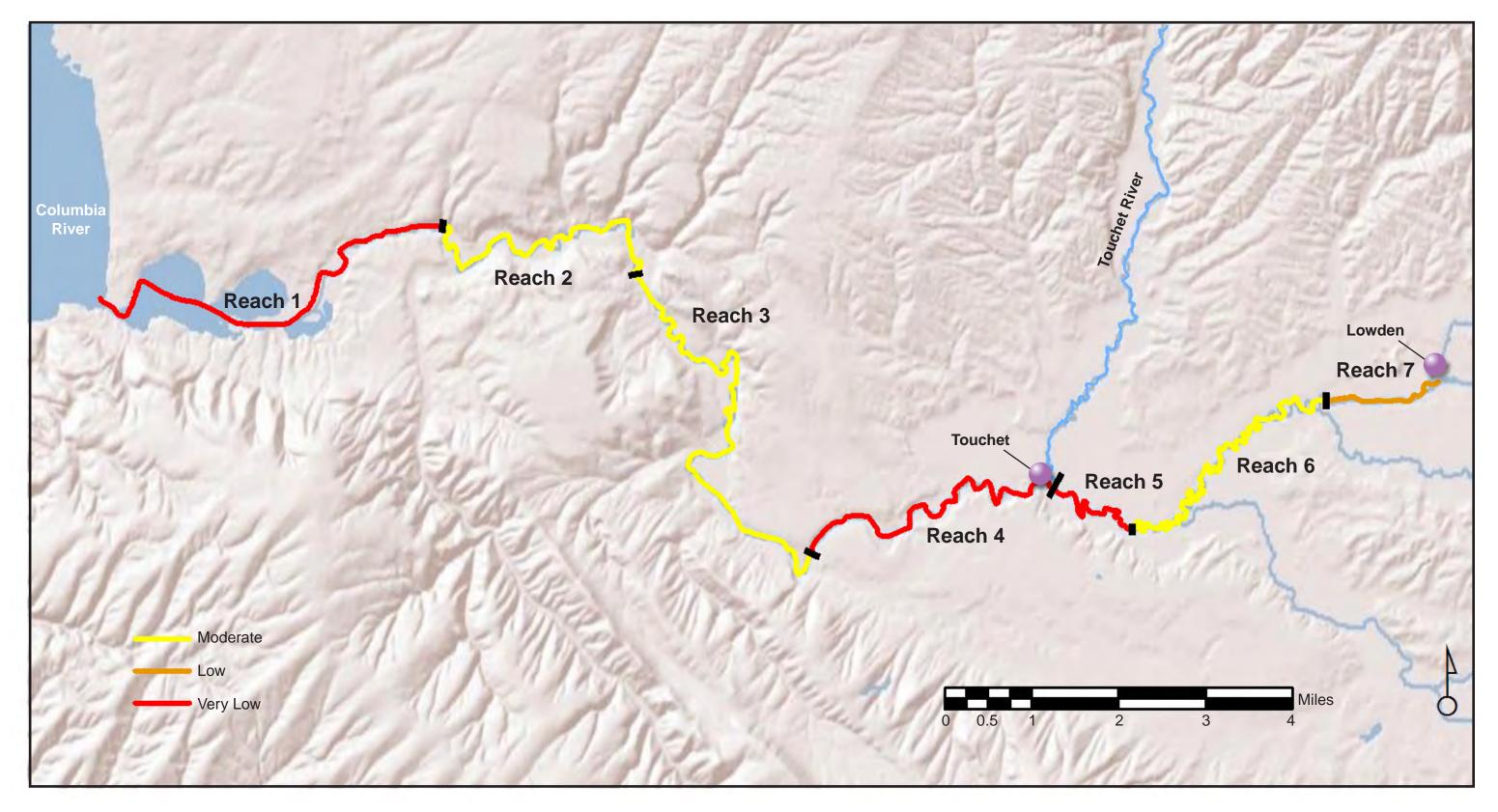
Geomorphic Reach 5 – RM 21.6 to 22.8



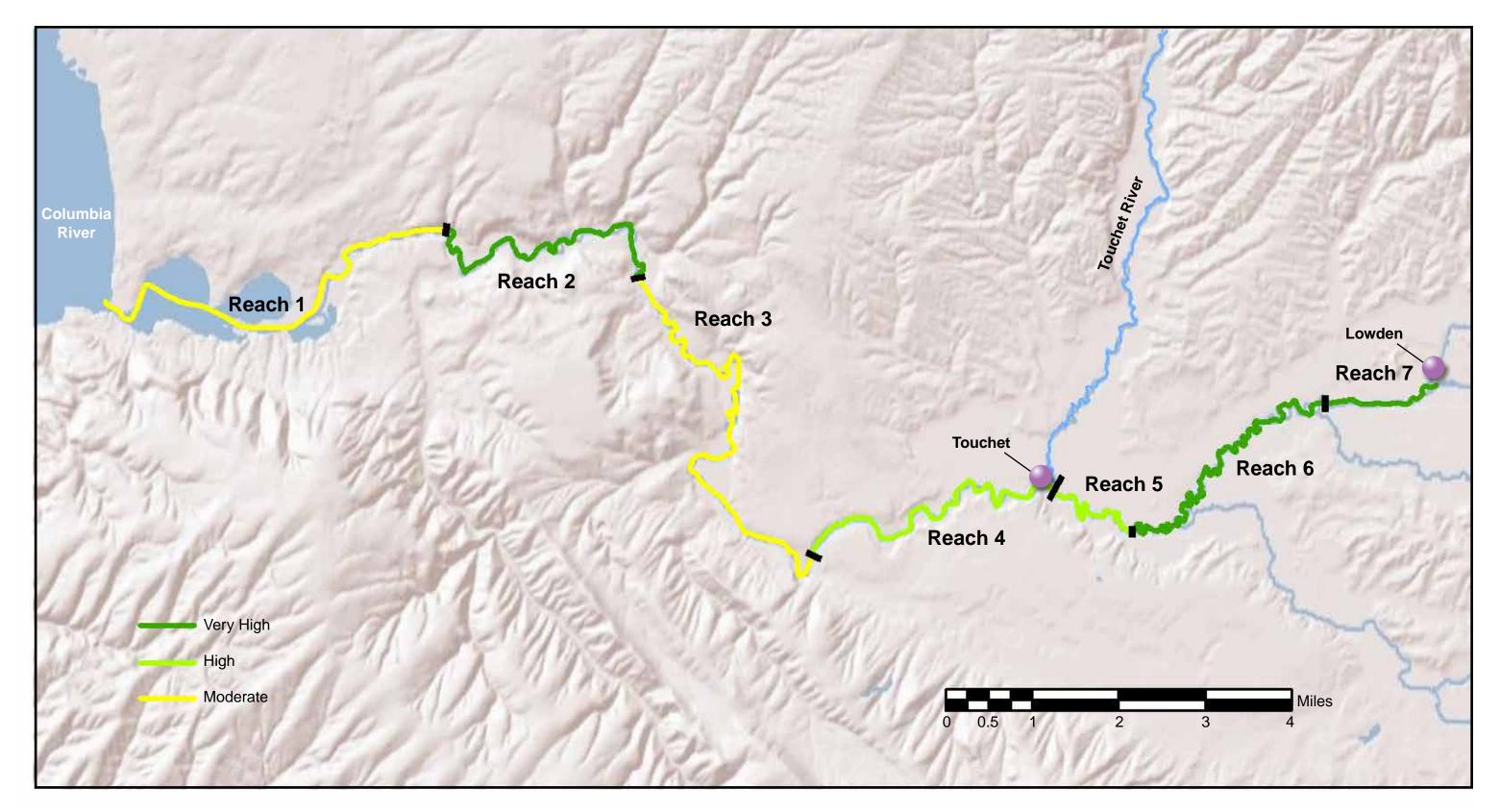
Geomorphic Reach 6 – RM 22.8 to 26.0



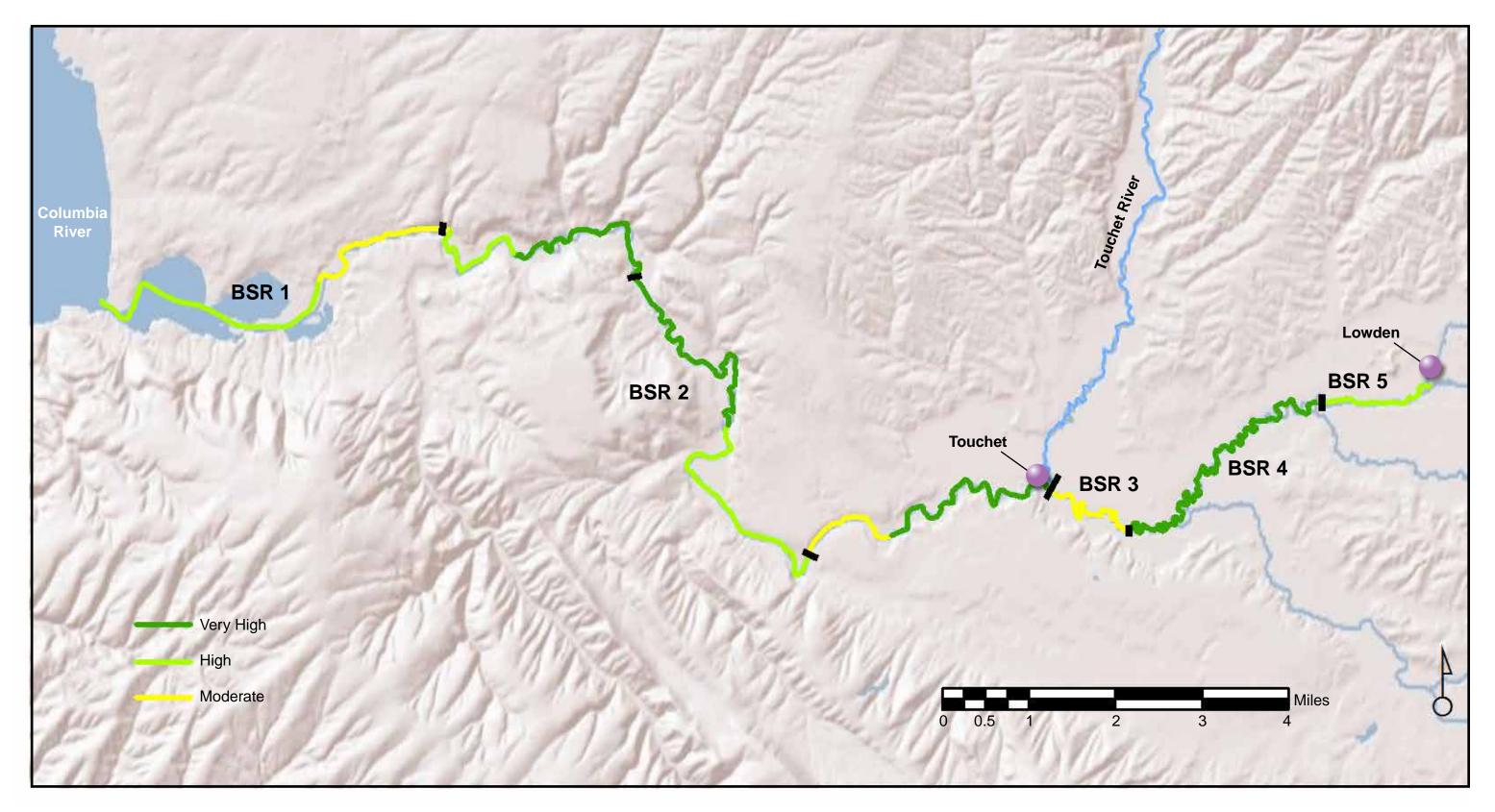
Geomorphic Reach 7 – RM 26.0 to 27.4



### **Current Geomorphic Function**



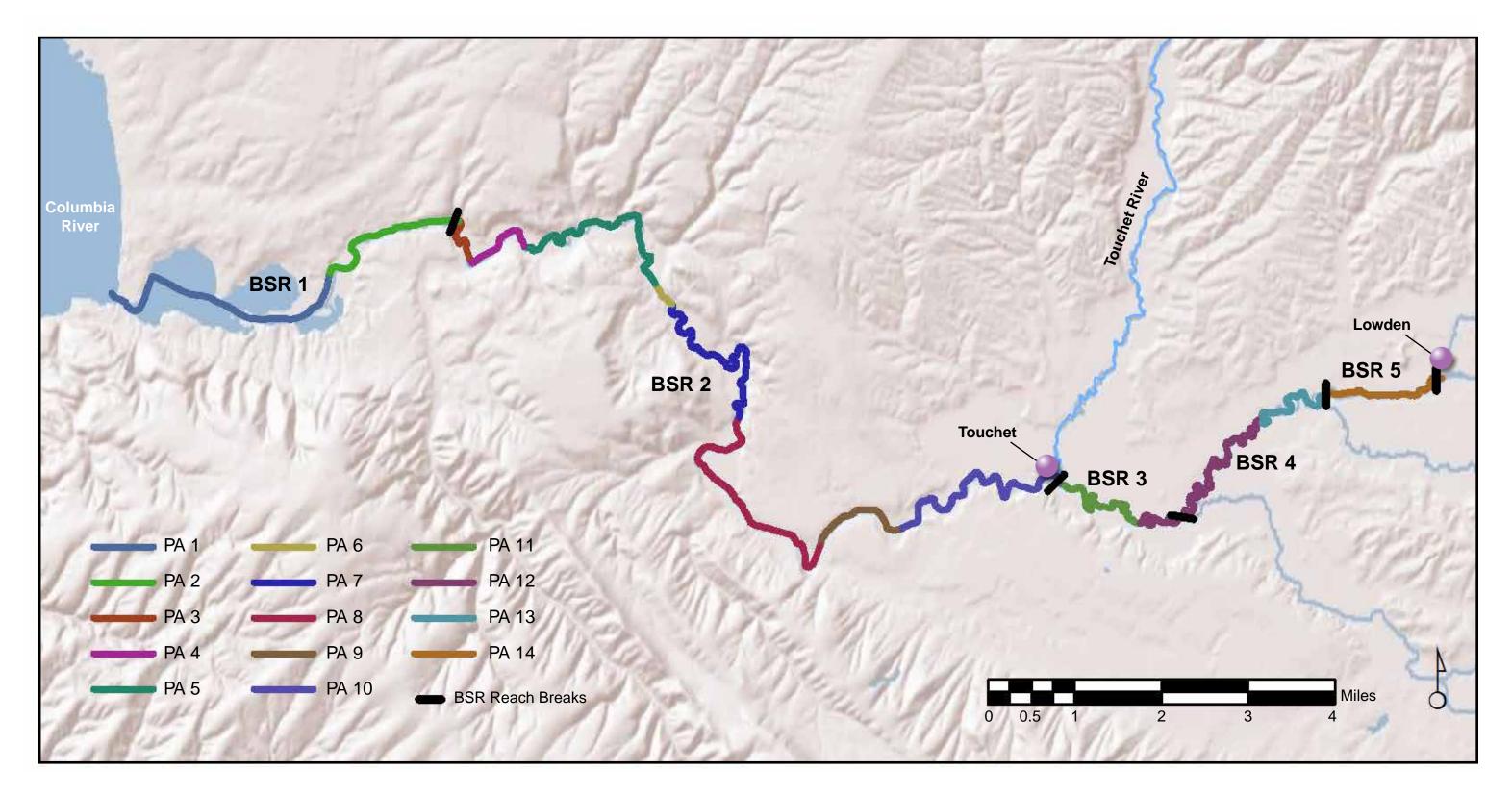
**Geomorphic Potential** 



### **Focal Species Utilization Potential**

# Action Plan

- Based on the Geomorphic Assessment, identified project areas and biologically significant areas
- Prioritized project areas based on geomorphic and fish use potential, feasibility, and funding availability
- Developed conceptual restoration categories, design elements, and drawings for representative potential project areas that can be broadly applied to other project areas or sites
- Identified landowner and fish habitat outcomes for each conceptual drawing category



