

SEPA¹ Environmental Checklist

Purpose of checklist

Governmental agencies use this checklist to help determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization, or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal.

Instructions for applicants

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Please answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. You may need to consult with an agency specialist or private consultant for some questions. **You may use “not applicable” or “does not apply” only when you can explain why it does not apply and not when the answer is unknown.** You may also attach or incorporate by reference additional studies reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions often avoid delays with the SEPA process as well as later in the decision-making process.

The checklist questions apply to **all parts of your proposal**, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

Instructions for lead agencies

Please adjust the format of this template as needed. Additional information may be necessary to evaluate the existing environment, all interrelated aspects of the proposal and an analysis of adverse impacts. The checklist is considered the first but not necessarily the only source of information needed to make an adequate threshold determination. Once a threshold determination is made, the lead agency is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the checklist and other supporting documents.

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B, plus the Supplemental Sheet for Nonproject Actions (Part D). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in “Part B: Environmental Elements” that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/Checklist-guidance>

A. Background

[Find help answering background questions²](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-A-Background)

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Oakesdale Mill Building Envelope Stabilization Project

2. Name of applicant:

Port of Whitman

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Kara Riebold, Executive Director
302 N Mill St., Colfax, WA 99111
509-288-0179
kara@portwhitman.com

4. Date checklist prepared:

July 10, 2026

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Port of Whitman

6. Proposed timing of schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

- Building Stabilization: July – October 2026
- Utilities Extension (including water, sewer, electrical, and fiber): July – October 2026

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

- Future phases may involve installation of EV chargers, parking, building remodel, and development of outdoor public spaces.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was prepared in March 2024 and updated in October 2024. The Executive Order 21-02 Cultural resource review and consultation with DAHP and interested Tribes was completed by CERB.

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

No known applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by the proposal.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

Permits and approvals may be required, including, but not limited to:

² <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-A-Background>

- Town of Oakesdale building permit
- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Railroad Permit
- WSDOT Franchise Agreement

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

This project addresses the first phase of redevelopment for the Oakesdale Mill, replacing the existing roof, stabilizing the exterior envelope of the building, and extending necessary utilities (water, sewer, fiber, and electrical) to the project site.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

The proposed project is located at the historic Oakesdale Flour Mill in Oakesdale, Whitman County, Washington, specifically Section 22, Township 19 North, and Range 44 East (Attachment 1, Vicinity Map). The property itself is two parcels (80700000000193 and 80700000000184), approximately 1.2 acres in size, divided by an undeveloped ROW.

B.Environmental Elements

1. Earth

[Find help answering earth questions³](https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-earth)

a. General description of the site:

The two parcels involved in the proposed project are generally flat, but slopes downwards towards McCoy Creek.

Circle or highlight one: Flat rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other:

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

The steepest slope on the site is approximately 0–1%.

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them, and note any

³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-earth>

agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey, soils on the site are entirely Caldwell silt loam, 0 to 3% slopes.

- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.**

There are no surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity.

- e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**

None.

- f. Could erosion occur because of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.**

No.

- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?**

No change.

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any.**

None proposed.

2. Air

[Find help answering air questions](#)⁴

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.**

Dust and machinery exhaust from construction activities are anticipated. Air impacts would be short-term and cease following the completion of construction.

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.**

No off-site sources of emissions or odor would affect the proposal.

⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-Air>

c. **Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:**

None proposed.

3. Water

[Find help answering water questions](#)⁵

a. **Surface:**

[Find help answering surface water questions](#)⁶

1. **Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.**

McCoy Creek, an intermittent stream, and a palustrine emergent wetland (PEM1C) associated with the creek, occur approximately 100 feet north of the Oakesdale Flour Mill.

2. **Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.**

This project will require construction within 200 feet of McCoy Creek. Work over or in the described waters will not be required.

3. **Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

No fill or dredge material would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands.

4. **Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give a general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

The proposed project would not require surface water withdrawals or diversions.

5. **Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

Yes, the parcel where the Oakesdale Flour Mill is situated is within a 100-year floodplain; however, the building itself does not appear to be located in the floodplain.

6. **Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.**

⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water>

⁶ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Surface-water>

No, the proposal does not involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters.

b. Ground:

[Find help answering ground water questions](#)⁷

1. **Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give a general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

No groundwater would be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes.

2. **Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals...; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.**

Waste material would not be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources as a result of the proposed project.

c. Water Runoff (including stormwater):

1. **Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.**

No change.

2. **Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.**

No.

3. **Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.**

The proposed project would not alter or affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site.

- d. **Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:**

None proposed.

4. Plants

[Find help answering plants questions](#)

⁷ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Groundwater>

a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:

- ☒ **deciduous tree:** alder, maple, aspen, other
- ☒ **evergreen tree:** fir, cedar, pine, other
- ☐ **shrubs**
- ☒ **grass**
- ☐ **pasture**
- ☐ **crop or grain**
- ☐ **orchards, vineyards, or other permanent crops.**
- ☐ **wet soil plants:** cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other
- ☐ **water plants:** water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- ☐ **other types of vegetation**

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

The USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) identified Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*), a federally listed threatened species, as potentially occurring on or near the site. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) did not identify any documented occurrence of Spalding's catchfly in or near the site.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any.

None proposed.

e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

In 2015, the Whitman County Weed Board identified Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), a Class B noxious weed, in the Town of Oakesdale. However, noxious weeds and invasive species are not known to be on or near the site.

5. Animals

[Find help answering animal questions](#)⁸

a. List any birds and other animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.

Examples include:

- **Birds:** hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:

⁸ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-5-Animals>

- **Mammals:** deer, bear, elk, beaver, other: moose, raccoons, skunks, squirrels
- **Fish:** bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:

b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

The USFWS IPaC identified the federally threatened yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), proposed threatened monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), and proposed endangered Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee (*Bombus suckleyi*) as potentially occurring on or near the site. The WDFW PHS Report did not identify documented occurrences of these species on or near the site.

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

No, the site is not part of a known migration route.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any.

e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

No invasive animal species are known to be on or near the site.

6. Energy and natural resources

[Find help answering energy and natural resource questions](#)⁹

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

No change.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

The proposed project would not affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any.

This project will abide by the applicable Washington State Energy Code.

7. Environmental health

[Health Find help with answering environmental health questions](#)¹⁰

⁹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-6-Energy-natural-resou>

¹⁰ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-7-Environmental-health>

- a. **Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur because of this proposal? If so, describe.**

1. Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

2. In 2024, a Phase 1 ESA was conducted for the site. The site contains soils that exceed cleanup levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), likely due to a coal storage shed previously located at the property or the railroad spur. The project will not likely disturb these soils.

3. Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.

4. In 2024, a Phase 1 ESA was conducted for the site. The site contains soils that exceed cleanup levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), likely due to a coal storage shed previously located at the property or the railroad spur. The project will not likely disturb these soils.

5. Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.

No toxic or hazardous chemicals would be stored, used, or produced by the proposed project. Gas/diesel fuel, oil, and other mechanical fluids will be used for construction equipment during project construction.

6. Describe special emergency services that might be required.

None required.

7. Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any.

None.

b. Noise

1. What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

Existing noise in the area includes traffic and railroad noise.

2. What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site)?

Short-term noise would be created by construction.

3. Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

No measures to reduce or control noise impacts are proposed. Construction activity will be limited to normal working hours.

8. Land and shoreline use

[Find help answering land and shoreline use questions](#)¹¹

- a. **What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.**
- b. The current use of the site is as a historic Flour Mill. Plans for future use are in development. The site is bounded on the north and south by commercial uses. On the east, the property is adjacent to McCoy Creek. On the west, the property is adjacent to open/undeveloped space and a commercial use. The proposal is not anticipated to affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties.
- c. **Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses because of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?**

No, the project site has not been used as working farmlands or working forest lands.

- 1. **Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how?**

No, the proposed project would not affect or be affected by the surrounding working farm or forest land's normal business operations.

- d. **Describe any structures on the site.**
- e. The Oakesdale Flour Mill is a historic, multi-story wood-frame industrial building originally constructed in the late 19th century (ca. 1890s) and subsequently expanded with associated outbuildings and storage silos. The main mill building is a tall, rectangular structure with vertical wood siding and a gabled roof, typical of late 19th- and early 20th-century flour mills in the inland Northwest. The building footprint is approximately 18,000 SF and rises 4 stories above grade.
- f. **Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?**
No structures would be demolished.
- g. **What is the current zoning classification of the site?**
The current zoning classification of the site is commercial/industrial.
- h. **What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?**
The current comprehensive plan designation of the site is agricultural.

¹¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-8-Land-shoreline-use>

i. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

The site is not designated under the Whitman County shoreline master program.

j. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

Yes, the site is located within the 100-year floodplain, which is considered a critical area.

k. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

This proposal will not result in people residing in the completed project.

l. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

The proposed project would not displace any individuals.

m. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any.

No displacement impacts would occur; therefore, no measures to avoid or reduce such impacts are proposed.

n. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any.

The proposed project is consistent with current zoning and the comprehensive plan.

o. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

No impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance are proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control impacts are proposed.

9. Housing

[Find help answering housing questions](#)¹²

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

The proposed project would not provide any housing units.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

The proposed project would not eliminate any housing units.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

No housing impacts are expected; therefore, no measures to mitigate or control housing impacts are proposed.

¹² <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-9-Housing>

10. Aesthetics

[Find help answering aesthetics questions](#)¹³

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?**

The maximum building height in this zone is 35' or two stories. The existing building is a pre-existing, conforming use and will remain at its current height.

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?**

None. The views in the immediate vicinity will not be altered or obstructed by the proposed project.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:**

No aesthetic impacts would occur; therefore, no measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts are proposed.

11. Light and glare

[Find help answering light and glare questions](#)¹⁴

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?**

None.

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?**

Light or glare from the finished project will not be a safety hazard or interfere with views.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?**

No off-site sources of light or glare exist that may affect this proposal.

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:**

No light or glare impacts would occur; therefore, no measures to reduce or control such impacts are proposed.

¹³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-10-Aesthetics>

¹⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-11-Light-glare>

12. Recreation

[Find help answering recreation questions](#)

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?**

There are no designated or informal recreational opportunities in the immediate vicinity. Oakesdale City Park is located approximately 650 feet southwest of the project site.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.**

No existing recreational uses would be displaced by the proposed project.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:**

No impacts to recreation would occur; therefore, no measures to reduce or control such impacts are proposed.

13. Historic and cultural preservation

[Find help answering historic and cultural preservation questions](#)¹⁵

- a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers? If so, specifically describe.**

Yes, the Oakesdale Flour Mill (J. C. Barron Flour Mill; Smithsonian No. WT00141), located at the intersection of First and Jackson Streets, was constructed in 1890 and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1978 (Listing No. 78002788) and in the Washington Heritage Register. It is located on parcel 80700000000184, and is owned by the Port of Whitman County, a public entity.

The Oakesdale Flour Mill consists of a rough, sawed timber frame that stands three and one-half stories in height. The entire flour mill building is a composite of four semidetached structures. They include: the flour mill proper (1890), former steam generating plant (1890), crib elevator (1898), and a grain and flour warehouse (circa 1890).

- b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.**

The Oakesdale Flour Mill (J. C. Barron Flour Mill; Smithsonian No. WT00141), located at the intersection of First and Jackson Streets, was listed in the NRHP in 1978 (Listing No. 78002788) and in the Washington Heritage Register. Both parcels, 80700000000193 and 80700000000184, are indicated as “survey highly advised” on the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) Washington Information

¹⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-13-Historic-cultural-p>

System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data (WISAARD) online database. To date, no professional cultural resources investigations have occurred on either parcel 80700000000193 or 80700000000184.

- c. **Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.**

The DAHP WISAARD was used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on and near the site. A Cultural Resource Survey was conducted by Plateau CRM. (Attachment 2, Cultural Resources Survey).

- d. **Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.**

An Unanticipated Discovery Plan and Treatment of Archaeological Materials Plan was prepared by Plateau CRM.

14. Transportation

[Find help with answering transportation questions](#)¹⁶

- a. **Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**

The site sits between Jackson Street to the north, E Bartlett Street to the south, and First Street/Highway 27 to the west.

- b. **Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

No, the site is not currently served by public transit. The nearest transit stop is in Pullman, Washington.

- c. **Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle, or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).**

The proposed project will not require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle, or state transportation facilities.

- d. **Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.**

Yes, the site sits between Jackson Street to the north, E Bartlett Street and an active railroad line to the south, and First Street/Highway 27 to the west.

¹⁶ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-14-Transportation>

- e. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

None.

- f. Will the proposal interfere with, affect, or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.

No, the proposed project would not interfere with, affect, or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area.

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

15. Public services

[Find help answering public service questions¹⁷](#)

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

No.

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

None proposed.

16. Utilities

[Find help answering utilities questions¹⁸](#)

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other:

No utilities exist at the site, other than fiber internet. Water and sewer are located in First Street, and Avista power lines are overhead.

- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

- Water and sewer extensions to the building – Town of Oakesdale
- Electrical extensions – Avista
- Fiber extensions – Port of Whitman County

¹⁷ <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-15-public-services>

¹⁸ <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-16-utilities>

C. Signature

[Find help about who should sign](#)¹⁹

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

X *Kara L Riebold*

Type name of signee: Kara Riebold

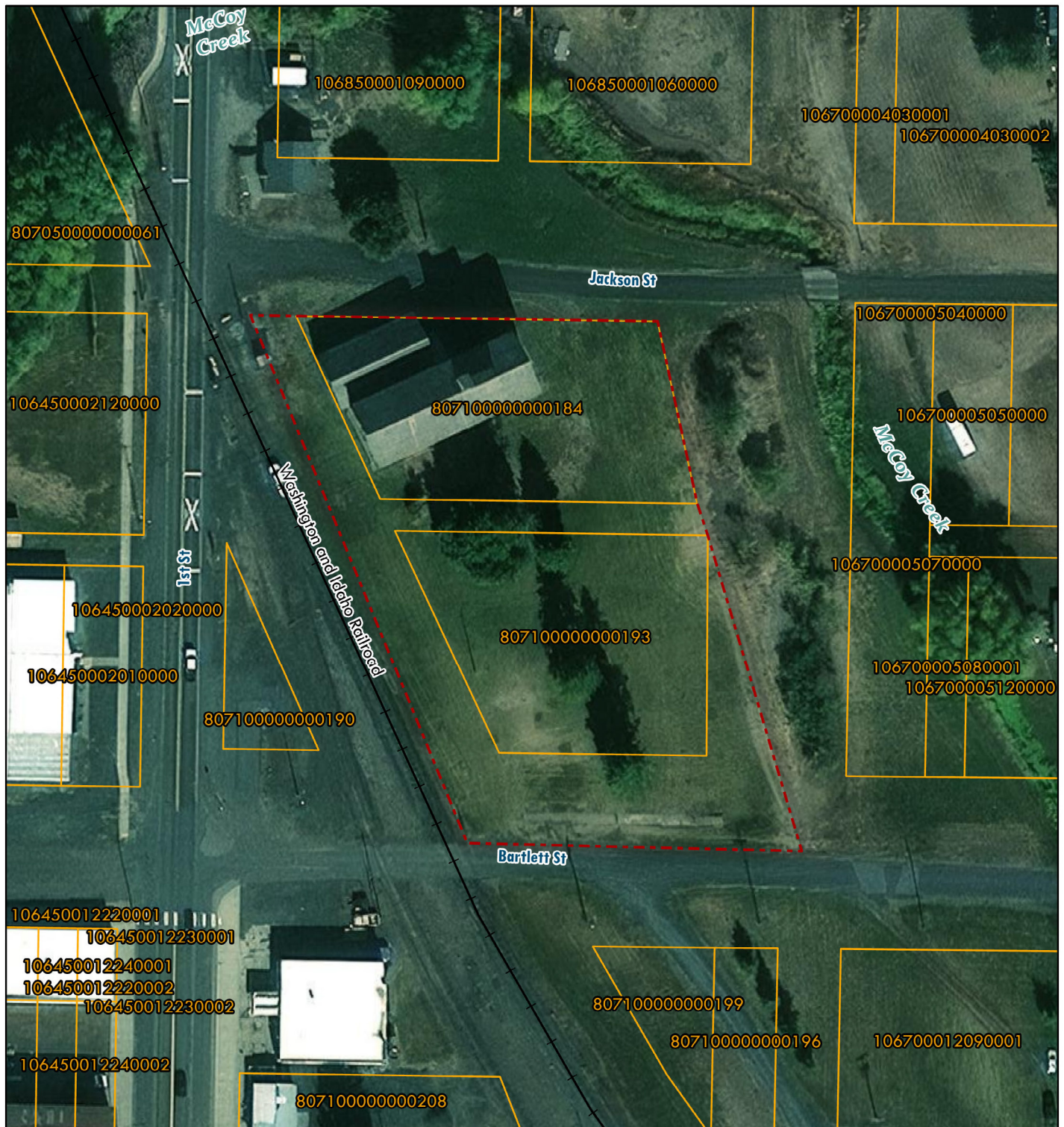
Position and agency/organization: Executive Director / Port of Whitman County

Date submitted: July 10, 2026

¹⁹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-C-Signature>



FIGURE 2 PROJECT AREA



LEGEND

-  Site
-  Parcels (Source: Whitman County)



CULTURAL RESOURCES REPORT COVER SHEET

DAHP Project Number: 2026-02-01210

Author: Josh L. Espen, J. Fone, Jeff Creighton, Justin Fitzpatrick, and David A. Harder

Title of Report: Cultural Resources Survey for the Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project,
Whitman County, Washington

Date of Report: May 4, 2026

County: Whitman Section: 22 Township: 19 N Range: 44 E

Quad: Oakesdale 1964 (1991) Acres: 1.8

PDF of report submitted (REQUIRED) ☒ Yes

Historic Property Inventory Forms to be Approved Online? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Archaeological Site(s)/Isolate(s) Found or Amended? ☐ Yes ☒ No

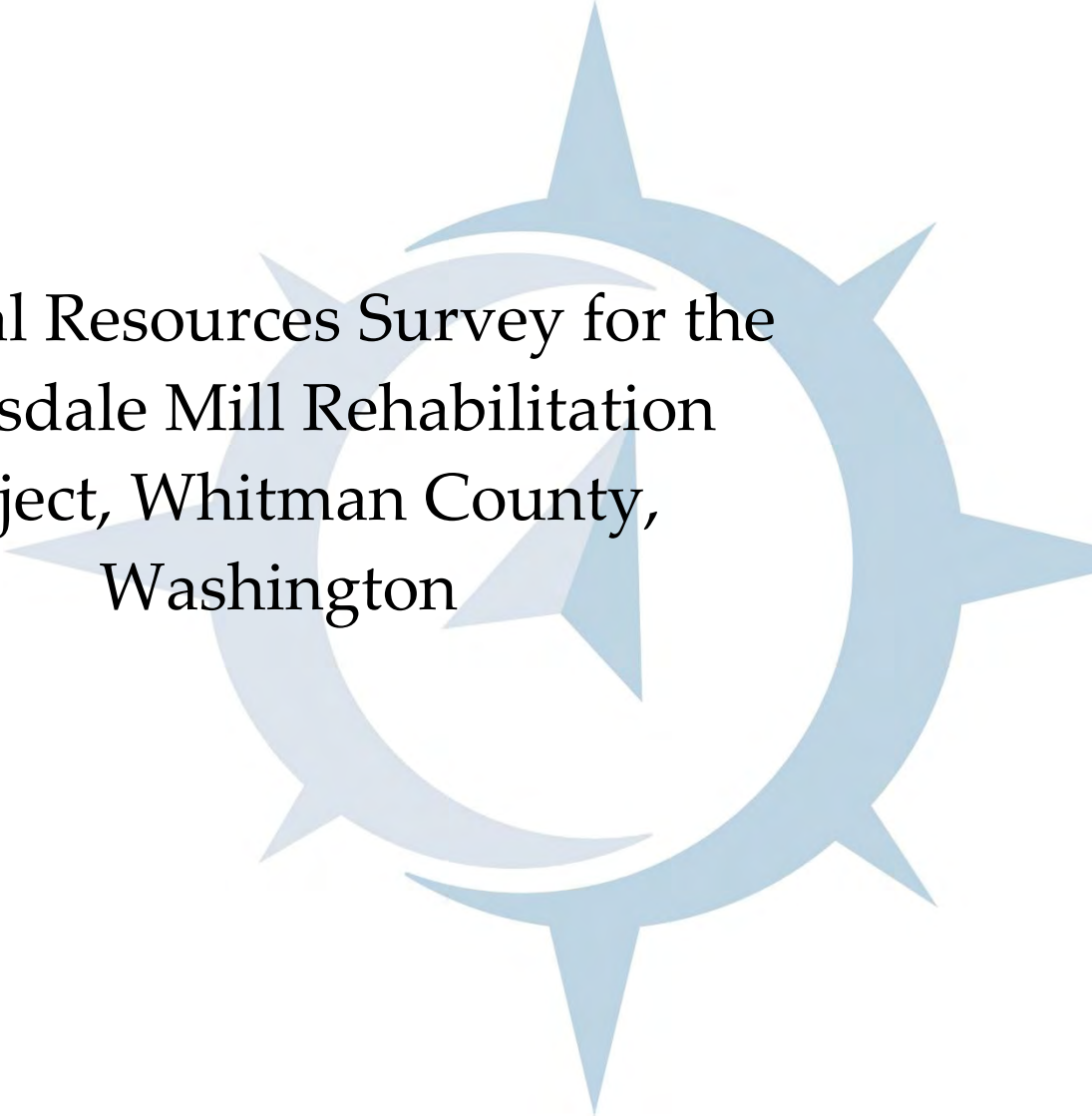
TCP(s) found? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Replace a draft? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Satisfy a DAHP Archaeological Excavation Permit requirement? ☐ Yes # ☒ No

Were Human Remains Found? ☐ Yes DAHP Case # ☒ No

DAHP Archaeological Site #:
45WT00141 (15687)



Cultural Resources Survey for the Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington

By:

Josh L. Espen, J. Fone, Jeff Creighton, Justin Fitzpatrick,
and David A. Harder



May 2026

ABSTRACT

Cultural Resources Survey for the Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington

The Port of Whitman has received Community Economic Revitalization Board funding to assist with rehabilitation efforts of the Oakesdale Flour Mill. The project will include the replacement of the roof and construction of utilities on the property in the initial phase. As such, the Port of Whitman has requested a cultural resource survey and architectural history inventory of the Oakesdale Flour Mill property to assist in the current and future phases of this rehabilitation project. The area of potential impact covers approximately 1.8 acres and lies in Section 22 of Township 19 North, Range 44 East, Willamette Meridian.

As the project is being financed by the Community Economic Revitalization Board using state funds, this cultural resources survey is being performed to meet the requirements of Governor's Executive Order 21-02 and consider potential impacts to historic properties prior to project implementation.

Pre-field research included the review of known archaeological resources within a 1.0-mile radius of the area of potential impact as inventoried at the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. This review was completed using Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's secure electronic database known as the Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data. This database includes recorded archaeological resources, historic property inventories, National Register of Historic Properties and Washington Heritage Register properties, identified cemeteries, and previously conducted cultural resource surveys found throughout the state. The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's predictive model places the area of potential impact in an area of "Moderate Risk" for encountering cultural resources, stating that "survey is recommended" for this location.

The fieldwork was completed in a manner consistent with RCW 27.53.030 and included inspection techniques to identify both surface and subsurface archaeological resources. Plateau CRM archaeologists conducted a pedestrian survey and excavated five subsurface probes. The pedestrian survey covered the entire area of potential impact and subsurface probes were dispersed throughout. No precontact or historic-era cultural materials or features were identified during the pedestrian survey or subsurface testing. A Plateau CRM architectural historian evaluated the Barron, J.C., Flour Mill (15687) and recommends that the resource is eligible only under Criterion A due to the historical importance of the mill to the town of Oakesdale. Due to the demolishing of buildings associated with the mill, Plateau CRM recommends that the mill is not eligible anymore under Criterion C. The elimination of the steam plant in 2021 and applied corrugated metal siding over the original board and batten on the warehouse structure has greatly diminished the integrity of the mills original architecture. As such, any changes to the interior or exterior of the building will not affect the historical importance of the building. Plateau CRM recommends **that the undertaking will have no adverse effects to historic properties.**

KEY INFORMATION**PROJECT**

Cultural Resources Survey for the Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington

REPORT AUTHORS

Josh L. Espen, J. Fone, Jeff Creighton, Justin Fitzpatrick, and David A. Harder

COUNTY

Whitman County

LEGAL LOCATION OF PROJECT

Section 22 of Township 19 North, Range 44 East, Willamette Meridian

USGS QUADS

Oakesdale, 1964 (1991) 7.5 minute, Washington

ACREAGE

1.8 acres

PROJECT DATA

One previously recorded historic property
No new cultural resources located and/or recorded

DAHP PROJECT NUMBER

2026-02-01210

MANAGING AGENCY

Community Economic Revitalization Board

REPORT PREPARED FOR

Port of Whitman

FIELD NOTE DISPOSITION

Archived at the office of Plateau CRM, Pullman.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

David A. Harder, M.A.

CERTIFICATION OF RESULTS

I certify that this investigation was conducted and documented according to Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines and that the report is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature

May 5, 2026

Date

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Port of Whitman is preparing to rehabilitate the Oakesdale Flour Mill, located in Whitman County, Washington (Figure 1). The initial phase of the project will include replacing the roof and constructing utilities on the property. Anticipated impacts include excavations, compaction of sediments, and other ground-disturbing construction activities. The area of potential impact covers approximately 1.75 acres and lies within Section 22 of Township 19 North, Range 44 East, Willamette Meridian (Figure 2). The area of potential impact hereafter will be referred to as the "Project Area."

