



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
Walla Walla District

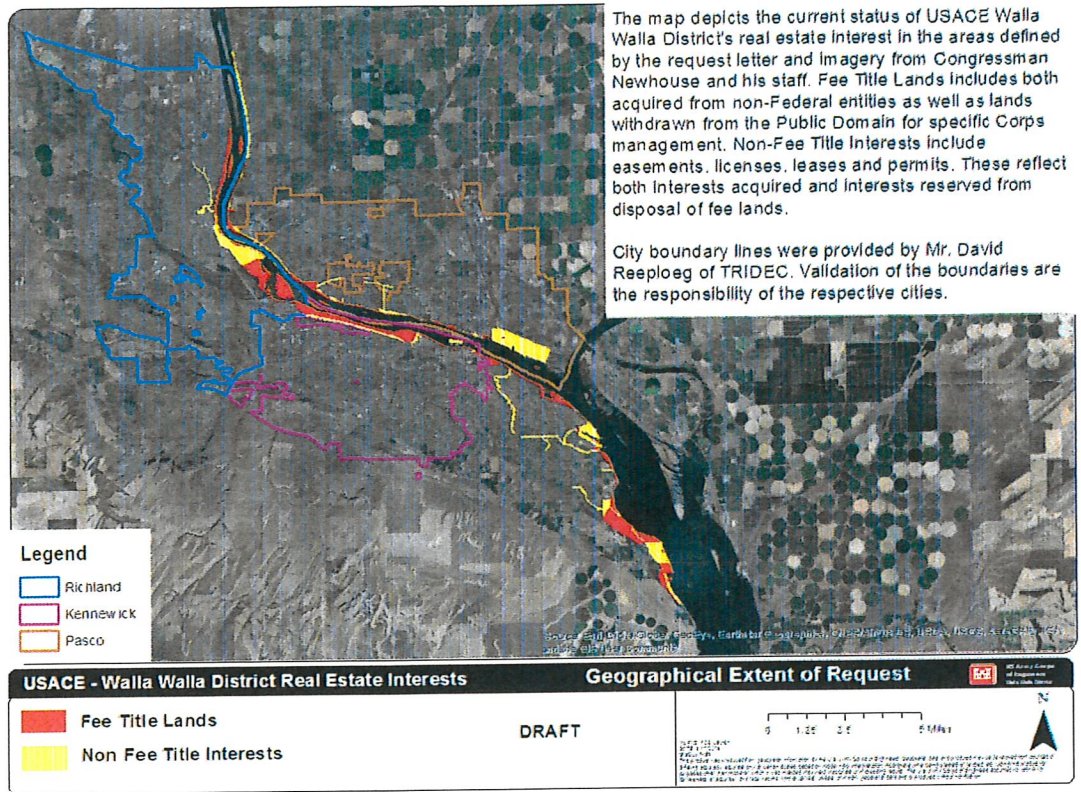
# FACT SHEET TRICITIES LAND CONVEYANCE

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for operating, managing and maintaining federal lands and federal levees on the Columbia and Snake rivers within the Tri-Cities region.

## Land Transfer Authorization, Costs and Legal Requirements

The Corps legally acquired over 39,000 acres at fair market value using federal-taxpayer funds in building McNary Dam. As stewards of these lands, the Corps cannot now simply give them away without fairly compensating taxpayers. In 1996 Congress authorized the Corps to transfer about 1,380 acres of land to local Tri-Cities governments. Still in effect, this authorization requires that local governments pay the associated administrative costs, including compliance with environmental laws, cultural resource protection laws, and land surveys. Due to these costs and other issues, most of the park areas have been leased to the cities, rather than transferred.



## The Levee System

The Columbia River levees in the Tri-Cities are a part of the McNary Dam Project, serving multiple mission purposes that include flood risk management, and would remain classified as federal civil works projects. Any modifications to these levees would still require federal permission even if transferred to local governments. Maintenance and periodic engineering inspections of these levees, which are complex systems, would become the responsibility of the new owners. The Corps of Engineers currently spends approximately \$1.3 million per year to maintain these levees and pumping stations, a job which requires six full-time federal employees. Also, the pump stations in the Tri-Cities levee system are nearing the end of their service life. During the next 10 years, they will need to be replaced at a cost of about \$18 million. That cost will be assumed by the owner, which is currently the federal government

## Our Commitment to You

The Corps of Engineers has no position at this time on the proposed transfer of Corps-managed federal land to local governments. As stewards of public resources, the Corps of Engineers recognizes that transferring federal lands to local communities can benefit both the local government and the federal government, and that these transfers are complicated and all of the consequences – positive and negative - should be fully understood by local citizens.