**Project Areas and Biologically Significant Reaches** 

#### **Project Area Prioritization Matrix and Overall Project Area Rankings**

Project Area (PA)	Location (RM)	Focal Species Utilization Potential <sup>1/</sup>	Focal Limiting Factors <sup>2/</sup>	Current Geomorphic Function <sup>3/</sup>	Geomorphic Potential⁴	Cost- Benefit⁵	Feasibility <sup>6/</sup>	Project Area Cumulative Score	Overall Rank (Tiers I, II, III)
PA 1	3.8–7.0	2	2	3	1	1	3	12	II
PA 2	7.0–8.6	1	1	3	1	1	3	10	III
PA 3	8.6–9.2	2	2	1	1	1	3	10	111
PA 4	9.2–10.2	2	2	1	1	1	3	10	III
PA 5	10.2–12.8	3	3	1	2	2	3	14	П
PA 6	12.8–13.0	3	1	1	1	3	3	12	П
PA 7	13.0–15.0	3	3	1	3	2	3	15	I
PA 8	15.0–17.9	2	2	1	2	2	2	11	III
PA 9	17.9–19.2	1	1	3	2	2	2	11	111
PA 10	19.2–21.6	3	3	3	3	2	2	16	I.
PA 11	21.6-22.8	1	3	3	3	2	2	14	Ш
PA 12	22.8–25.0	3	3	1	3	2	3	15	I.
PA 13	25.0 to 26.0	3	2	1	3	3	3	15	I
PA 14	26.0-27.4	2	2	2	3	3	3	15	L

1/ Focal fish species utilization potential was ranked Low (1), Medium (2), or High (3) based on existing focal fish species utilization, channel morphology, sediment characteristics, focal fish species limiting factors, BSRs, professional experience, and best professional judgment.