The project is being financed by the Community Economic Revitalization Board using state funds. As such, the cultural resources survey is being performed to meet the requirements of Governor's Executive Order 21-02 and consider potential impacts to historic properties prior to project implementation.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES FOR SURVEY

The cultural resources survey for the Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project is intended to identify potential historic properties, including archaeological and built environment cultural resources, within the Project Area prior to execution of the proposed project. The pre-field research is designed to identify any known historic properties, including archaeological sites and isolates; historic property inventories of buildings, structures, and historic districts; and cemeteries located in or near the Project Area. Fieldwork procedures are intended to identify areas of moderate to high probability for such cultural resources, previously recorded or otherwise. This report describes the pre-field research, methodology, results, and recommendations for the cultural resources aspect of the proposed project.

PRE-FIELD RESEARCH

Pre-field research included the review of known archaeological resources within a 1.0-mile (mi) (1.6-kilometer [km]) radius of the Project Area as inventoried at the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) in Olympia, Washington. This review was completed using DAHP's secure electronic database known as the Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data (WISAARD). This database includes recorded archaeological resources, historic property inventories (HPIs), properties and districts on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the Washington Heritage Register (WHR), identified cemeteries, and previously conducted cultural resource surveys found throughout the state.

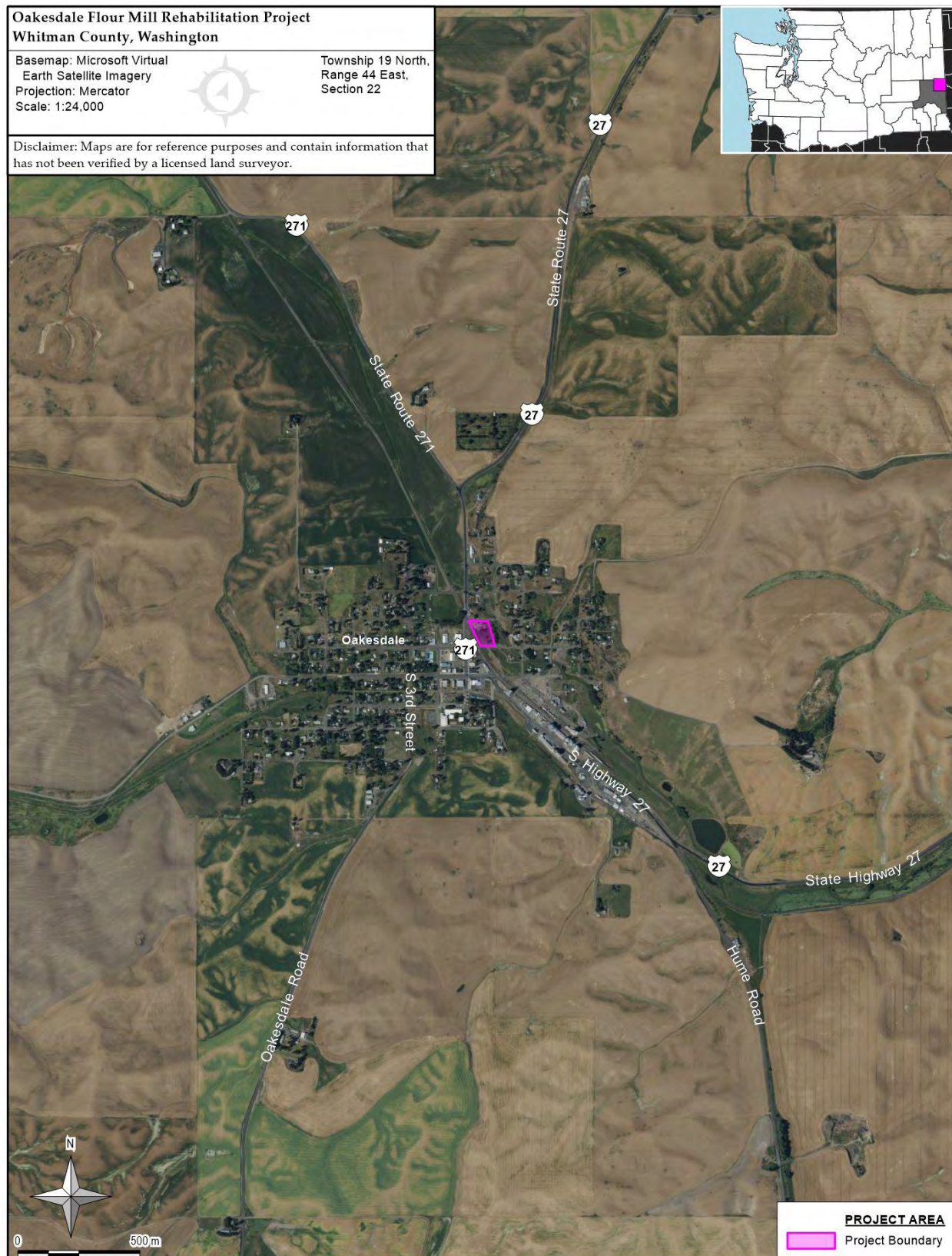


Figure 1. The location of the Project Area within Whitman County.

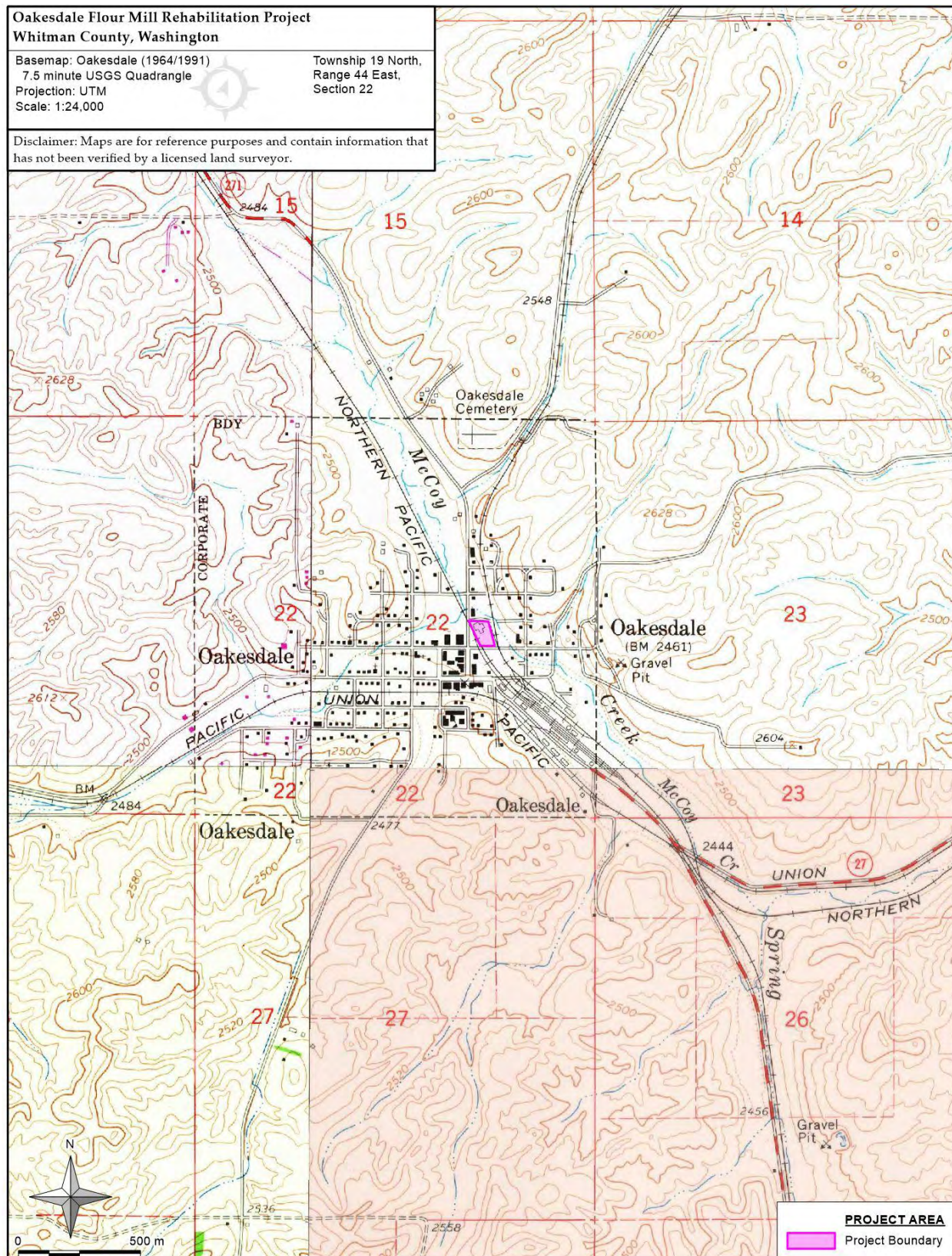


Figure 2. The Project Area shown on a portion of the Oakesdale USGS maps.

Plateau CRM also conducted cartographic analysis of landform, topography, proximity to water using topographic maps, and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) online soil survey. Secondary historic resources, on file at the DAHP and the Plateau CRM office in Pullman, were consulted to identify other potential historic resources. In addition, available surveys, overview reports, and ethnographic accounts of the region were consulted. This background review allows for the identification of previously recorded historic and archaeological resources within or near the Project Area.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project Area is within the Columbia Basin, situated between the Rocky Mountain and Cascade Mountain ranges (Figure 3). The region consists of gently rolling hills amidst the Channeled Scablands, features that were scoured by Pleistocene-era mega-floods. The resultant landforms range in size from small stream-like trenches to large coulees measuring miles wide and hundreds of feet deep. Elevations in this region range between 200 feet (ft) (61 meters [m]) above mean sea level (AMSL) near the Columbia River to over 4,500 ft (1,372 m) AMSL in outlying ridges and low mountains (Fenneman 1946; Hunt 1967).

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (2026), the Project Area contains one soil type: Caldwell silt loam.

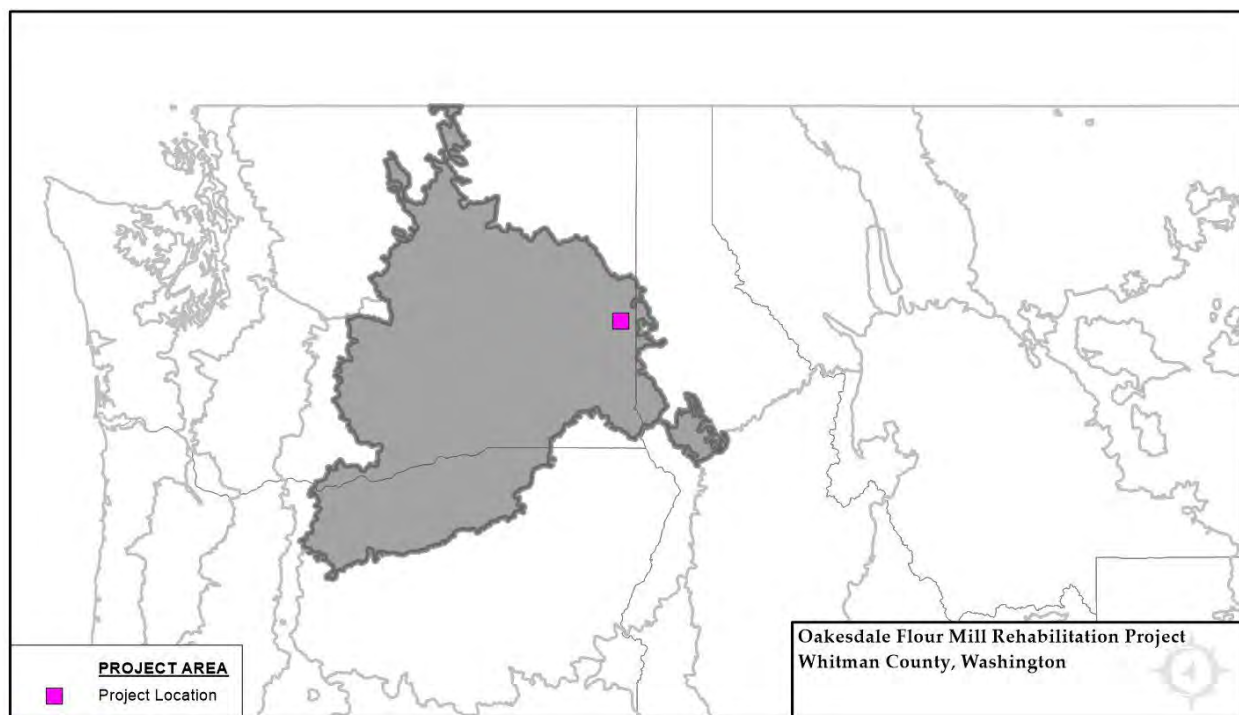


Figure 3. The Project Area shown within the Columbia Basin ecoregion.

