

Southwest Washington Mitigation Banks



Improving Wetland Mitigation in Washington State

The Columbia River Wetland Mitigation Bank (CRWMB) and the East Fork Lewis Wetland Mitigation Bank (EFLMB) together will restore over 265 acres of valuable aquatic and upland habitat in Southwest Washington. These projects will help offset unavoidable aquatic resource impacts that occur as a result of development. Both mitigation bank projects provide effective large scale restoration of wetland functions to the watershed and restore habitat communities including aquatic bed, emergent, shrub and forested wetlands as well as upland shrub and forested habitat.

The banks are developed through the Washington State Mitigation Banking Program and authorized by the US Army Corps of Engineers, US Environmental Protection Agency, Washington State Department of Ecology the City of Vancouver (CRWMB) and Clark County (EFLMB). Each bank will provide wetland mitigation credits and critical area buffer credits for use within its respective service area. The service areas include portions of Clark, Cowlitz and Skamania Counties (see service area map). Public agencies, utility companies, ports and private developers will be able to utilize credits for permitted projects where impacts to wetlands and critical areas are unavoidable and must be mitigated. Often these projects require 404/401 permits, reasonable use exceptions or local jurisdiction critical area permits for wetland and buffer impacts. Bank credits are also an option for settling regulatory permit violations.



Benefits of Mitigation Banking

Given the high failure rate of small on-site mitigation projects, wetland mitigation banking is now a preferred option for mitigating permitted impacts to aquatic resources. Banking consolidates mitigation into large sites that have significant ecological value, are protected by conservation easements, have a high probability of success and sustainability, are monitored and managed for 10 years and have a funded third party stewardship in perpetuity. Bank users agree that using aquatic resource credits from a bank is more cost effective than permittee-sponsored mitigation, especially with the increased obligations for long term monitoring and maintenance, and the accompanying financial assurances now required for most isolated mitigation projects.



Using a Mitigation Bank

Impacts that are unavoidable, require mitigation that cannot be provided on-site, or require mitigation that can best be provided by the ecological functions of the mitigation bank are likely users of a mitigation bank. The impact must be in the service area of the bank (see service area map), and the bank must be able to provide adequate mitigation credits for the impact. Proposing the use of bank credits is similar to proposing other types of mitigation in a typical mitigation plan. The USACE and DOE have developed guidance for creating a “Bank Use Plan” for permit applicants and their consultants to help guide them through this process. Guidance on submitting bank use plans, is available from Habitat Bank or online at the Department of Ecology’s Mitigation Banking website.

Once a project has been approved to use mitigation bank credits, the mitigation credits are purchased and the credits are transferred to the applicant’s permit numbers. All liabilities and obligations are now the responsibility of the mitigation bank, and the applicant may pursue the permitted project without distraction or future disruption.



Credit Ratios

The number of credits normally required to compensate for each unit of permanent loss of a listed aquatic resource has been recommended by the agencies approving the bank. The wetland functional categories are based on the Washington State Wetland Rating System for Western Washington. Units of loss are measured in square feet for wetland and buffer impacts.

Resource Impact	Bank Credits Per Resource Impact
Wetland, Category I	Case by case
Wetland, Category II	1.2
Wetland, Category III	1.0
Wetland, Category IV	.85
Critical Area Buffer	Case by case