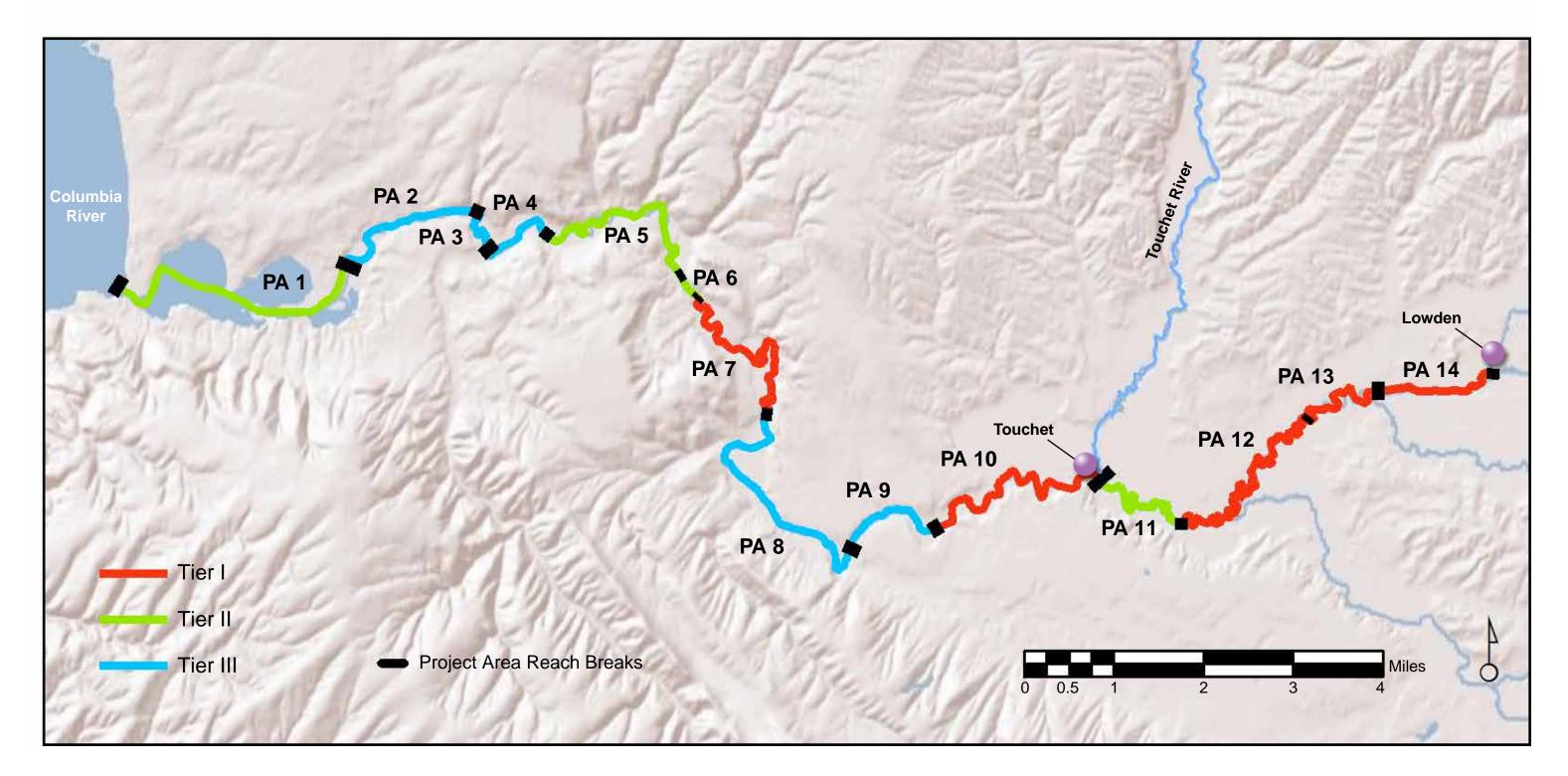
2/ Focal limiting factors were ranked as Low (1), Medium (2), or High (3), based on the number of limiting factors addressed in proposed activities and the rank of those limiting factors (see Table 4-1).

3/ Current geomorphic function was given a Low (1) priority ranking if the Geomorphic Assessment results indicated current function was moderate, Medium (2) if current function was low, or High (3), if the current geomorphic function was very low (see Figure 3-20).

4/ Geomorphic Potential factors were ranked as Low (1), Medium (2), or High (3), based on Geomorphic Assessment results, professional experience, and best professional judgment.

5/ The cost versus benefit was ranked as Low (1), Medium (2), or High (3) based on the relative cost as estimated based on past projects and the expected benefit as defined by measurable effect on focal limiting factors.

6/ Feasibility benefit was ranked as Low (1), Medium (2), or High (3) based on evaluating potential construction access, difficulty of restoration and enhancement actions, probability of achieving a successful outcome from project actions from professional experience, and best professional judgment.



**Project Area Prioritization** 

Location	Focal Limiting Factors (Limiting to Highly Limiting)	Existing Conditions	Proposed Actions
Project Areas 1 and 2 RM 3.8 to 8.6 Geomorphic Reach 1 BSR 1	<ul> <li>Predation</li> <li>Riparian Condition</li> <li>Large Woody Debris</li> <li>Pool Frequency/Quality</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>SEM Stage 2: Channelized</li> <li>The second seco</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Riparian planting</li> <li>Conservation agreements</li> <li>Remove invasive vegetation</li> <li>Implement beaver restoration management</li> <li>Construct perennial off-channel habitat</li> <li>Add LWD to existing off-channel habitat</li> <li>Add instream LWD structure to existing bars</li> </ul>
Project Areas 9 to 11 RM 17.9 to 22.8 Geomorphic Reaches 4 & 5 BSRs 2 and 3	<ul> <li>Predation</li> <li>Riparian Condition</li> <li>Streambank Condition</li> <li>Floodplain Connectivity</li> <li>Off-Channel Habitat</li> <li>Flood Refugia (High Velocity)</li> <li>Large Woody Debris</li> <li>Pool Frequency/Quality</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>SEM Stage 3s: Arrested Degradation</li> <li>Image: Arrested Degradation</li> <li>Deeply incised channel, caught in Stage 3s of SEM</li> <li>Lowest values for current geomorphic function</li> <li>Relatively narrow riparian corridor with CREP planted areas</li> <li>High velocities with little or no refugia</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Riparian planting</li> <li>Conservation agreements</li> <li>Construct alcoves including LWD</li> <li>Construct perennial off-channel Habitat</li> <li>Construct high-flow bypass channels</li> <li>Add point bar structures at existing bars and/or other deposits</li> <li>Add LWD to existing off-channel habitat</li> <li>Add instream LWD structure to existing bars and inlet of existing side-channels</li> <li>Remove existing bank armor structures; construct isolated bank protection and habitat structures</li> </ul>
Project Area 14 RM 26.0 to 27.4 Geomorphic Reach 7 BSR 5	<ul> <li>Predation</li> <li>Riparian Condition</li> <li>Streambank Condition</li> <li>Floodplain Connectivity</li> <li>Off-Channel Habitat</li> <li>Flood Refugia (High Velocity)</li> <li>Large Woody Debris</li> <li>Pool Frequency/Quality</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>SEM Stage 5: Aggradation and Widening</li> <li>Extensive channel straightening</li> <li>Prevention of widening by bank armor structures</li> <li>More frequent gravel bars and LWD than any of the downstream reaches</li> <li>Lack of riparian vegetation or CREP planted areas</li> <li>Low habitat diversity</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Riparian planting</li> <li>Conservation agreements</li> <li>Add point bar structures at existing bars</li> <li>Remove existing bank armor structures</li> <li>Construct isolated bank protection and habitat structures</li> </ul>
Project Areas 3 to 8, 12 and 13 RM 8.6 to 17.9 and 22.8 to 26. Geomorphic Reaches 2, 3, & BSRs 2, 3, and 4		<ul> <li>SEM Stage 7: Laterally Active</li> <li>Channel pattern exhibits higher sinuosity, particularly in Reach 6</li> <li>Instream complexity, floodplain connectivity, and habitat quality are higher than other reaches</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Riparian planting</li> <li>Conservation agreements</li> <li>Implement beaver restoration management</li> <li>Construct perennial side-channels with LWD</li> <li>Reconnect existing disconnected off-channe habitat</li> <li>Construct high-flow bypass channels</li> <li>Construct alcoves including LWD</li> <li>Add point bar structures at existing bars and/or other deposits</li> <li>Add instream LWD structure to existing bars</li> </ul>

Pool Frequency/Quality

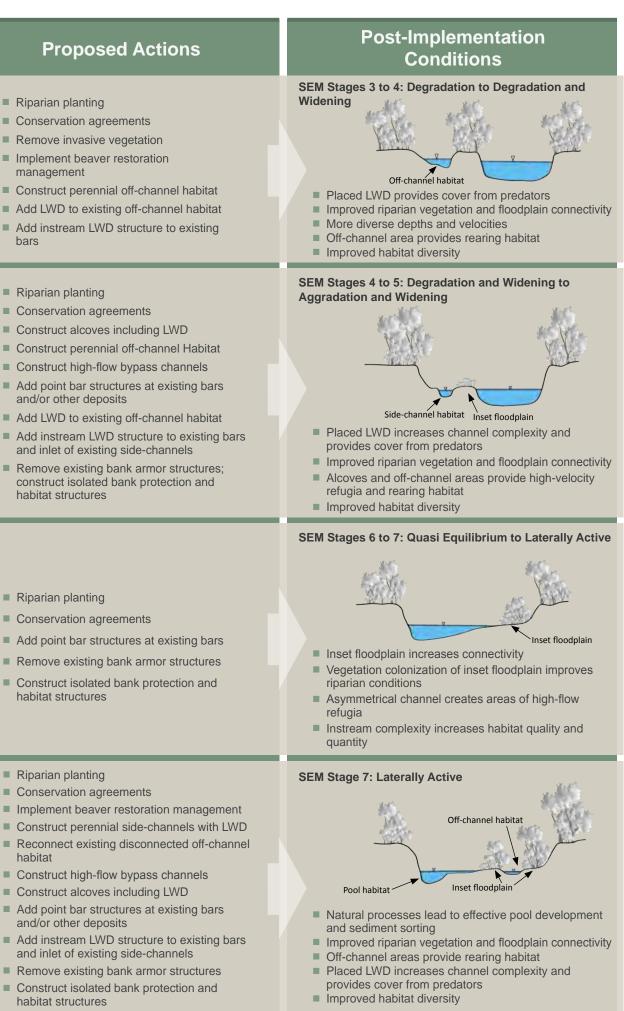
reaches Riparian characteristics range from sparse (Reach 3) to a relatively wide riparian corridor