Table 1. NRCS Soil Descriptions within Project Area.

Soil Name	Parent Material	Horizons	% P/A
Caldwell silt loam	Alluvium derived from loess	Horizon I (0–26 inches [in]): silt loam Horizon II (26–61 in): silty clay loam	100%

The predominant draw for Native American and Euroamerican populations in this region was, and still is, the extensive river systems. The most significant environmental feature is the Columbia River, which flows for more than 1,200 mi (2,000 km) from the base of the Canadian Rockies in southeastern British Columbia to the Pacific Ocean at Astoria, Oregon and drains a 259,000 mi² (431,670 km²) basin. Ten major tributaries—the Cowlitz, Deschutes, Kootenay, Lewis, Okanogan, Spokane, Snake, Wenatchee, Willamette, and Yakima Rivers—complete the drainage system. The Project Area is adjacent to the west of McCoy Creek. Numerous minor streams and canals are beyond 1.0 mi from the Project Area.

The vegetation around the Project Area falls within the *Festuca idahoensis*-*Symphoricarpos albus* habitat type, characterized by a grassland steppe (Daubenmire 1970; Taylor 1992). Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*) and common snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) are dominant in this environment. The plant community includes Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa Pratensis*), Nootka rose (*Rosa nutkana*), Woods' rose (*Rosa woodsii*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum*), prairie Junegrass (*Koeleria cristata*), miner's lettuce (*Montia perfoliata*), and maiden blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia parviflora*) (Daubenmire 1970). Many of these plants have been incorporated by Native American peoples as medicine, food, and other applications.

The Project Area lies within a region that historically contained an abundance of life. It is likely, though, that in the past Native Americans had access to a larger variety of species that were integrated into indigenous lifeways, settlement, and travel patterns in relation to the Project Area. Common animals and their names in Latin and *Snchitsu'umshtsn*, the language traditionally spoken by the Coeur d'Alene people, are presented in Table 2.

The climate in the Columbia Basin was cool and moist at the end of the last glacial period. Climatic conditions gradually became warmer and drier by approximately 9,000 years before present (B.P.). The warm and dry climatic trend reached its peak around 6,500 B.P. Conditions subsequently reverted to a cooler and moister regime (Fryxell and Daugherty 1962). The present climate is comparably arid with mild moist winters and hot dry summers (Meinig 1968). The mean seasonal temperatures recorded at the Rosalia weather station (#457180) between 1893 and 2012 are 30.3° Fahrenheit (F) in winter and 64.4°F in the summer. Extreme temperatures of -29°F and 112°F have been recorded at the same station. Yearly precipitation averages 17.86 in (Western Regional Climate Center 2026).

Table 2. Common Animals in the Vicinity of the Project Area.

<i>Snchitsu'umshtsn</i>	Common Name	Latin Name
Available Animals		
<i>k'wit'e'n</i>	sagebrush vole	<i>Lemmys curtatus</i>
<i>k'wit'e'n</i>	Great Basin pocket mice	<i>Perognathus parvus</i>
<i>k'wit'e'n</i>	deer mice	<i>Peromyscus maniculatus</i>
<i>k'wit'e'n</i>	bushy-tailed wood rat	<i>Neotoma cinerea</i>
<i>sich'</i>	Washington ground squirrel	<i>Spermophilus washingtoni</i>
<i>pu'lye or spetep</i>	northern pocket gopher	<i>Thomomys talpoides</i>
<i>s-ch-'i'm</i>	yellow-bellied marmot	<i>Marmota flaviventris</i>
	white-tailed hare	<i>Lepus townsendii</i>
<i>sqwitsEmsh</i>	Nuttall cottontail	<i>Sylvilagus nuttalli</i>
<i>sni'tsla'wasqn, s-k'u-k'we'l, or sku'k'we'l</i>	porcupine	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>
<i>hnmulshench</i>	beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>
<i>sqwitsEmsh</i>	muskrat	<i>Ondatra zibethica</i>
<i>qhweLqhwaL or Sip</i>	big horn sheep	<i>Ovis canadensis</i>
<i>st'maltmsh; tsulm</i>	bison	<i>Bison bison</i>
Predators		
<i>smiyiw or s'm'm'yi'w</i>	coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>
<i>p'ech'n'</i>	bobcat	<i>Lynx rufus</i>
<i>yaqhyaqut.shen</i>	badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>
<i>stq'wEsu'm</i>	long-tailed weasel	<i>Mustela frenata</i>
Fowl and Game Birds		
<i>sk'waqhl'u'</i>	Dusky Grouse	<i>Dendragapus obscurus pallidus</i>
<i>sk'waqhl'u'</i>	Columbian Ruffed Grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus affinis</i>
<i>sk'waqhl'u'</i>	Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse	<i>Pedioecetes phasianellus</i>
<i>sk'waqhl'u'</i>	Greater Sage Grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus phaios</i>
<i>qhwaqhwat</i>	Mallard Duck	<i>Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos</i>
Not available	Western Harlequin Duck	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus pacificus</i>
Not available	American Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser americanus</i>
<i>s(ihent, s(ihnt, sq'weq'walqw, or tqEmish</i>	Lesser Snow Goose	<i>Chen hyperborea hyperborea</i>
<i>hn'm'ma'ma'mts'm, hn'm'ma'ma'mts'n, or sq'weq'walqw</i>	Great Basin Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis moffitti</i>
Summer Fowl and Game Birds		
Not available	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>
Not available	Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>
Not available	Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>
Not available	Northern Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxjura jamaicensis rubida</i>
Winter Fowl and Game Birds		
Not available	Canvasback	<i>Aythya valisineria</i>
Not available	American Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila nearctica</i>

REGIONAL PRECONTACT BACKGROUND

The Project Area is included in the Plateau culture area, which corresponds roughly to the geographic region drained by the Fraser, Columbia, and Snake Rivers. The Plateau culture area is bordered on the west by the Cascade Mountains and on the east by the Rocky Mountains. The northern border of the culture area is in Canada where it gives way to Arctic culture patterns. The southern border of the Plateau culture area mixes gradually with the Great Basin culture area (Walker 1998:1–3).

A cultural chronology provides a timeline describing the adaptation, material culture, subsistence, and sometimes settlement patterns of the people who inhabit a specific area. A culture chronology for the eastern Plateau was compiled by Roll and Hackenberger (1998), which covers the 9,000 years of human occupation within the area created by the drainage systems of the Kootenai, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Clearwater, and Salmon Rivers. While variation is exhibited between the drainages (specifically the Salmon and Clearwater which support anadromous fish populations, and the Kootenai, Pend Oreille, and Spokane [above Spokane Falls] which do not contain anadromous fish species) three overarching phases were defined for the Eastern Plateau as a whole: the Early Prehistoric (6,000 to 3,000 B.P.), the Middle Prehistoric (3,000 to 1,500 B.P.), and the Late Prehistoric (1,500 to 200 B.P.). The culture chronology of the eastern Plateau has been discussed at length in Roll and Hackenberger (1998), and, if pertinent, will be discussed further within the results of this report.

ETHNOGRAPHY

Ethnographic sources that depict the geographic distribution of Native American traditional territories provide a general guide for identifying the range of occupation for Indigenous groups in the precontact and historic eras. However, these boundaries are oversimplified and should not be viewed as rigid considering that they are arbitrarily defined, with sharp lines that neither depict joint or disputed inhabitation, nor historical changes in range distributions prior to and after the early- to mid-nineteenth century (Walker, ed. 1998:viii). While these ethnographic sources provide a baseline for recognizing the ancestral homes of the groups that originally inhabited the Project Area, it is important to recognize the variability in the geographic distribution of groups on the Plateau and the broader relationships between people and place that make these boundaries permeable (see Thom 2009:179). According to the DAHP, the Project Area is in an "area of interest" for the the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe of Indians, the Nez Perce Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR), and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (Yakama Nation) (DAHP 2026a).

The Project Area falls within the traditional territories of the Coeur d'Alene and Spokane tribes.

Coeur d'Alene

The Project Area lies within the traditional territory of the Coeur d'Alene people. The Coeur d'Alene call themselves the *Schitsu'umsh*, translated "The Discovered People" or "those who are found here" (Coeur d'Alene Tribe 2010). The name, Coeur d'Alene, was generated by the local French fur traders and was applied to Chief Stellum, delineating his harsh bartering methods as having a "Heart of an Awl" (Coeur d'Alene Tribe 2010; Stevens 1955).

Traditional Coeur d'Alene territory included four million acres of rolling Palouse prairie, foothills, mountains, and valleys (Frey 2001:7). Frey's (2001:7) Coeur d'Alene ethnography delineates western boundaries, as sanctioned by Coeur d'Alene Tribal Council, as beginning at the Spokane River continuing south along Hangman (Latah) Creek and Pine Creek drainages, to Steptoe Butte, Washington.

The Coeur d'Alene are grouped into three divisions: Spokane River and Lake Coeur d'Alene division (17 villages); the Coeur d'Alene River division (12 villages); and the St. Joe River division (nine villages) (Palmer 1998:313). Ray (1936:130–133) lists 34 villages within Coeur d'Alene territory. Boas and Teit (1930) list a total of 33 villages: six villages along the St. Joe River, 11 villages along the Coeur d'Alene River, and 16 villages along the Spokane River—Lake Coeur d'Alene.

Hunting, fishing, and gathering were practiced, and productivity was maximized through various land management practices such as burning, pruning, harvest timing, and access regulation by bands. Late summer was spent in upstream meadows of the Coeur d'Alene, St. Joe, and Palouse river drainages digging camas. Fall was spent huckleberry picking, hunting, and fishing in the uplands. During winter, people congregated in the lowlands for hunting, fish trapping, and ice fishing (Palmer 1998:315).

Sprague (2005:41) notes that the Coeur d'Alene had the greatest variety of watercraft of any Plateau group. Ethnographic accounts recognized several types of bark-covered canoes, including the flat keel sturgeon nose, curved keel sturgeon nose, and the Kalispel variant of the sturgeon-nose; the Kutenai "Eastern" type elk hide canoe; dugout canoe; tule rafts; and bull boats. Watercraft were used for basic transportation, fishing, hunting, and gathering resources such as the water potato (*Sagittaria latifolia*), which grows in soft mud underwater. Canoes were used in fun pastimes, such as canoe racing and tipping, which in turn strengthened "canoe fighting" (warfare) skills (Sprague 2005:52). The importance of the canoe is emphasized in death as it is pounded on to announce a death, much like a church bell. Fragments of canoes were used as burial markers, and the canoe makes an appearance in religion and legends—most notable is the star constellation called "the canoe" (Sprague 2005:53).

Following the introduction of the horse on the Plateau, the Coeur d'Alene actively sought to acquire many of the animals (Cebula 2003:28). Herds of horses soon became symbols of wealth and status; they eased communication, and enabled transport to and from far distant buffalo

hunting grounds, leading to absence during the late fall and early spring months (Palmer 1998:315). Eventually the open prairies of the Palouse became far more suitable than the forested reaches of Lake Coeur d'Alene for equestrian life (Cebula 2003:30). Over time, horse rearing centered on the Hangman and Palouse river regions (Frey 2001:53).

The smallpox epidemic seems to have appeared among the Coeur d'Alene in 1780 when they were reported to have a population of 3,000–4,000. The population was ravaged by the epidemic, and by 1853 the Tribe reportedly numbered 320 people. By 1905 the population had steadily climbed to 494 individuals. Tribal enrollment in 2020 totaled 2,554 people (U.S. Department of Energy 2024).

Chief Circling Raven's prophecy of black robes carrying sticks was realized when the Coeur d'Alene heard of the Jesuit Priests. In 1842 Pierre Jean de Smet came to the area, and in November Father Nicolas Point was sent to introduce Catholicism and begin the Sacred Heart Mission. The mission was first located along the St. Joe River, then moved north to Cataldo in 1850 where the structure built by Father Anthony Ravalli and the Coeur d'Alene still stands (Frey 2001:65).

Cebula (2003:108) states the Jesuit priests aimed to convert Coeur d'Alene shaman as they had great ability in influencing tribal members. Coeur d'Alene Catholic converts visited various shaman's lodges speaking persuasion. Many Coeur d'Alene, such as Chief Peter Moctelme, followed the advice of the Catholic Fathers to farm, accruing large expanses of cultivated land that would later be taken away in 1905 and 1906 with the Dawes Allotment Act of 1891 (Ruby and Brown 1981:268).

