

WILLITS BYPASS ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY PROCESS

STEP 1 INITIATE PROJECT AND COLLECT PROJECT DATA

STATUS: COMPLETE

STEP 2 IDENTIFY ALTERNATIVES

STATUS: COMPLETE

STEP 3 CONDUCT DETAILED STUDIES

**STATUS: COMPLETED STUDIES ON ALTERNATIVES E3, C1T, J1T, LT.
CURRENTLY STUDYING MODIFIED J1T.**

STEP 4 PREPARE AND CIRCULATE THE DRAFT EIS/EIR

STATUS: COMPLETED AUGUST 2002

STEP 5 HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING

STATUS: COMPLETED JULY 2002

STEP 6 IDENTIFY THE LEAST ENVIRONMENTALLY DAMAGING PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE (LEDPA)

STATUS: WE ARE HERE

STEP 7 PREPARE A FINAL EIS/EIR

STEP 8 PROJECT APPROVAL

STEP 6. LEDPA* SELECTION

**Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative*

STEP 6 GOAL

Select an alternative with the least impact to wetlands, with no significant adverse impacts to other environmental resources (Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines).

The Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEPDA) is the only alternative that can receive a permit for construction from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps).

Alternatives E3, C1T, and L/C do not meet LEDPA criteria for the following reasons:

ALTERNATIVE E3

- Impacts to endangered fish species;
- Water quality degradation because of highly erosive soils and extensive number of stream crossings;
- 12 million cubic yards of roadway excavation during construction;
- 133 home and business relocations;
- High number of archaeological sites (18);
- Largest percentage of farmland conversion;
- Impact to oak woodlands.

ALTERNATIVE C1T AND THE HYBRID L/C

- Impacts to 119 acres of aquatic resources;
- Adverse impacts to listed fish species due to extensive realignment of Mill and Outlet Creeks;
- Removes approximately 34 acres of riparian habitat that benefits four sensitive bird species;
- Potential to alter surface and groundwater hydrologic conditions of several flood basins within Little Lake Valley.

A permit for the Corps will be required to construct a Willits Bypass. The Corps has concluded, informally, that it cannot issue a permit to construct Alternatives E3, C1T or L/C.