

# WHAT IS NEPA AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO THIS PROJECT?

**The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a procedural statute (40CFR sec 1500) for decision-making during federal projects which assures proper analysis of social, economic and environmental impacts are performed.**

**This project is federally funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and as such is subject to federal regulation. ITD is required to prepare a “NEPA” document for FHWA.**

**The NEPA documents will study a reasonable range of alternatives based on the Purpose and Need, consider appropriate mitigation for impacts, include interagency coordination and consultation, and provide the public opportunity to participate in the process and comment on the project.**

**At the end of the process, the studies, agency coordination, public participation and comments are wrapped up into a document called a Categorical Exclusion.**

# ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The environmental evaluation for this project will take into account a variety of factors, including:

## Snake River Physa Snail

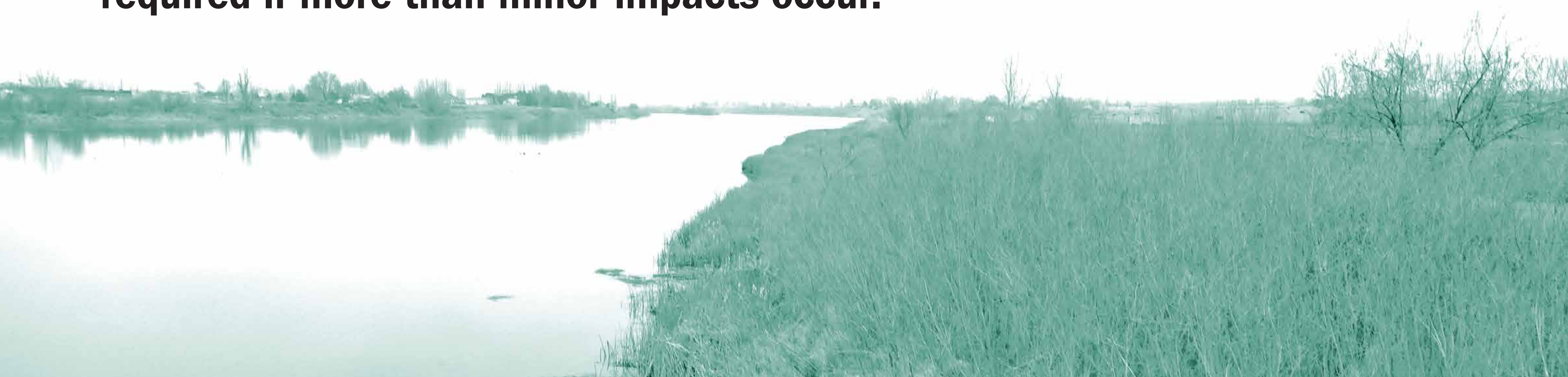


The Snake River physa snail is protected under the Endangered Species Act. It is found only in the middle of the Snake River in Idaho. The riverbed below the bridge contains suitable habitat. A Biological Assessment will be prepared to analyze potential impacts to the species and habitat as the result of the project.

## Marsing Island Park

The park was developed with federal dollars from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Section 6(f) of that act requires any park land taken by this project must be replaced.

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 stipulates that the Federal Highway Administration (funding this project) cannot approve the permanent or temporary use of land from publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife refuges or historic sites unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative and the action includes all possible planning to minimize impacts to the property or its users. Mitigation is required if more than minor impacts occur.



# ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

**The environmental evaluation for this project will take into account a variety of factors, including:**

## **The Existing Bridge**

**The bridge is historic and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because of its design and contribution to economic development in the region. The same requirements of Section 4(f) apply. In addition, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that adverse impacts to National Register eligible properties in connection with a Federal action must be mitigated. A Memorandum of Agreement will be developed to define mitigation for bridge removal. The State Historic Preservation Office, ITD and FHWA will be signatories, and local county historical societies and historic preservation committees will be invited to participate.**