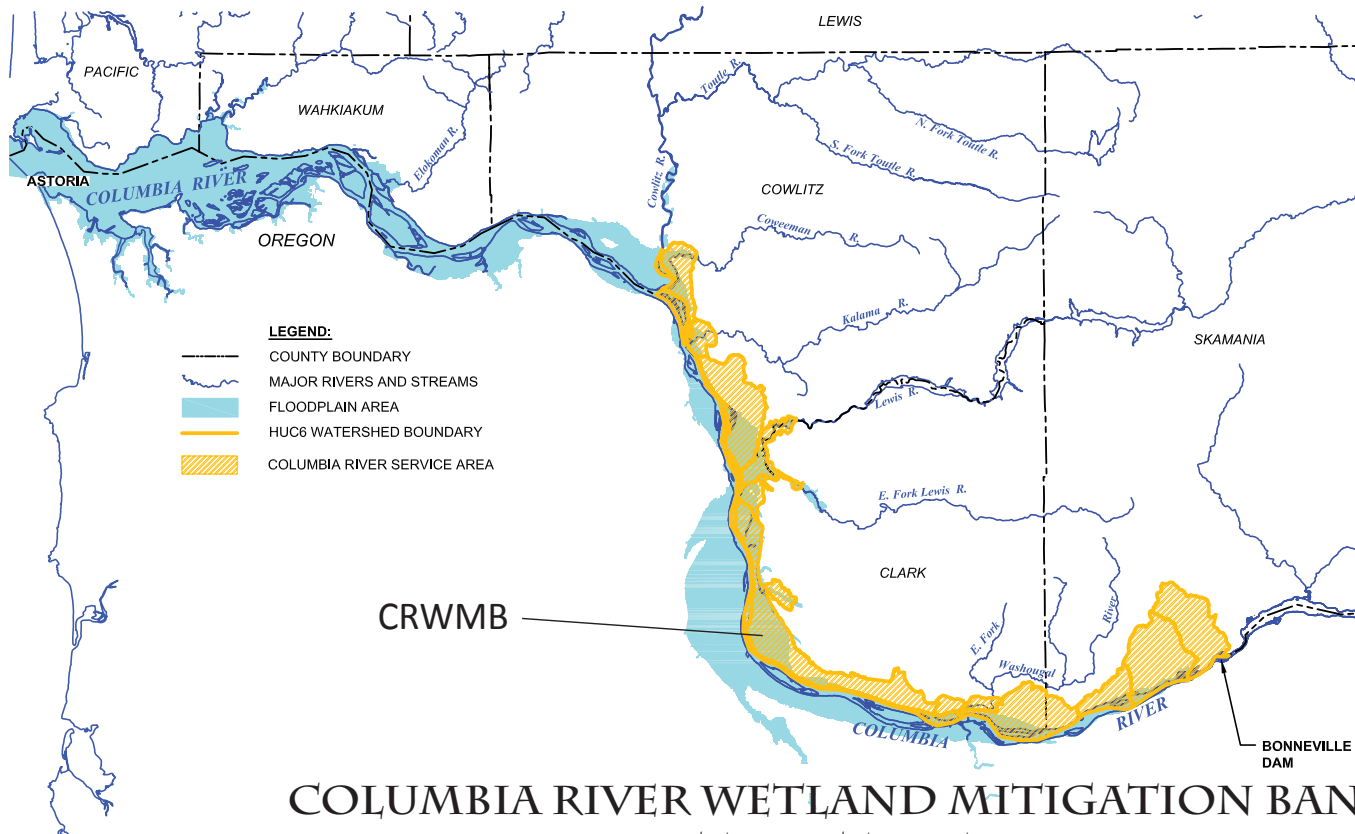
Function

The table below shows the anticipated functional lift at each bank site according to each wetland function category. Monitoring and management throughout the life of the bank project insures that the bank is meeting its stated goals, objectives and performance standards. Credits are released for sale over a ten year monitoring period only after financial protections have been secured for the bank site and specific ecological performance standards have been met.