Limited areas of high-flow refugia

(Reach 6)

and inlet of existing side-channels

habitat structures



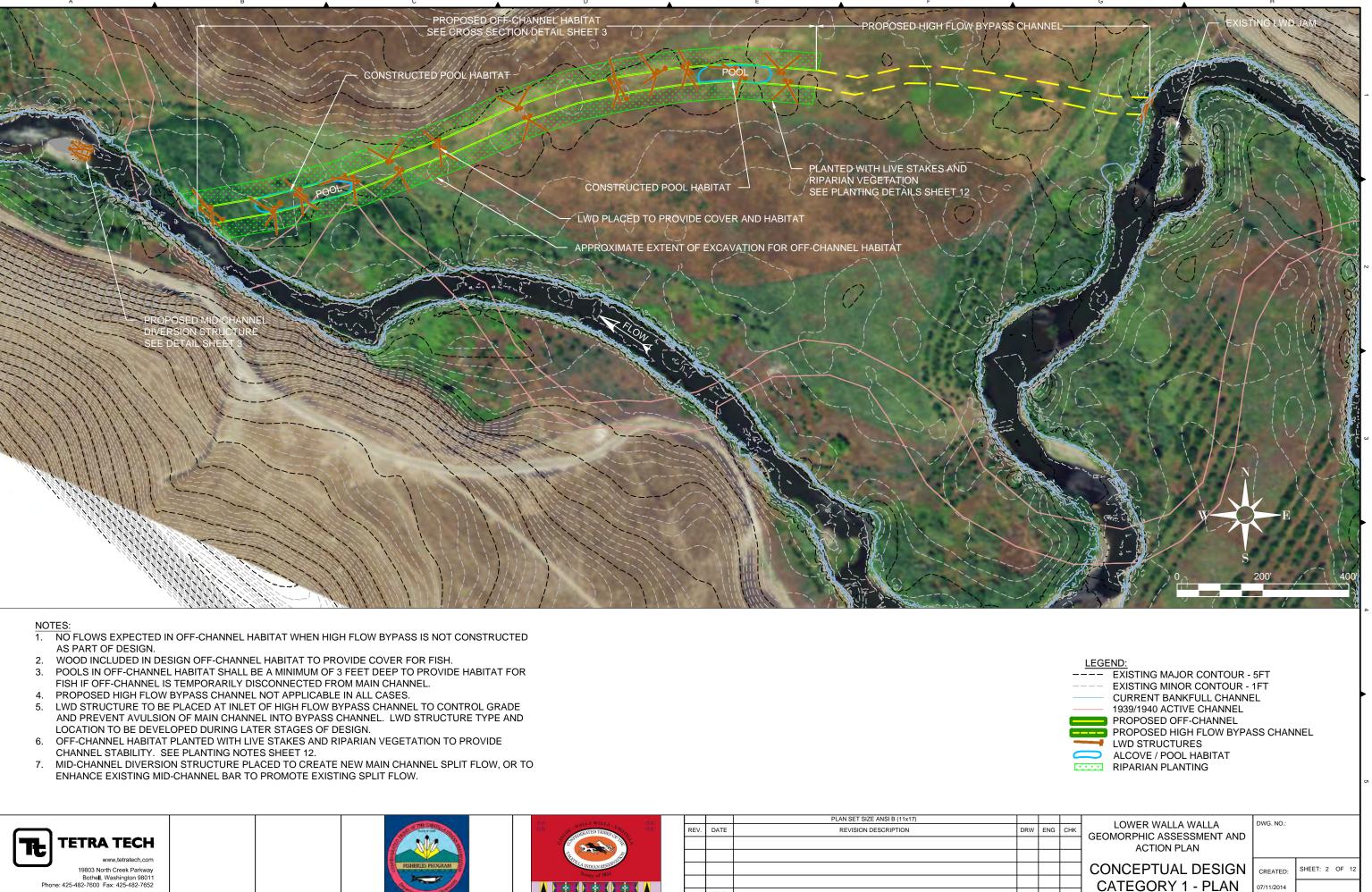
# **Conceptual Drawings and Outcomes**

**Design Category 1:** Project Area 7 (RM 14.0, BSR 2, Tier I)

**Design Category 2:** Project Area 10 (RM 20.4, BSR 2, Tier I)

**Design Category 3:** Project Area 11 (RM 22.3, BSR 3, Tier II)

**Design Category 4:** Project Area 12 (RM 23.7, BSR 4, Tier I)





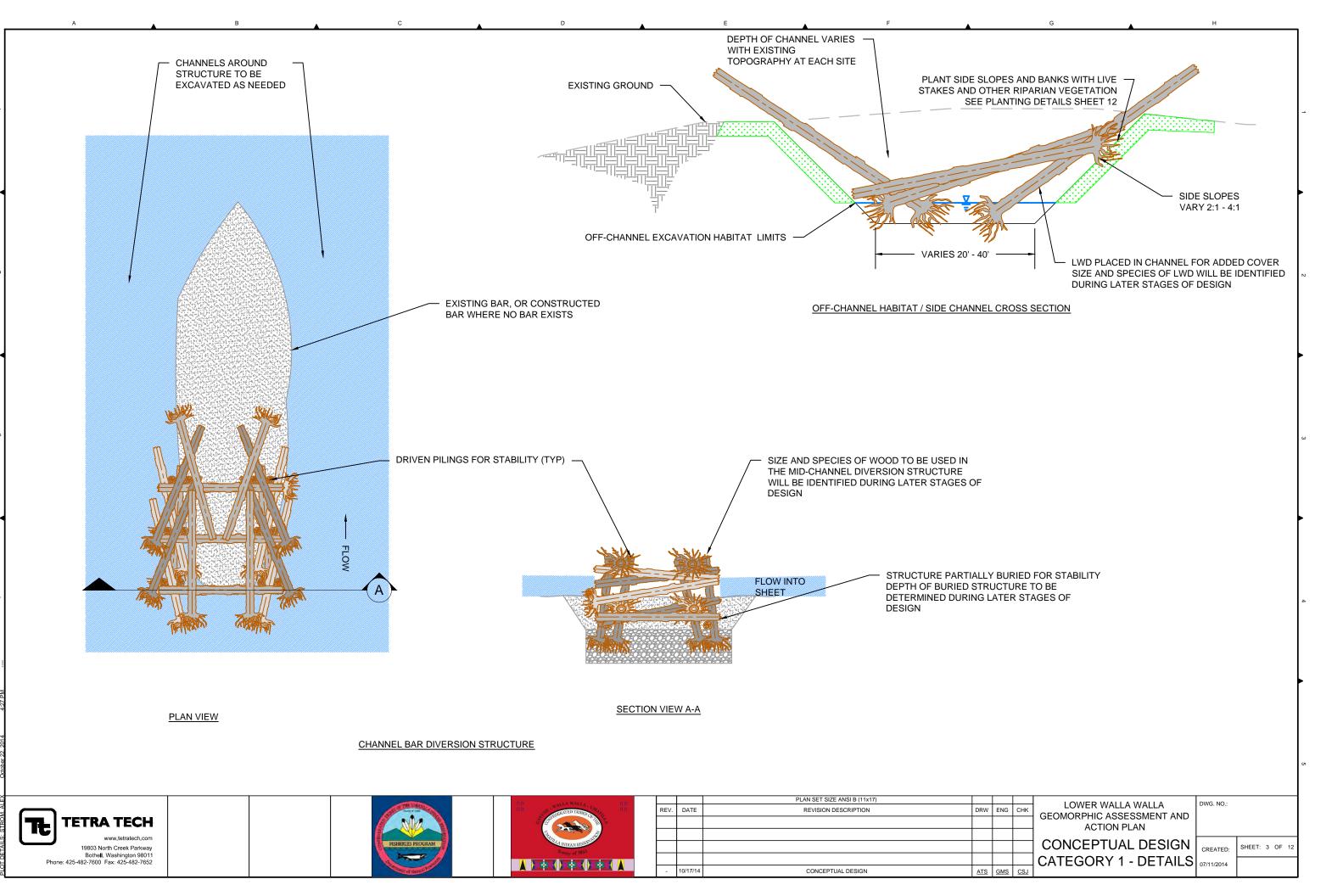


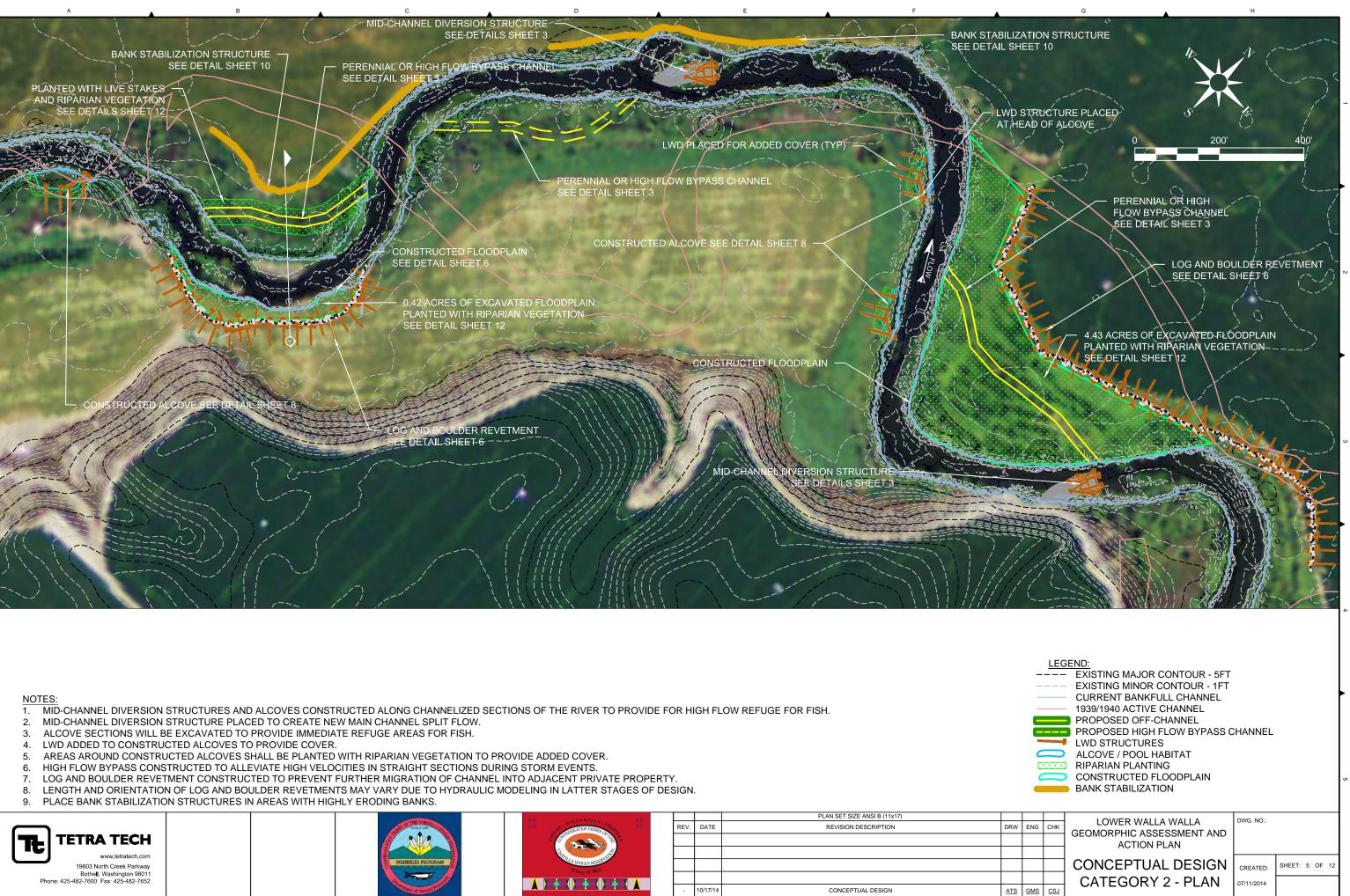


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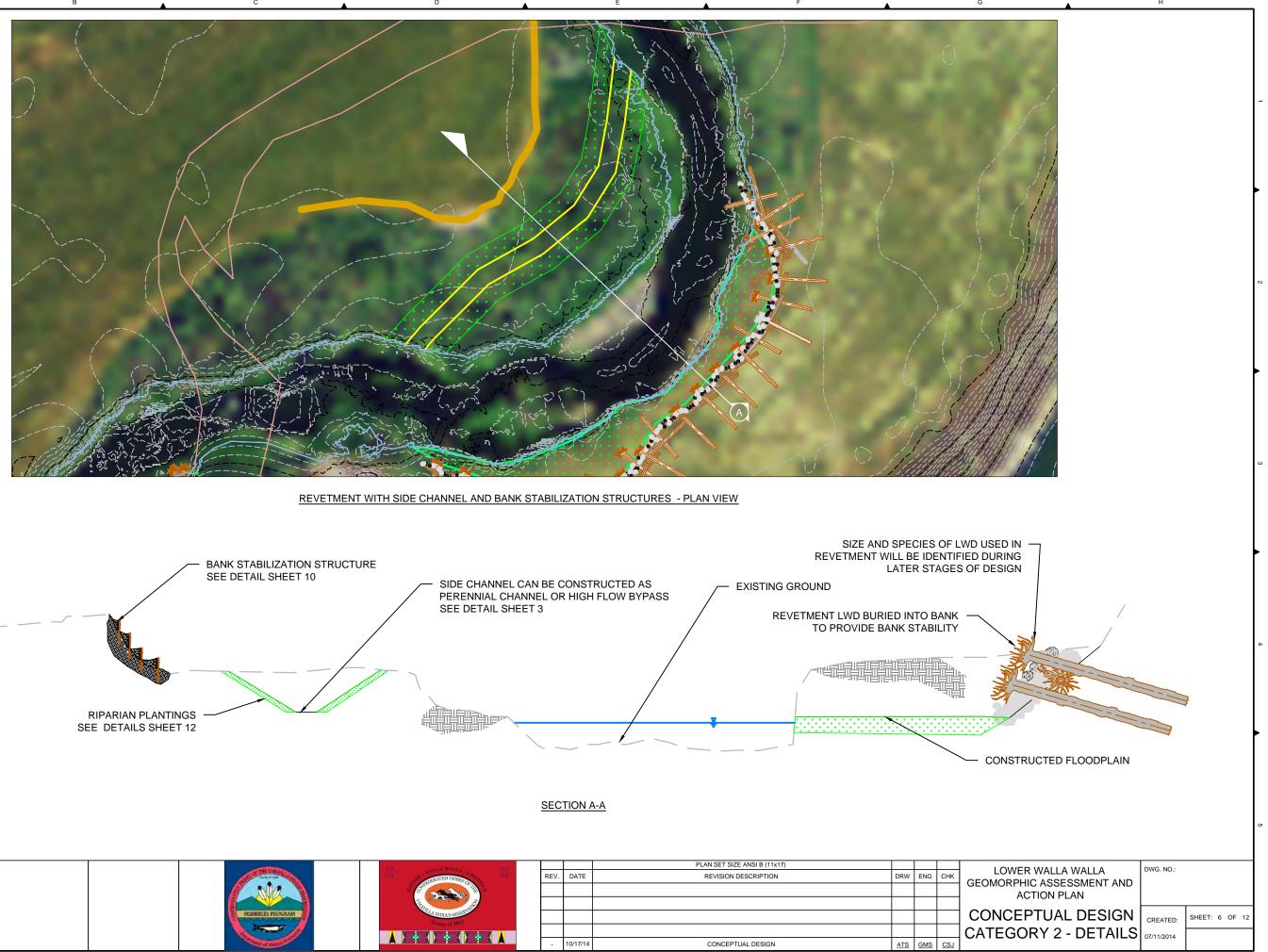