The Executive Order of 1873, signed by President Ulysses S. Grant, began a series of land relinquishments by the Coeur d'Alene. Reservation boundaries were delineated as 590,000 acres. An 1891 act further reduced sovereign lands to 400,000 acres. In 1894, the federal government reimbursed the Coeur d'Alene Tribe \$15,000 for a one-mile strip of land east of Lake Coeur d'Alene, where squatters had formed the town of Harrison. The Allotment Act of 1910 again reduced land ownership to some 104,000 acres. In 1908 and 1911, the Coeur d'Alene residents of southern Lake Coeur d'Alene were evicted, and the \$11,000 compensation was used by the state to develop Heyburn State Park. Currently 70,000 acres are owned by the Tribe and Tribal members, within a reservation boundary of some 345,000 acres of sovereign land inclusive of the town centers of Benewah, DeSmet, Plummer, Sanders, Tensed, and Worley (Coeur d'Alene Tribe 2010).

Spokane

The Project Area falls within lands traditionally occupied by the Spokane Indians, speakers of a dialect of Interior Salish, a language shared with neighboring Coeur d'Alene, Kalispel, Pend d'Oreille, and Flathead groups (Ross 1998). Three bands of Spokane lived in eastern Washington: Lower Spokane, with a principal settlement near Little Falls; Middle Spokane, occupying Hangman or Latah Creek; and Upper Spokane, who lived along the Little Spokane River and upriver from the junction of Hangman Creek. Ross (1998:271) notes that the Middle and Upper Spokane considered themselves "all one people," and distinguished themselves from the Lower Spokane. The Coeur d'Alene (*Schitsu'umsh*) tribal territory traditionally extended from the southern end of Lake Pend Orielle in the north, along the Bitterroot Range of Montana in the east, to the Palouse River and the North Fork of the Clearwater River in the south, to Steptoe Butte and up to just east of Spokane Falls in the west (Frey 2000). This territory extended over the drainage and headwaters of the Spokane River (Palmer 1998).

Traditionally, food procurement activities and the establishment of villages followed a seasonal pattern. Winter habitation sites were occupied during the coldest months of the year, and likely were in place by mid- to late-October. In the subsequent four to five months, stored foods and game were the primary sources of food. In early spring, when winter supplies began to dwindle, people began making forays to gather emergent root crops (Nelson 1973). Spring, summer, and fall root and berry gathering, as well as hunting and resource processing, took place at areas away from winter villages. Task groups often went to specific areas to hunt, to quarry tool stone, to collect berries, or to gather other resources such as tules to make mats (Aikens 1993:90). The predictability of salmon runs provided a valuable resource for immediate and stored use (Schalk 1977). By the end of summer, reserves of dried salmon and prepared roots were stocked for the winter. The diet of the Spokane people included food gathered along the banks of the Spokane and Columbia rivers (Spokane Tribe of Indians 2024). Salmon, steelhead, eel, and shellfish made up to 60% of their diet (Spokane Tribe of Indians 2024).

Ethnographically, the Spokane lived in three types of settlements: permanent winter villages; temporary summer and fall villages; and task-specific summer encampments for hunting, plant gathering, and mineral and lithic exploitation (Ross 1998:272). Winter villages, located along the Spokane River, included hunting grounds, resource gathering areas, burial grounds, and sacred sites. Conical semi-subterranean pit houses were constructed for winter villages using poles covered with layers of tule mats or a permanent double-apsidal lodge with an inverted V pole construction covered with tule mats. Summer fishing villages supported relatively large polyglot populations that came together to fish, trade, and entertain. Temporary villages were comprised of many families and were located in seasonal resource areas. Smaller temporary tule mat structures were used in summer villages and encampments (Ross 1998).

For the Spokane, fishing commenced in May at several major fisheries along the Spokane River (Ross 1998). Set nets, traps, leisters, harpoons, hooks, gaffs, and dip nets were used. In sections of narrow streams, crushed granite was used to line stream beds to afford better visibility. In the winter, the Spokane used snowshoes, toboggans, and frozen animal hides to transport heavy

loads. The introduction of the horse in the mid-eighteenth century greatly increased their mobility and changed their socioeconomic patterns. Now they were able to travel greater distances and carry heavier loads, as well as having contact with remote Native American cultures.

Following the establishment of the Oregon Territory in 1848 and Washington Territory in 1853, tensions increased between Pacific Northwest tribes and the U.S. Federal Government. In 1858, no treaty existed between the Spokane and the Federal Government, and the incursion of U.S. soldiers into Spokane territory led to violent clashes (Spokane Tribe of Indians 2024). In 1887, President Rutherford B. Hayes established the Spokane Indian Reservation, and the peoples of the Upper and Middle Spokane were ultimately split between the Spokane, Coeur d’Alene, Jocko (Flathead), and Colville Reservations (Spokane Tribe of Indians 2024). By 1951, following the signing of a formal Constitution, the Spokane Tribe of Indians became one of 574 officially recognized tribal governments within the United States (Spokane Tribe of Indians 2024). The government of the Spokane Tribe of Indians is currently located in Wellpinit, Washington, and the tribe contains 2,900 enrolled citizens (Spokane Tribe of Indians 2024).

While ethnographies such as those referenced above provide a useful means of understanding the traditional lifeways of Indigenous peoples, it is important to remember that Indigenous groups were, and continue to be, markedly complex, dynamic, and diverse. Uncritical applications of the ethnographic record to representations of past lifeways have the potential to produce reductionist views of tribes and bands that portray them as homogenous or static. The above depictions of the Coeur d’Alene and Spokane peoples serve as generalized portrayals of the traditional lives of these groups and should be viewed in light of these complexities.

Ethnographically Named Places

A review of ethnographies was undertaken to help identify any known ethnographic locations within or near the Project Area. The works of Angelo Anastasio (1972), William Bischoff (1974), Franz Boas and James Teit (1930), Stuart Chalfant and William Bischoff (1974), Joseph Feathers (1971), Rodney Frey (1995, 2001), Jay Miller (1998), Gary Palmer (1998), Jerome Peltier (1979), Verne F. Ray (1933, 1936, 1939, 1942), Gladys Reichard (1947), John Ross (1998), Robert Ruby and John Brown (1970, 1986), Robert Ruby et al. (2010), Richard Scheuerman and Michael Finley (2008), Joseph Seltice (1949), Mary Eldonna Shaw (1971), Allan Smith (1988), Leslie Spier (1936), Michael Striker (1995), and Deward Walker, Jr. (1978, 1980) were consulted. Scheuerman and Finley (2008) identified one ethnographically named place within 10.0 mi (16.1 km) of the Project Area (Table 3, Figure 4).

Table 3. Ethnographic Locations near the Project Area.

Traditional Name	Translation	Details
Steptoe's Route	not applicable	This route is located approximately 1.0 mi (1.6 km) northeast of the Project Area (Scheuerman and Finley 2008:75).

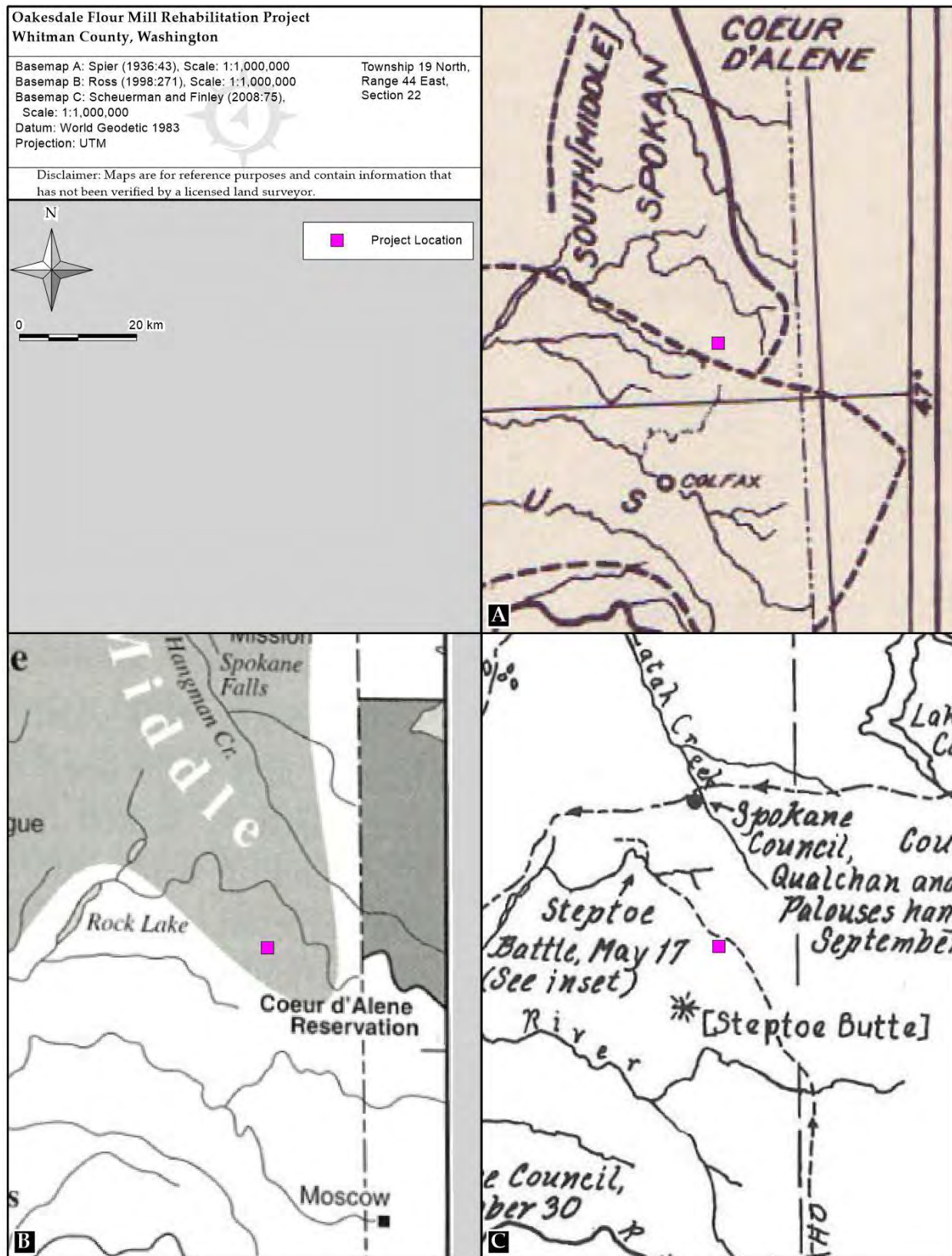


Figure 4. The Project Area shown in relation to ethnographic locations.

It should be noted that place names, landscape narratives, and Traditional Cultural Places (TCPs) are highly sensitive and often sacred. Native American traditional knowledge and landscape narratives are extensive within their traditional territories, which extend well-beyond current reservation boundaries and include the Project Area. Due to the significance of TCPs, as well as their esoteric and sacred importance, and out of genuine and reasonable concern for their safety, tribes often do not share information regarding TCPs, and published materials often do not reveal locations of sensitive properties or narratives. If further review of TCPs is required, it is recommended that one consult with the tribes directly.

TCPs are important for the “role the property plays in a community’s historically rooted beliefs, customs and practices” as stated in the *National Register Bulletin 38* (U.S. Department of the Interior 1990). Although these places can be difficult to identify and evaluate from an etic perspective, an initial search of pertinent publications can be helpful toward identifying the types of properties that may be expected. The *National Register Bulletin 38* goes on to state that “examples of properties possessing such significance include:

- a location associated with the traditional beliefs of a Native American group about its origins, its cultural history, or the nature of the world;
- a rural community whose organization, buildings and structures, or patterns of land use reflect the cultural traditions valued by its long-term residents;
- an urban neighborhood that is the traditional home of a particular cultural group, and that reflects its beliefs and practices;
- a location where Native American religious practitioners have historically gone, and are known or thought to go today, to perform ceremonial activities in accordance with traditional cultural rules of practice; and
- a location where a community has traditionally carried out economic, artistic, or other cultural practices important in maintaining its historic identity.”

REGIONAL HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The Palouse Prairie physiographic region is located in southeastern Washington and northwestern Idaho and is characterized by rolling hills on deep deposits of loess (Bailey 2004; Palouse Prairie 2023) (Figure#5). The west side is bounded by the flatter terrain of the Columbia Basin with its shallow soil and on the east by the forests of northern Idaho as they climb up into the Bitterroot Mountains. On the north, the region is bounded by the change in vegetation and shallower soils west of Lake Coeur d'Alene and on the south by the rising landscape of the Blue Mountains (Palouse Prairie 2023; Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2017). The major waterways include the Palouse River, Latah Creek, Rock Creek, Union Flat Creek, the Snake River, and the Clearwater River. The region includes all or portions of five counties in Washington, including Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, Spokane, and Whitman, and seven counties in Idaho, including Benewah, Clearwater, Idaho, Kootenai, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, and Spokane. The major towns and cities include Clarkston, Colfax, Dayton, and Pullman in Washington and Grangeville, Lapwai, Lewiston, and Moscow in Idaho.