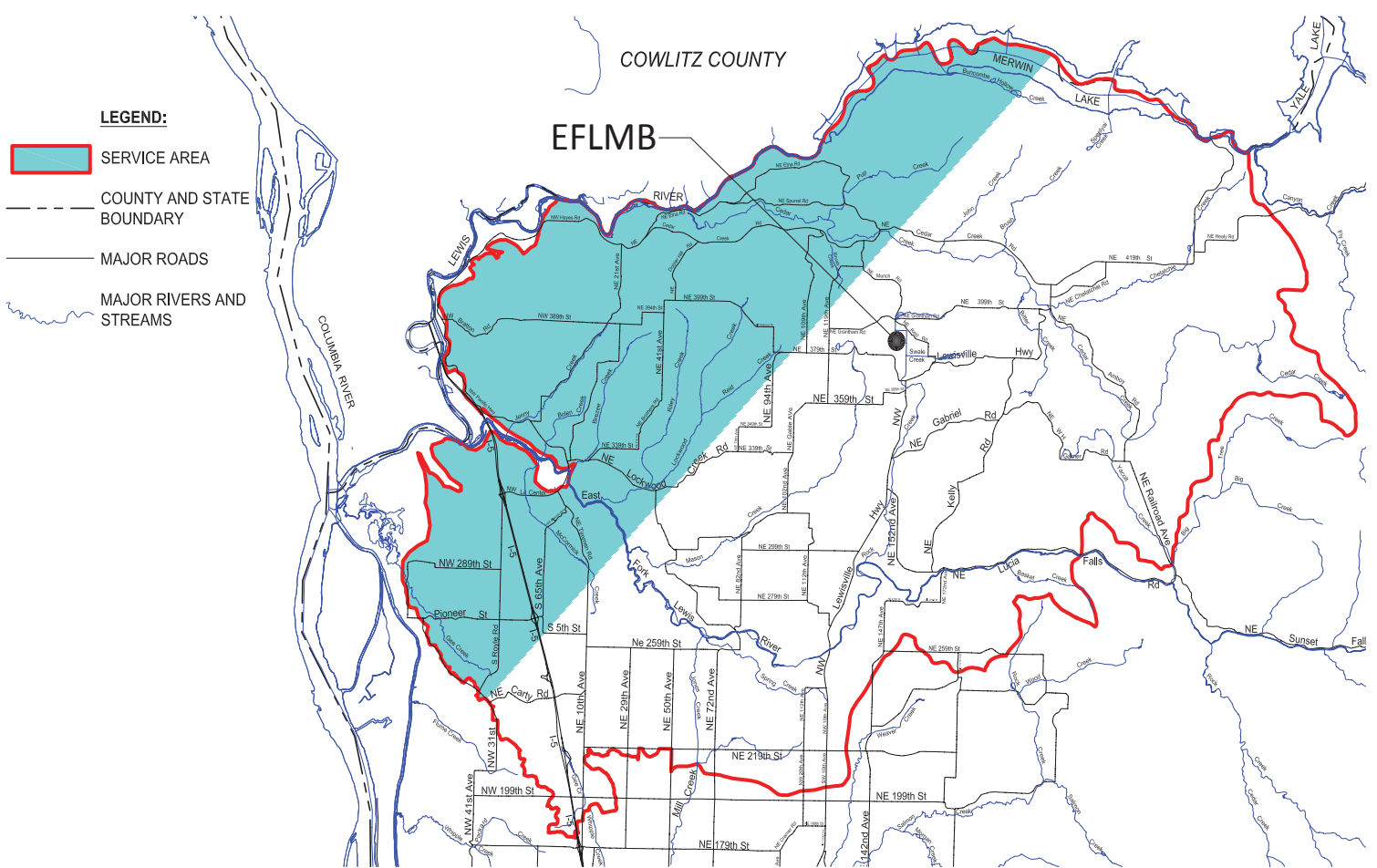
	Wetland Function	East Fork Lewis Mitigation Bank			Columbia River Mitigation Bank		
		Index Potential	Existing Opportunity	Anticipated Change Post Construction	Index Potential	Existing Opportunity	Anticipated Change Post Construction
Water Quality	Sediment Removal	4	Moderately High	Increase	5	Moderately High	Increase
	Nutrient Removal	4	Moderately High	Increase	4	Moderately High	Increase
	Metals & Toxic Organics Removal	2	Moderately High	Increase	5	Moderately High	Increase
Water Quantity	Peak Flow Reduction	5	Moderate	Increase	4	Moderate	Increase
	Downstream Erosion Reduction	4	Moderate	Increase	5	Moderate	Increase
	Groundwater Recharge ²	1	High	Increase	3	High	Increase
Habitat	General Habitat Suitability	3	Low	Increase	7	Moderate	Increase
	Invertebrate Habitat	4	Low	Increase	7	Moderate	Increase
	Amphibian Habitat	5	Low	Increase	5	Moderate	Increase
	Anadromous Fish Habitat	2	Low	Increase	4	--	--
	Resident Fish Habitat	8	Low	--	5	--	--
	Wetland-Associated Mammal Habitat	8	Low to Moderate	--	4	Moderate	Increase
	Native Plant Richness	3	Low	Increase	7	Moderate	Increase
Primary Production and Export	3	Moderately High	Increase	8	High	Increase	





- LEGEND:**
- COUNTY BOUNDARY
 - MAJOR RIVERS AND STREAMS
 - FLOODPLAIN AREA
 - HUC6 WATERSHED BOUNDARY
 - COLUMBIA RIVER SERVICE AREA

COLUMBIA RIVER WETLAND MITIGATION BANK SERVICE AREA



- LEGEND:**
- SERVICE AREA
 - COUNTY AND STATE BOUNDARY
 - MAJOR ROADS
 - MAJOR RIVERS AND STREAMS

Contact.
 For more information on the Columbia River Mitigation Bank or the East Fork Lewis Mitigation Bank please visit:
www.habitatbank.com
 or contact: 425.785.8428 / info@habitatbank.com

EAST FORK LEWIS WETLAND MITIGATION BANK SERVICE AREA