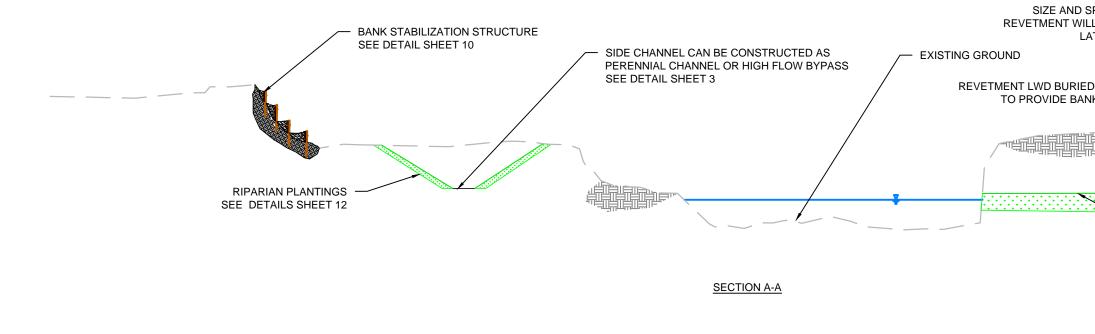


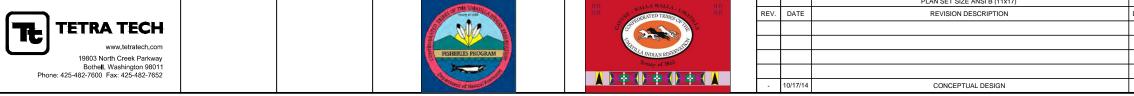


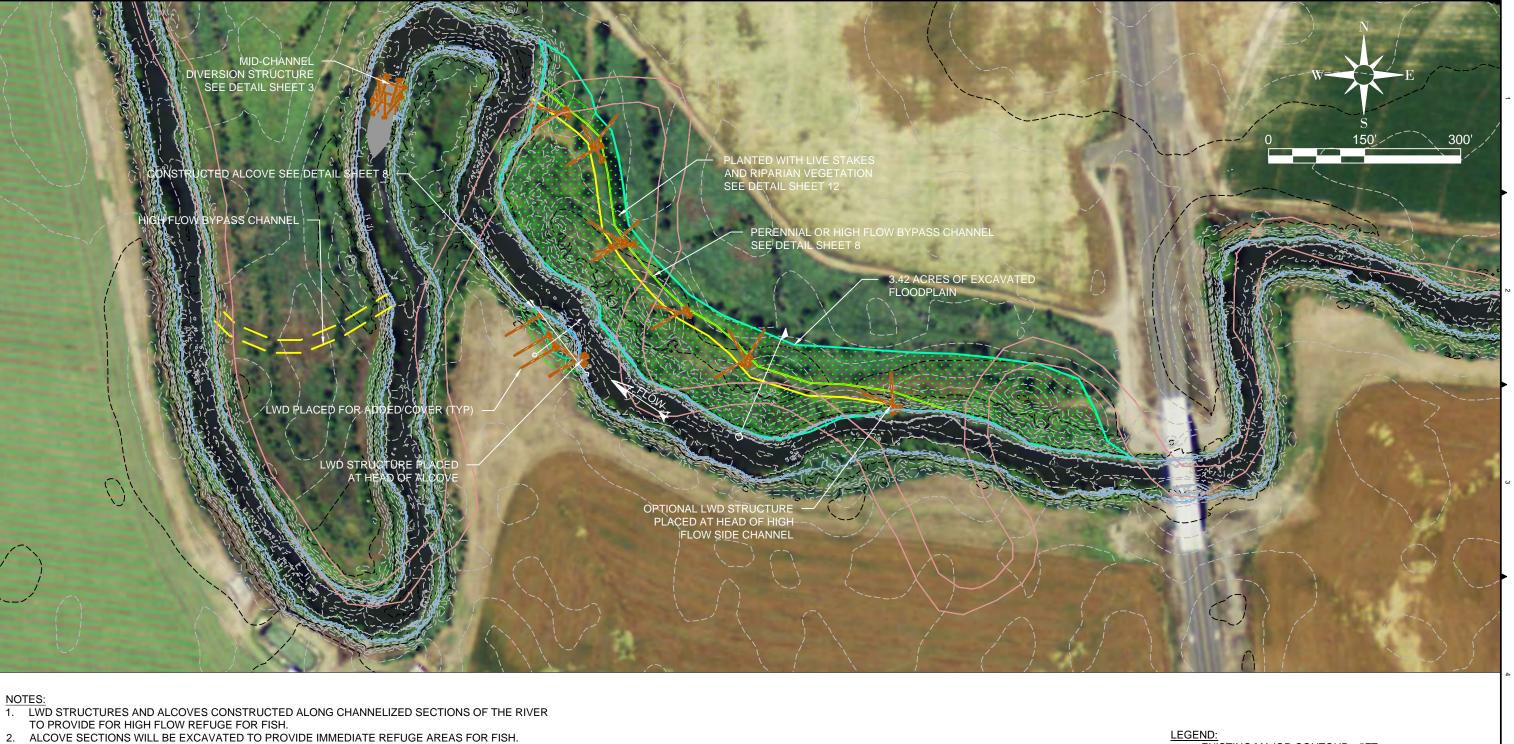


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#### NOTES:

- 1. LWD STRUCTURES AND ALCOVES CONSTRUCTED ALONG CHANNELIZED SECTIONS OF THE RIVER
- 3. LWD ADDED TO CONSTRUCTED ALCOVES TO PROVIDE COVER.
- 4. AREAS AROUND CONSTRUCTED ALCOVES SHALL BE PLANTED WITH RIPARIAN VEGETATION TO PROVIDE ADDED COVER.
- HIGH FLOW BYPASS CONSTRUCTED TO ALLEVIATE HIGH VELOCITIES IN STRAIGHT SECTIONS 5. DURING STORM EVENTS.
- 6. UPSTREAM END OF HIGH FLOW BYPASS PLACED ON INSIDE OF CURVE TO PREVENT AVULSION OF MAIN CHANNEL INTO HIGH FLOW BYPASS CHANNEL.
- 7. CHANNEL BAR DIVERSION STRUCTURE PLACED TO CREATE NEW MAIN CHANNEL SPLIT FLOW, OR TO ENHANCE EXISTING MID-CHANNEL BAR TO PROMOTE SPLIT FLOW CONDITION IN MAIN CHANNEL.







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-		- EXISTING MAJOR CONTOUR - 5FT					
_		EXISTING MINOR CONTOUR - 1FT					
_		CURRENT BANKFULL CHANNEL					
_	1939/1940 ACTIVE CHANNEL						
		PROPOSED OFF-CHANNEL					
		PROPOSED HIGH FLOW BYPASS C	HANNEL				
-		LWD STRUCTURES					
C		ALCOVE / POOL HABITAT					
	• • • •	RIPARIAN PLANTING					
6		CONSTRUCTED FLOODPLAIN					
ENG	снк	LOWER WALLA WALLA	DWG. NO.:				
LING	CHIK	GEOMORPHIC ASSESSMENT AND					
		ACTION PLAN					
		CONCEPTIAL DESIGN		SULET			

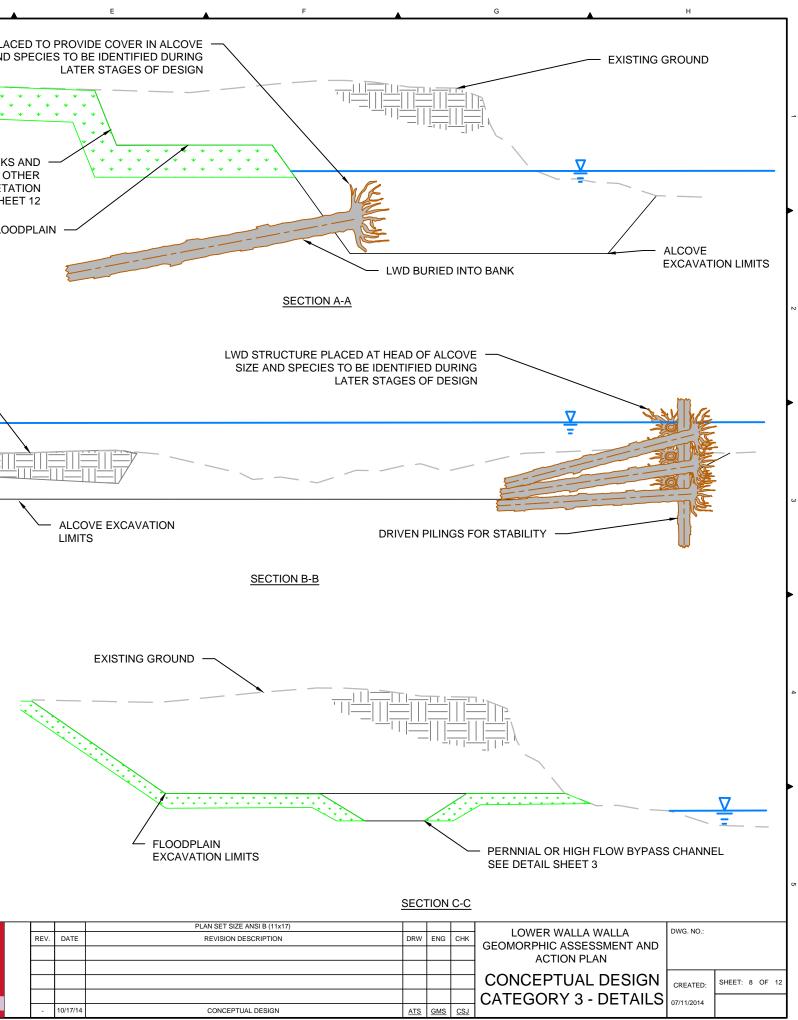
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN | CREATED: CATEGORY 3 - PLAN