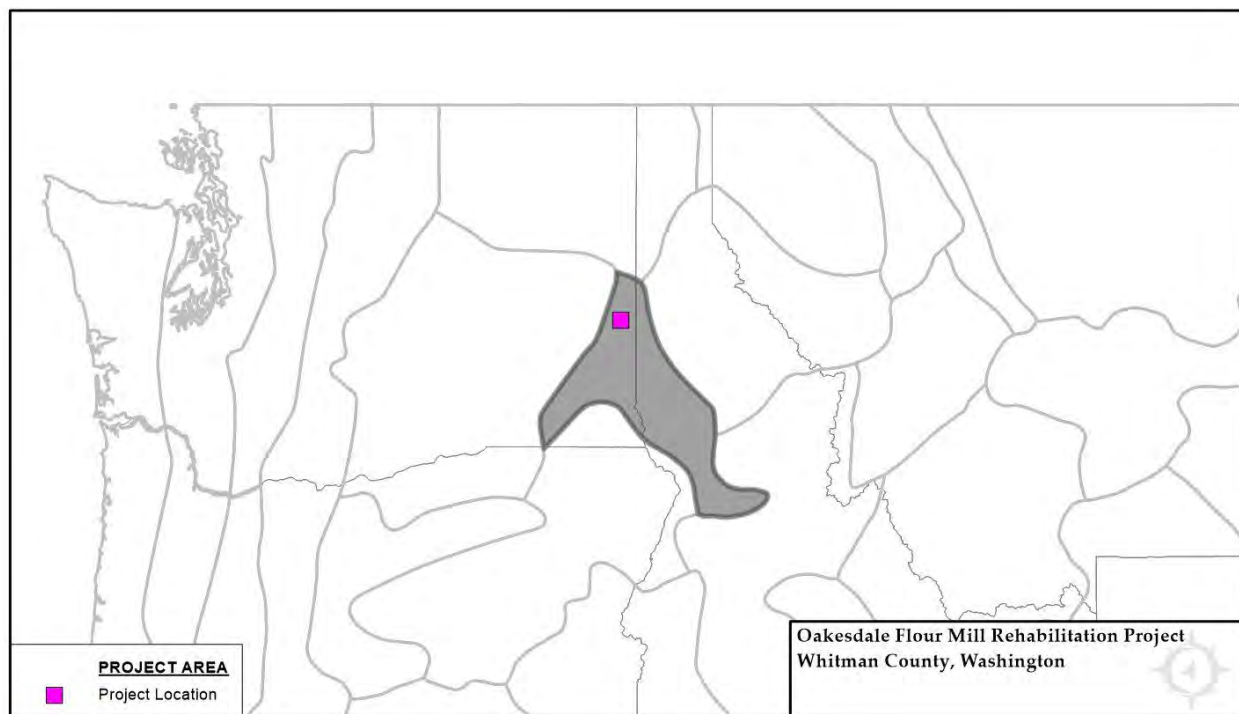


Figure 5. The Project Area within the Palouse Prairie physiographic region (Bailey 2004).

The Palouse Prairie region is home to the Coeur d'Alene Reservation and the Nez Perce Reservation, although it is recognized that numerous other bands and tribes traditionally shared the use of the region for hunting, gathering, fishing, and travel. The Coeur d'Alene Reservation covers 345,000 acres and is headquartered in Plummer, Idaho (Coeur d'Alene Tribe 2023a). The Nez Perce Reservation covers 770,000 acres in a checkerboard system and is headquartered in Lapwai, Idaho (Nez Perce Tribe 2023). The Palus people who lived in the Palouse Prairie region prior to the 1850s were included in the treaty between the Yakama and the U. S. Government as well as the treaty between the Colville and the U. S. Government. Their descendants live on both reservations (Johnson 2021; Yakama Nation 2023).

It is likely that the first indirect contact with Europeans came through the introduction of the horse from tribes south of the Columbia Basin in the late 1600s which fundamentally changed the way of life for people in the region (Meinig 1968:24). The Corps of Discovery expedition passed through the Palouse Prairie in 1805–1806 as they paddled the Clearwater River and Snake River (National Park Service [NPS] 2023a). They were most likely the first direct contact between Native Americans and Euroamericans in the region, although diseases such as smallpox had circulated as early as the sixteenth century (Meinig 1968:26; Walker and Sprague 1998:138). In addition, Euroamerican goods such as horses, beads, coins, and copper kettles among other things, were already part of the material culture by 1805 (Walker and Sprague 1998:138).

After the Corps of Discovery came the fur traders in 1812 when Donald McKenzie and Wilson P. Hunt passed through the region on their way to Astoria on the Pacific coast (Walker and Sprague 1998:142; NPS 2020a). They established a short-lived fur trading post at the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater rivers, but the lack of abundance of fur bearing animals in the region and the reluctance of the Nez Perce to catch pelts in exchange for Euroamerican goods caused it to be abandoned only a year later (Walker and Sprague 1998:142; NPS 2020a). No other fur or trading posts were established until later in the 1800s.

The earliest missionaries in the Palouse Prairie region were most likely Henry and Eliza Spalding who established a Presbyterian mission in 1836 near Lapwai Creek in Idaho with the help of the Nez Perce (NPS 2023b; Drury 1986:226-227). Spalding focused on teaching Christianity, farming, and animal husbandry to the Nez Perce (NPS 2023b). However, the mission was abandoned in 1847 after the massacre of the Whitmans, fellow missionaries, at Waiilatpu near Walla Walla, Washington, a little over 100 miles to the west (NPS 2023b; Walker and Sprague 1998:146). In 1867, Father Cataldo established St. Joseph's mission in Slickpoo, Idaho, the first Roman Catholic presence in the region, which operated until it closed in 1958 (NPS 2020b).

Washington Territory was created in 1853 out of the much larger Oregon Territory (Beckham 1998:151). Newly appointed Governor Isaac Stevens negotiated treaties with several tribes at Walla Walla including the Nez Perce in 1855 (Beckham 1998:151). The treaty, ratified in 1859, preserved their traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering rights as well as created a reservation for them (Nez Perce Tribe 2003:40-41; Beckham 1998; Walker 1998). In that treaty, the Nez Perce ceded approximately 5.5 million acres, retaining a 7.5-million-acre reservation that was to be

protected from Euroamerican trespass and settlement (Nez Perce Tribe 2003:41; Slickpoo and Walker 1973). However, gold was discovered east of the Cascades, prompting Governor Stevens to open the reserved lands to afford miners passage and access to the newfound resources (Beckham 1998:152-153). Conflict ensued, starting a cycle of violent confrontations between the U.S. military and Native Americans that finally ceased in 1858 with definitive defeats of the tribes by the U.S. Army and subsequent destruction of horses and winter supplies (Beckham 1998:153-155). Ultimately, more than a dozen Native Americans were hanged by U.S. Army Colonel Wright at a place on Latah Creek (Lambeth 2023a).

Gold was discovered on Nez Perce lands in 1860 near Orofino Creek prompting another gold rush (Beckham 1998:157). Prospectors violated the treaty again, crossing Nez Perce land, creating further conflict (Beckham 1998:157). The cities of Orofino and Lewiston, Idaho were both established as a result of the gold rush (Nez Perce County Historical Society and Museum 2023). In 1863, the Nez Perce reservation lands were further reduced to 750,000 acres, to satisfy the newly arrived Euroamerican settlers (Beckham 1998; Nez Perce Tribe 2003; Walker 1998). A third Executive Order by President Ulysses S. Grant in 1873, set aside land for the Chief Joseph band but failed to satisfy their needs (Flanagan 1999:80), setting the stage for a tragic confrontation. After battles at such places on the Palouse Prairie as White Bird Canyon, Chief Joseph and his people were apprehended (Walker 1998d:435; Nez Perce Tribe 2003:48). After eight years in exile and captivity in Oklahoma the Nez Perce were freed. Approximately half of the prisoners returned to the reservation in Idaho, while Chief Joseph and others accepted Chief Moses' invitation to live on the Colville Reservation in Washington. Others lived on the Umatilla Reservation. Many of the survivors had to change their names due to threats of violence towards them and their families by the U.S. military (Nez Perce Tribe 2003:48).

Ulysses S. Grant established a reservation for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe by Executive Order in 1873 (Palmer 1998:322). In exchange for 600,000 acres of their own, the Coeur d'Alene ceded 2.2 million acres (Palmer 1998:322). However, not until a second agreement was negotiated between 1887 and 1889 did the Coeur d'Alene receive compensation for and title to a slightly smaller 598,000-acre reservation and cede three million acres (Palmer 1998:322; University of Idaho [UI] 2023a). The Upper and Middle bands of the neighboring Spokane Tribe were invited to settle on the new reservation, although most of them chose to live on the Spokane Reservation (UI 2023a; Spokane Tribe of Indians 2018:7).

The Mullan Road was completed in 1861 (Lambeth 2023b). It was the first wagon road across the northern Rocky Mountains and passed through the Palouse Prairie on its way southwest from the northern tip of Lake Coeur d'Alene to Fort Walla Walla at the mouth of the Snake River (Lambeth 2023b). It served the region as a path for immigrants, miners, and settlers, and for moving goods to market until the advent of the railroad in 1869 when the Mullan Road was decommissioned (Lambeth 2023b).

The Palouse Prairie region was settled by Euroamericans concurrent with the treaty period. Gold in the east of the region brought miners and prospectors. The fertile soil in the central and western part of the region brought farmers, ranchers, and timber men. Wheat growing spread to the Palouse soon after the Whitmans cultivated seeds they'd brought to their mission near Walla Walla, Washington in 1838 (Kershner 2018). The first wheat crop was raised in the Touchet Valley in 1861 (Kershner 2018). Once it was realized that wheat grew well in the same places that native bunchgrass did, the Palouse became a primary wheat growing region (Kershner 2018). Wheat was taken by wagon loads south to barges on the Columbia River and north to the Montana gold fields along the Mullan Road (Kershner 2018).

The wheat business prompted the invention of the combine in 1890, a single piece of equipment that cut the grain, separated it from the stalk, and sacked it (Kershner 2018). The rolling hills of the Palouse spurred the further invention of the side-hill leveler, which allowed the header to adjust to the slope and reduced the likelihood of tipping over (Kershner 2018). These machines were drawn by huge teams of 20–60 horses or mules until after WW I when motorized combines became increasingly affordable (Kershner 2018). Advances in fertilizers, reduction in soil erosion, and the development of strains of wheat that resisted disease and increased yield led to Whitman County and neighboring Adams and Lincoln counties in the Columbia Basin to the west to become the highest producing counties in the United States by 1955 (Kershner 2018). Whitman and Lincoln counties continued to be the top wheat producing counties in the U.S. through 2016 (Kershner 2018). Farmers began using lentils as a rotation crop to reduce disease, use less fertilizer, and help control grassy weeds as early as 1937 (Crossley 2021). Lentil production peaked in 1980 and has declined since the introduction of other rotation crops (Crossley 2021).

Sheep and cattle were brought to the region by the Whitmans in 1838 (Rousso 2020). Prior to intensive Euroamerican settlement the Cayuse raised cattle near Walla Walla (Curless 2020). Both kinds of livestock were staples for the settlers' early economy (Rousso 2020; Curless 2020). In 1869 S. M. Waid drove 5,000 head of sheep from Umatilla County, Oregon into the area around Dayton, Washington and settled there (Rousso 2020). Dayton became a hub of range sheep farming where the animals were allowed to graze on open land and then collected once a year for shearing and culling for market (DeRuwe and Ellingson 2009). The Mullan Road was used to drive flocks from the Palouse to summer grazing in Montana, Idaho, or the Blue Mountains (Rousso 2020). After 1900 range land became scarce as it was cultivated for wheat, and cattle ranchers and sheep herders often vied for the same grazing land into the 1930s (Rousso 2020). Overgrazing and loss of bunchgrass habitat became a problem (Rousso 2020). Sheep operators downsized or sold off their herds between the 1950s and 1970s, and sheep are raised only on a small scale in the Palouse Prairie today (Rousso 2020). Cattle raising was similarly scaled down from large herds to small, family farming operations, particularly after WWII (Curless 2020).

The city of Palouse, Washington is one of the oldest communities in the Palouse Prairie region. It was founded in 1874, some years after the arrival of William Ewing in 1869 (Cipalla 2020). For a time, it was the lumber capital of eastern Washington due to the presence of Potlatch Lumber Company and the railroad (Cipalla 2020).

The city of Pullman, Washington was first settled in 1877 by farmers and expanded when the Columbia and Palouse Railway announced a plan to build a line through the town in 1883 (Avery 2015). The first train rolled through town in 1885 (Avery 2015). The Northern Pacific Railroad Company followed with the completion of the Spokane and Palouse Branch line in 1887 (Avery 2015). Abundant water and the establishment of Washington Agricultural College in 1890 brought people to the town and ensured its success (Avery 2015).