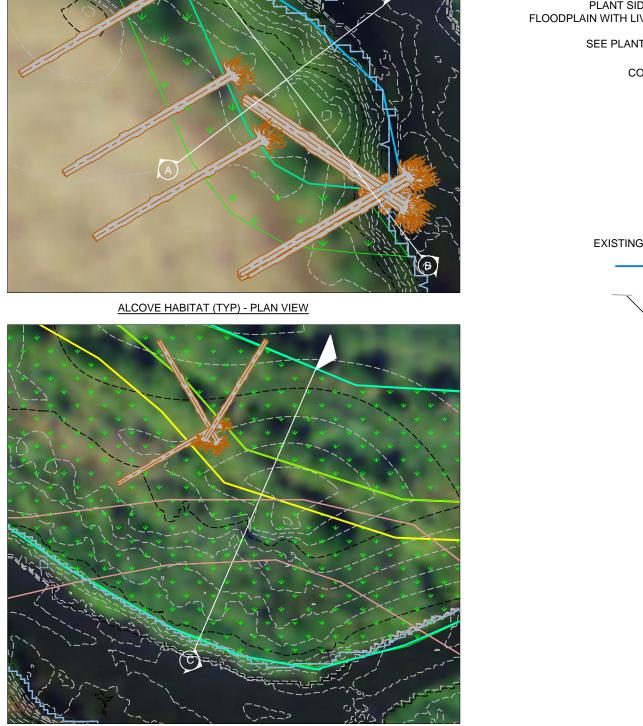
EET: 7 OF 12 07/11/2014



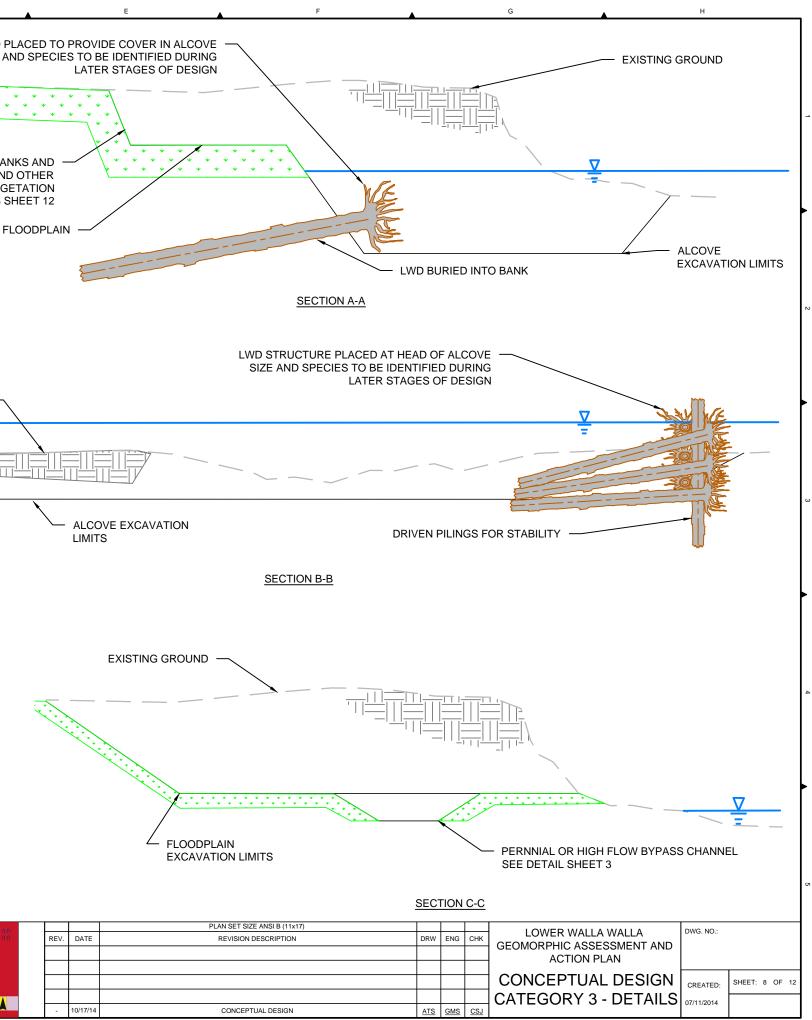
FLOODPLAIN WITH SIDE CHANNEL HABITAT (TYP) - PLAN VIEW