The city of Lewiston, Idaho was started at the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater rivers in the wake of Captain E.D. Pierce's discovery of gold in 1860 (Nez Perce County Historical Society and Museum [NPCHSM] 2021). The land was still owned by the Nez Perce Tribe at the time and the presence of a tent city provoked much consternation (NPCHSM 2021). After the Nez Perce were persuaded to accept a reduction in the size of their reservation in 1863 (Beckham 1998:157), Lewiston was free to expand. It became the location of Lewis-Clark State College in 1893, and today, its economy is based on agriculture, lumber, and recreation (Britannica 2023)

Moscow, Idaho was founded in 1871 as Hog Heaven (City of Moscow 2023). The abundance of grassland and availability of timber for building were among the prime attractions. The railroad arrived in 1885, and Moscow was chosen as the site for the University of Idaho in 1889 (City of Moscow 2023). Today, Moscow has a vibrant arts community as well as education, and agriculture contributing to its economic development (City of Moscow 2023).

Today, the economy of the Palouse Prairie is focused on agriculture, education, research, light manufacturing, and healthcare (City of Moscow 2017; Employment Security Department 2023). The Nez Perce Reservation has a vibrant fishery program (McNeel 2013), a casino, tourism, many small businesses, and is developing an alternative energy program (Nez Perce Tribe 2023b). The Coeur d'Alene Tribe relies on logging, tourism, and agriculture and produces wheat, barley, peas, lentils, canola, and Kentucky Blue Grass (Coeur d'Alene Tribe 2023b).

Whitman County

Named for missionaries Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Whitman County was formed in November of 1871 (partitioned from Stevens County to the north). Whitman County is bordered by Spokane County to the north, Adams County to the west, the Snake River to the south, and Idaho to the east. Whitman County's economy is based on agriculture, as it has been from the earliest time of settlement. The region of the Palouse, consisting of Whitman and surrounding counties, is considered to be one of the richest agricultural regions in the state of Washington, with an emphasis on wheat. Today Whitman County ranks amongst the top in wheat production within the nation.

Initially settlement was slow, particularly in the northwest reaches of the county. Most of the population centered in the towns of Pullman and Colfax, with lesser-populated settlements springing up throughout the county after 1876. As in most cases throughout the West, stock raising, and small-scale dry land farming was practiced where large tracts of land could be acquired. Though irrigation would come later, dry land wheat farming was prominent in the

western portion of the county in particular (Lever 1901:185-190). After 1880, crops such as barley, oats, rye, and flax were being grown, while seed peas came into production sometime after 1910. Fruit, including apples, peaches, and plums, could be found along the Snake River drainages and bottomlands, as well as in other parts of the county where irrigation was available.

A branch of the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) was the first railroad to be built in the county in 1883. It was constructed by the Oregon Transcontinental Railway Company and was known at the time as the Columbia and Palouse Railway (Lewty 1995:27). Later in 1886, a branch of the NPRR—originally named Eastern Washington Railway and renamed Spokane and Palouse in the winter of 1886—reached Rosalia, vastly increasing the town's population from a few dozen to over 200. The line originated in Spokane, traveled southwest to the town of Marshall, then south to Rosalia, before continuing on to Oakesdale to the east (Lever 1901:111, 221).

Originally incorporated in 1904 under the name Spokane Interurban System and changed to the Spokane & Inland Empire Railway in 1906, the electrified railway system had lines to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and two lines into the Palouse of Whitman County. A single line ran south out of Spokane, then split at Spring Valley; from there, two lines (the Colfax and Moscow spurs) continued south and southeast, respectively, through the county (Fahey 1994:54-73).

The railway transported both passengers and freight to and from Spokane into the Palouse and became a boon to farm communities along the line. The railway company also supplied electrical power to numerous towns that it served. As Spokane historian John Fahey (1994:67) describes:

The railroad sped country customers to the city in gay spirits on shopping tours, where they thronged stores, restaurants, and theaters. A salesman who once visited two towns in a day now might canvass four or five. City wholesalers delivered orders in one day...The farmer's wife shopped in Spokane and reached home in time to ready supper, bubbling with her urban adventures...For farm families, the railroad erected sheds at trackside where the men tethered horses while they were in Spokane, installed water in pens for animals awaiting shipment, and like other railroads ran instructional trains with lecturers from the colleges.

Oakesdale The town of Oakesdale (originally "Oakdale") was a small ranch community in 1886, but growing rapidly. The first known mention of the community in the local press was a half-page advert in the December issue of *The Commoner*, announcing the opening of the Bargain House, a venture started by M. Kaminsky & Sons, an enterprise that was also involved in the grain warehouse business. The Kaminskys were paying fifty cents for wheat, of which accounted for 140 bushels of grain in 1886 alone (The Commoner 1886).

Other businesses included the Oakes House, consisting of up to a dozen boarding rooms, a harness shop, a postal system as well as a new blacksmith, who is "drawing a trade far and near," and several companies "organized here for boring coal, or whatever may be hidden by mother earth" (The Commoner 1886).

In May of 1888, the town was on the rise with the erection of a new schoolhouse, a large church, and a plethora of other such buildings going up "in all directions." At the same time, surveyors for the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company (OR&N) were locating their roads just outside of town. A correspondent for the *Spokesman-Review* quipped, "Who can any longer doubt that Oakesdale is the coming town of the great Palouse country. It is now the great wheat center" (Spokesman-Review 1888a). The talk of a flouring mill was also discussed, citing that farmers were simply buying flour instead of travelling up to 20 miles to the nearest mill. Indeed, for many it was a foregone conclusion that Oakesdale would be a prime location for such a venture. And at last the railroad. It was announced in November that the OR&N would be constructing a depot within a few days (Spokesman-Review 1888b).

By late November 1888, Oakesdale would be officially incorporated, with city fathers consisting of G. Comeggs, W. Freiner, Dr. Baker, H.H. Selfridge, and the man who donated much of the land for the town, James McCoy.

James McCoy, one of the earliest pioneers to settle in Oakesdale, had taken out a land patent for much of what became the town of Oakesdale (BLM 1890). Born 1829 in Ohio, he would migrate with family to Missouri and by 1853 was enroute to Oregon, taking advantage of the Oregon Land Donation Act. The family located in Benton County Oregon where they continued in farming as well as logging. Still seeking greener pastures, McCoy left Oregon in 1876 for a homestead in Whitman County, that he eventually acquired in 1879 (Spokesman-Review 1913). McCoy would remain in Oakesdale until his death in 1896 at the age of 89 (Lever 1901).

Oakesdale Mill The discussion of acquiring a substantial flouring mill in Oakesdale actually began in 1888, but floundered due to funds. An article in the *Oakesdale Sun* in 1890 was hopeful that a mill would become a reality. Upwards of \$20,000 had been raised, with the hope of that number increasing to \$30,000 to get "a contract closed" (Oakesdale Sun 1890). J G Porter hailing from Harrisburg, Saline County, Illinois would dismantle and send by rail an entire flouring mill. It is not known when the mill was originally constructed in Illinois, but up until its dismantling was functioning (Spokesman Falls Review 1890a).

J G Porter-Oakesdale Flouring Mill-1890-1892 The first we hear of Mr. Porter is his arrival at the Grand Central Hotel in Spokane, Washington, cited in the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* as the "Illinois Excursionists." The party included his family and other associates, touring the Big Bend, Palouse region, as well as the Puget Sound, though his intention was to locate in eastern Washington (Spokane Daily Chronicle 1890a).

Porter, a longtime mill man, had made up his mind and by August of 1890 he was on the ground "with fifteen or sixteen others to locate in Oakesdale." The machinery arrival was expected within days, locating the mill on the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) line, and to have the flour mill up and running within 90 days. Porter was hoping for a production of a 150 barrels a day (Spokesman Falls Review 1890b).

True to his word, the flour mill would be up and running in December of 1890, a little over 90 days to completion. As the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* reported:

"The Oakesdale roller mill was started up Monday to grind it's first grain. Everything worked smoothly, and the many people who visited the establishment were delighted. Many samples of the flour turned out were given away, in order that all who felt disposed might test its quality. All our citizens as well as J. G. Porter, are very proud of the mill, and will doubtless have all the work it can manage. Many trains pass over the tracks of the Spokane & Palouse railroad every day, and the supposition is that some of the blockaded grain will now be carried out" (Spokane Daily Chronicle 1890b).

For an unknown reason, Porter would sell the mill in February of 1891 to James McCoy, J .S. Rhodes, J. J. Hogaboam, and William Helmer. This would not be the only business transfer, as at least a dozen other firms changed ownership that month alone (Spokane Falls Review 1890b). But Porter hadn't gone away, and was reported that in April of 1891 he had purchased a home in the McCoy Addition of Oakesdale planning to make it "his home for life." In addition, it seems his mill days were not over as he acquired a new location for another mill. According to the *Spokesman-Review*, "he will start east in about ten days to purchase the plant for a 100-barrel mill, with all the latest improved mill machinery..." (Spokesman-Review 1891). It is unknown exactly where this mill was located or if it was actually erected in Oakesdale at all.

Regardless, the Oakesdale flouring mill was indeed a success. In fact the by May of 1892, the volume of business transacted made Oakesdale the "largest mill in the Palouse country...its capacity being 150 barrels per day" (Spokesman-Review 1892a).

J. A. Henry/Donly & Hailey-Oakesdale Flouring Mill-1892–1898 In April of 1892, the consortium of McCoy, Hogaboam, et al, employed J. A. Henry as head miller. Henry would manage the mill up until his departure in 1897 to take a like position in Oregon (Spokesman-Review 1892b). The years between 1892–1898 were trying to say the least due to the Panic of 1893, which in the American west lingered for nearly four years. The mill was basically on again off again with boom and bust years. The silver problem along with the vast Reading Railroad collapse preceded the economic downturn which in turn effected farm prices; for a time milling wheat and other grains was simply unprofitable.

When the mill was operating other problems arose. In 1895, a shutdown was needed as a boiler failed in the steam plant, prompting a trip to the Puget Sound for a replacement (Spokesman-Review 1895a). However, by December of 1895, the plant would completely shut down again, this time due to the effects from the economic panic. Wheat had now dropped to a mere thirty

five cents. The manager at the time, Hailey, stated that the mill was losing far too much money. Hailey commented that "all the mills in the Palouse country will shut down in the near future unless there is a change in the price of wheat" (Spokesman-Review 1895b).

Though the mill would briefly open, it would once again shut down due to ongoing financial problems in 1897. J. A. Henry, who had been associated with the mill in various capacities since it began operation in late 1890, left for Athena, Oregon. According available records, once the mill did reopen, the duo of Donly & Hailey would take over operation by lease, but the actual ownership became cloudy (Spokesman-Review 1897). By September 1898, it was reported that the mill was back up and running at "full blast" with the mill being supervised by Donly & Hailey. The mill had been closed for months, and was recently sold under mortgage foreclosure to a Mr. Vrick of Illinois. Vrick's ownership, however, would not last long (Spokesman-Review 1898).

Gray & Gray Flouring Mill-1900–1907 Eventually, the experienced millers of William C. Gray & Sons (aka Gray & Gray) purchased the Oakesdale mill in 1900. A longtime mill owner in Palouse, dating back to 1892, the mill in that town was destroyed by fire in late November of 1900. Though the main warehouse was spared, the mill proper was a total loss. While Gray & Gray maintained the Palouse warehouse, they opted not to rebuild and proceed with the purchase in Oakesdale (Spokesman-Review 1900a). William C. Gray stated that the mill will be retrofitted with new machinery and that the mill would continue to be "one of the largest and best in the Palouse country..." The mill had been idle for some time except for the fall months "owing to the fact that it was owned by an estate and was in litigation" (Spokesman-Review 1900b).

By early January 1901, leasees Donly & Hailey were tying up loose ends in order to turn the property over to Gray & Gray. Papers for the transaction were signed in Colfax, while the new machinery was already on the way (Spokesman-Review 1901). Unfortunately, not long after the purchase of the mill, William C Gray had taken ill, and was apparently in poor health at the time he acquired the mill. The elder Gray had removed to Myrtle Creek, Oregon in the fall of 1901 with the hop of regaining his health, which had deteriorated due to consumption. Two months later on January 13 1902, he succumbed to heart failure. Gray was not only the owner of the once successful Palouse mill, but in addition to the Oakesdale enterprise, also founded the Golden Rule mill which his sons would take over (Spokesman-Review 1902; Tacoma Daily Ledger 1902).

By 1906, the Gray & Gray enterprise would go through a significant change as the brothers filed for dissolution of the company. As reported in the press, "E. J. and H. A., mother and son, are to continue the business at Oakesdale, while W.B. and R. J. Gray, cousins, take over the company's interests at Palouse." This dissolution had come about due to W. B. Grays poor health and a desire to retire from the business (Spokesman-Review 1906).