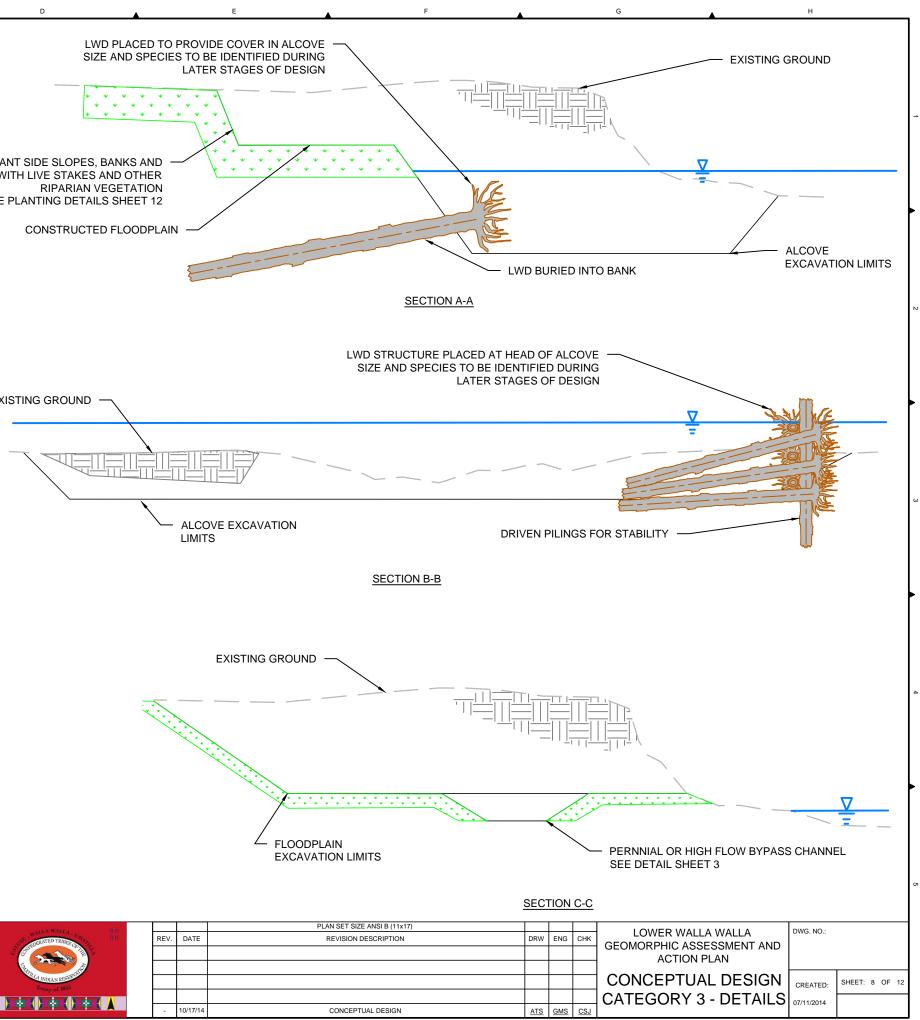


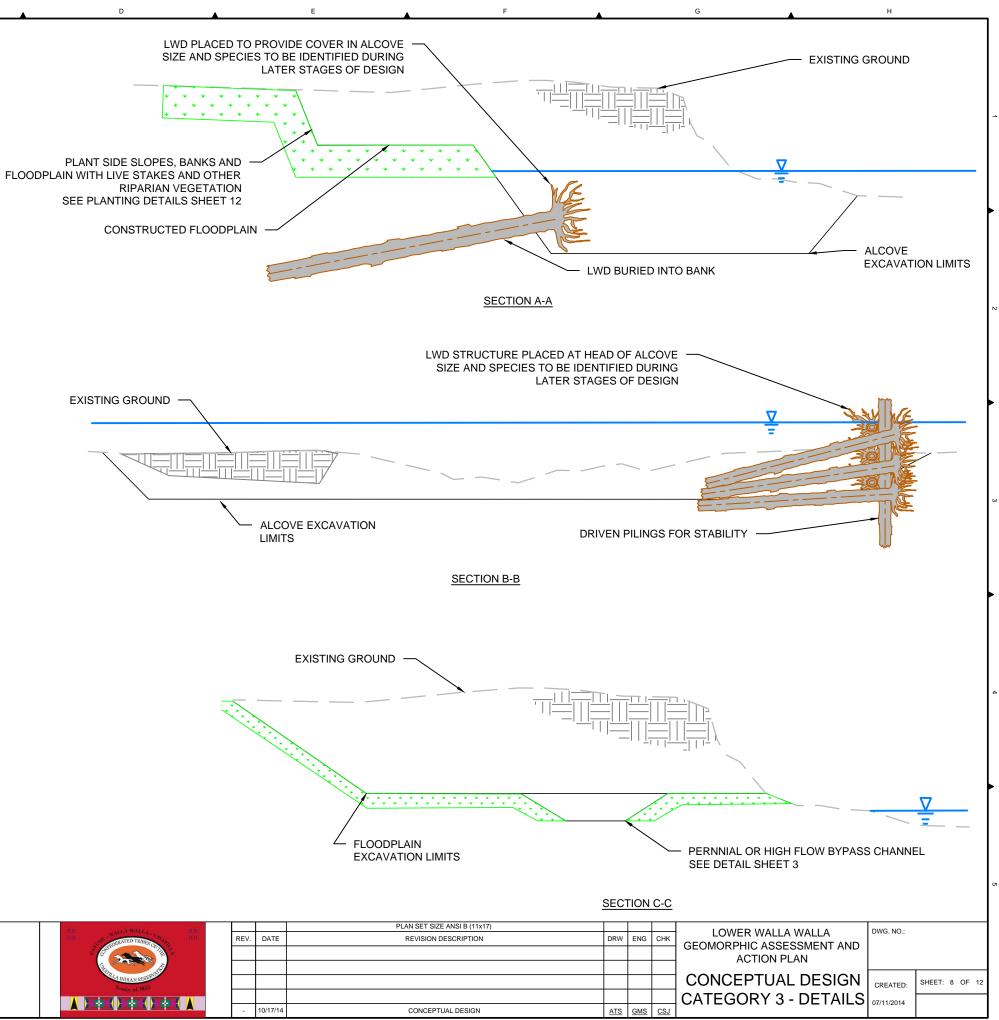


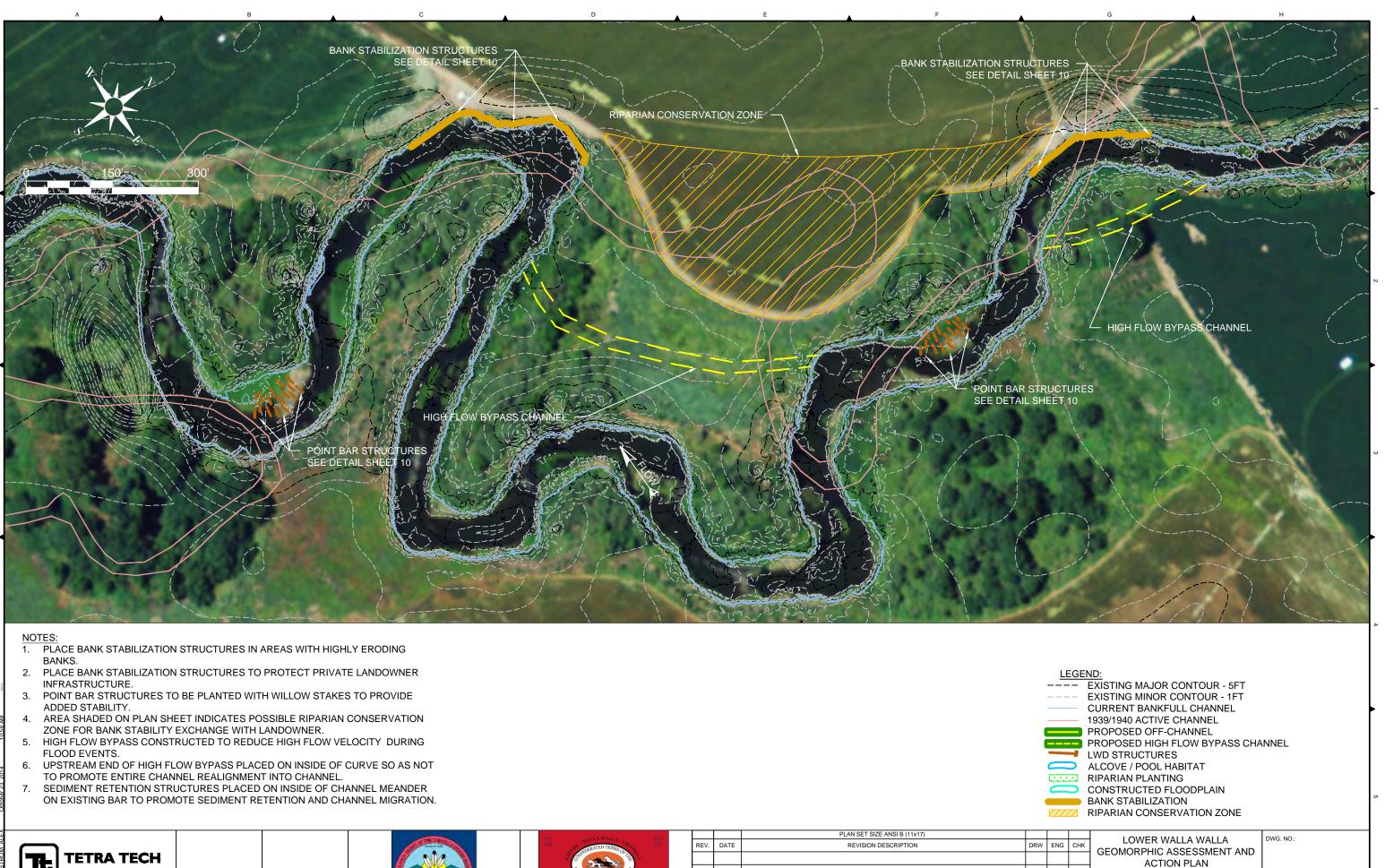


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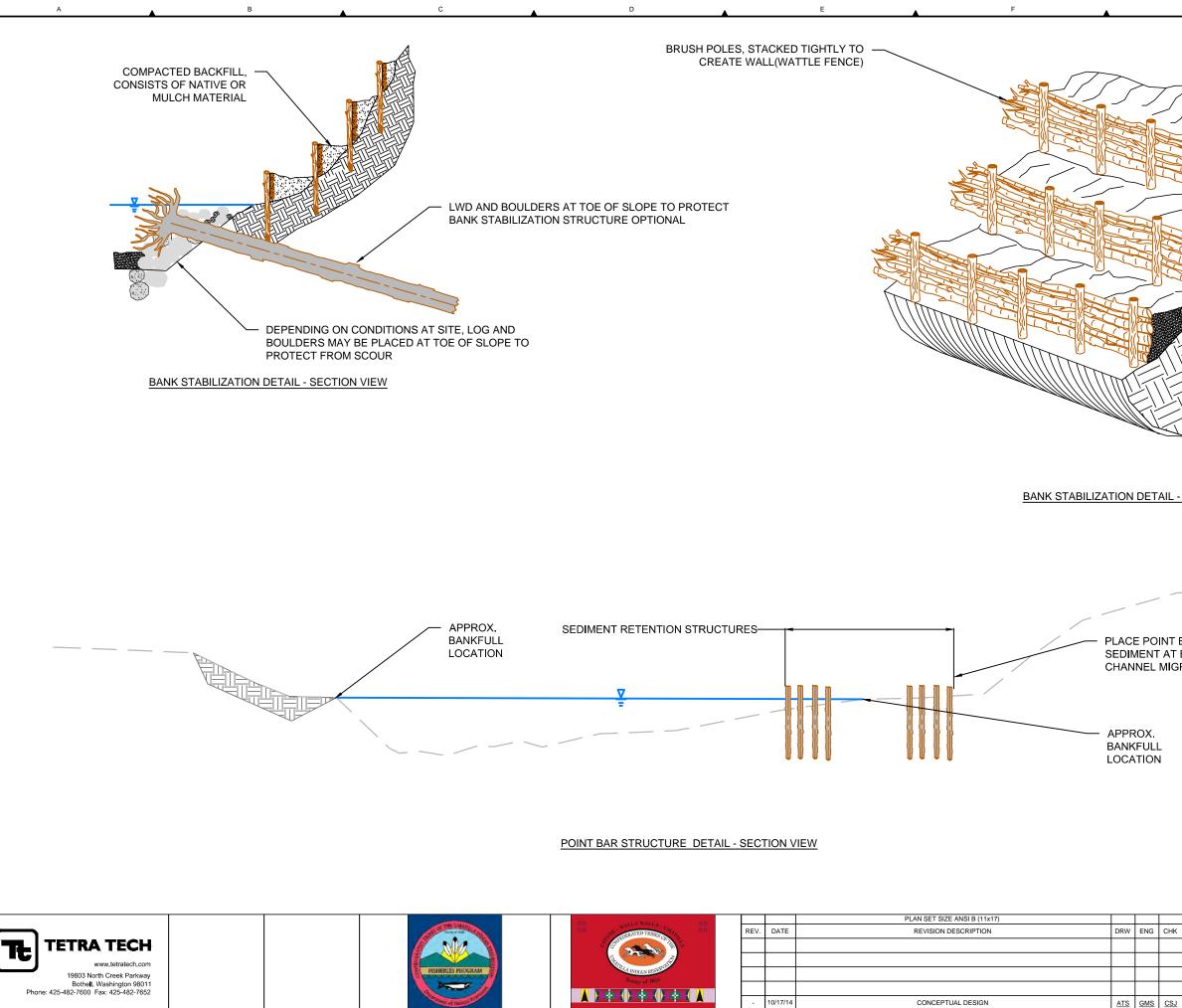




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CONCEPTUAL DESIGN CATEGORY 4 - PLAN

SHEET: 9 OF 12 CREATED: 7/11/2014



	- LIVE STAP	KES			
ATION DETAIL - ISOMETRIC VIEW					
PLACE POINT BAR STRUCTURES TO SEDIMENT AT EXISTING BAR AND P CHANNEL MIGRATION APPROX. BANKFULL LOCATION					
DRW ENG CHK GEOMORPHIC ASSI ACTION F	ESSMENT AND	DWG. NO.:			
	L DESIGN	CREATED:	SHEET:	10 OF	12

CATEGORY 4 - DETAILS 07/11/2014

### **Conceptual Drawing Category Outcomes**

Design Category	Outcomes
1	Reduce flow and hydraulic forces acting on eroding banks, restore floodplain connectivity, expand the riparian zone and increase shade, and provide off-channel habitat that results in improved pool frequency and depth and increased LWD and habitat diversity for year-around habitat use.
2	Restore processes in unfarmed areas and protect farmed areas by constructing side and high flow bypass channels to reduce bank erosion, increase floodplain connectivity, and provide overwinter rearing habitat; excavating alcoves and placing LWD to increase year-around main channel habitat diversity; and constructing bank stabilization structures, log and boulder revetments, and floodplains planted with riparian vegetation to limit bank erosion and increase shade.
3	Reduce channel incision, provide overwinter rearing habitat, and restore floodplain function by adding instream structures, constructing side and high flow bypass channels, and excavating an inset floodplain; and improve year-around main channel habitat complexity and diversity by excavating alcoves and placing LWD that provide increases in pool frequency and depth and cover from predation.
4	Reduce bank erosion in order to protect farmed areas, roads, and infrastructure through riparian conservation zones, high flow bypass channels, bank stabilization structures, and point bar structures that result in expanding riparian and floodplain zones that reduce flow and hydraulic forces acting on eroding banks, provide bank protection, and increase lateral migration away from areas of concern.