J. C. Barron Flouring Mill-1907–1997 In January of 1907, it was decided that the mill would be sold to Pennsylvania-born J. C. Barron who operated a successful mill in Asotin, Washington. An accomplished miller in his own right, who initially was on course to joining the ministry, Barron decided to fall back on what he knew best. Barron had been operating in Asotin for quite some

time but decided to take on one of the largest and most successful mills in the Palouse. The plant's current capacity was 100 barrels per day, down from 150 from past years. Barron would also convert the plant from steam to electrical power, as the Moscow Electric Light and Power company lines had finally reached Oakesdale shortly before Barron's acquisition. Barron was scheduled to take over the mill by mid-February 1907 (Spokane Daily Chronicle 1907).

With the plant converting to electrical power, Barron repurposed the steam plant building into living quarters, which was utilized in that capacity up until 1974 (Manring 1977). According to Manring:

"Barron successfully ran the Oakesdale flour mill for over 30 years, contributing significantly to the economic stability of the town. During the 1920s the enterprise was expanded to include the coal business. Several coal sheds dating from this period, stand east of the mill and are in the process of being permanently dismantled [1977]. One of the last operating flour mills in Whitman County, the J C Barron Flour Mill went out of business in 1939, unable to compete with larger, interstate mills. At the time of World War II, the grain storage and cleaning portions of the mill building were once again employed. This use was continued for several years after the end of the war" (Manring 1977).

Though the mill officially ceased full scale operation in 1939, Joseph Barron Jr operated a small scale milling project on and off for several years until complete shutdown in 1960. As of 1978, all original equipment was still intact, including office furniture. In and around 1997, Barron had offered to hand the mill over to the city for preservation, but they declined. The mill would be sold in December of 1997 to Mary Jane Butters, an organic farmer operating in Moscow, Idaho. Butters then transferred the mill in 1998 to Gristmill LLC, of which she was listed as both governor and member. Gristmill LLC operated in both property ownership and rentals; the LLC was dissolved in 2025. (News Tribune 1998; Whitman County Auditor 2026; SOS 2026; Palmer 2026).

The mill was actually sold by Gristmill LLC (Butters) for a \$10.00 filing fee in 2024 to the Innovia Foundation, a non-profit organization (formerly known as Spokane Community Foundation) in May of that year. By December, Innovia in turn, sold the property to the Port of Whitman for the price of \$150,000 (Spokesman-Review 2024a, 2024b; Whitman County Auditor 2024; Whitman County Auditor 2024).

Cartographic Analysis of the Project Area

The Project Area is located in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 22 of Township 19 North, Range 44 East. The 1874 cadastral map (McMicken 1874) depicts a roughly east/west oriented road south of the Project Area. No additional built environment features are depicted (Figure 6A).

According to the Bureau of Land Management (2026), in December of 1884, James McRoy was issued a serial patent under the authority of the Homestead Act for the W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 22 of Township 19 North, Range 44 East. This patent intersects the Project Area.

The 1903 Oakesdale USGS topographic map depicts the Project Area situated within the town of Oakesdale. Although the scale of the map makes specific identification impracticable, it appears that several structures are depicted intersecting and adjacent to the Project Area. A northwest/southeast oriented railroad is depicted adjacent to the western boundary of the Project Area. Unnamed intermittent streams are shown converging within Oakesdale; one north/south intermittent stream is depicted as passing near the eastern boundary of the Project Area (Figure 6B).

The 1964/1991 Oakesdale USGS topographic map depicts one structure, presumed to represent the Oakesdale mill, intersecting the northwestern portion of the Project Area. The Project Area remains depicted within the town of Oakesdale. The adjacent north/south railroad is now labeled 'Northern Pacific.' A second railroad, oriented roughly east/west, is labeled 'Union Pacific' and depicted south of the Project Area. A third north/south railroad is shown near the eastern boundary of the Project Area. The north/south intermittent stream depicted as passing near the eastern boundary of the Project Area has been labeled "McCoy Creek" (Figure 6C).

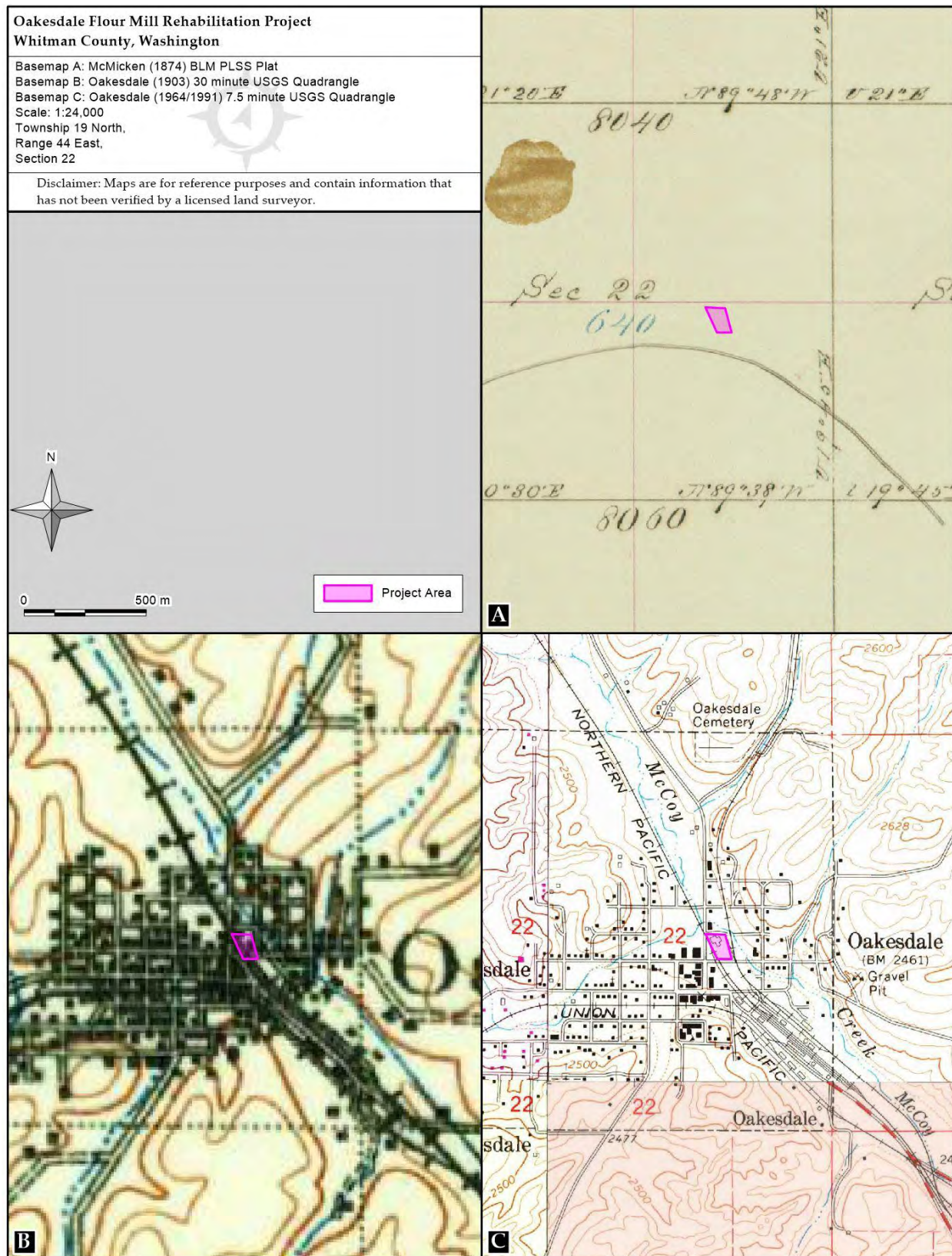


Figure 6. The Project Area shown on selected historic maps.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGY

A review of previously recorded cultural resources and archaeological surveys was completed through the WISAARD on February 12, 2026. The review covered an area of 1.0 mi (1.6 km) beyond the Project Area and included Sections 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, and 28 of Township 19 North, Range 44 East.

There have been seven previously conducted cultural resource surveys within 1.0 mi (1.6 km) of the Project Area (Table 4). One of these surveys is adjacent to the Project Area (Whistler et al. 2021).

Table 4. Previously Conducted Cultural Resource Surveys within 1.0 mi of the Project Area.

Author	Project	Distance from P/A	Results
Fitzpatrick and Harder 2024	Hume Road Reconstruction	0.5–0.75 mi SE	Negative
Hannum and Harder 2016	Pearl Street Improvements	0–0.25 mi W	Negative
Harder and Hannum 2012	Front Street Reconstruction	0–0.25 mi S	Negative
Nakonechny 2012	McCoy Creek/Steptoe Bridge Replacement	0.25–0.5 mi W	One ineligible HPI
Philips et al. 2021	Port of Whitman Fiber Installation	0–0.25 mi SW	Negative
Whistler et al. 2021	Oakesdale DWSRF Water System Improvements	Adjacent	Negative
Wollesen et al. 2025	Oakesdale Pool Upgrades	0–0.25 mi W	Two ineligible HPIs

In 2021, Plateau CRM completed a cultural resource survey for the Oakesdale DWSRF Water System Improvements Project (Whistler et al. 2021). A portion of this survey is adjacent to, and south of, the Project Area. Archaeologists conducted a pedestrian survey and excavated a total of 16 subsurface probes (SSPs). The pedestrian survey and subsurface investigations resulted in no newly recorded cultural resources.

The review revealed one cultural resource within 1.0 mi (1.6 km) of the Project Area (Table 4).

Table 5. Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within 1.0 mi of the Project Area.

Site Number	Site Type	Author(s)/Recorder(s)	Distance from P/A	Eligibility
45WT00355	Cemetery	DAHP 2026b	0.5–0.75 mi N	Undetermined

A total of 64 HPIs have been inventoried or derived from the Whitman County Assessor's records within 1.0 mi (1.6 km) of the Project Area. There are three eligible HPIs within 1.0 mi (1.6 km) of the Project Area are listed on the NRHP (Table 6).

The J.C. Barron Flour Mill, designated 45WT00141, is located within the northern portion of the Project Area. A detailed history of the mill has been included in the Oakesdale Regional Historic Background section of this report. The property has been listed on the NRHP under Criterion A and Criterion C (Manring 1977; Reed and Lindeman 1986a).

Table 6. NRHP Eligible Historic Properties Inventoried within 1.0 mi of the Project Area.

Property	Resource Name	Author(s)/Recorder(s)	Distance from P/A
15677 (45WT00265)	Edwin H. Hanford House	Manring 1984 Lindeman 1986	0.75–1.0 mi SE
15687 (45WT00141)	J. C. Barron Flour Mill	Manring 1977 Reed and Lindeman 1986a Reed and Lindeman 1986b	Intersecting
15709 (45WT00269)	Oakesdale City Hall	Manring 1992 Houser 2022	0–0.25 mi S

Expected Properties

Previous archaeological investigations correlate Native American sites with areas that have relatively flat terrain, well drained soils, close proximity to water, and sweeping vistas. Major rivers, such as the Columbia, provided corridors where animals and people moved across the landscape. It is along these rivers that ethnographers and archaeologists have documented large village sites. Residence and food procurement was tied to the seasons, with small creeks typically associated with seasonal hunting and plant gathering by relatively small, task-oriented groups of people. Task campsites might manifest themselves as low to moderate densities of stone tools which are concentrated in one or more loci, hearths, and middens.

Visits through this area may manifest themselves as isolated finds. Typically an item lost or discarded, an “isolate,” provides important information about the types of areas inhabited by past populations but is not considered eligible for listing on the NRHP.

No precontact cultural resources have been recorded within 1.0 mi (1.6 km) of the Project Area. Additionally, no ethnographically recorded precontact villages or named precontact sites were identified within 10.0 mi (16.1 km) of the Project Area. Although McCoy Creek passes near the Project Area, no perennial water sources are located in close proximity to the Project Area. Therefore, there is a low probability for encountering precontact cultural materials within the Project Area. If precontact cultural materials are found, they are likely to consist of lithic debitage or lithic tools.

Maps document a historic presence in the area since at least 1874 (McMicken 1874). Historic maps show the community of Oakesdale well established by 1903 and the Project Area intersected by a built environment (Figure 6B). Overall, there is a high probability for encountering additional historic cultural material or features within the Project Area. Any newly identified material would almost certainly consist of historic debris or industrial equipment associated with the mill or adjacent railroads.

FIELD METHODS

Survey work was completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716, September 29, 1983) and under the supervision of Principal Investigator, David Harder.

Prior to the field visit, a utility locate was requested under ticket #26084093: no subsurface utility lines were identified. Plateau CRM archaeologists Josh Espen and Kian Haupt completed the cultural resources survey on March 19, 2026. The limits of the Project Area were identified using maps and figures provided by the client, and with GIS data prepared by Plateau CRM. Mayor of Oakesdale Dennis Palmer visited the Project Area while archaeologists were conducting the cultural resource survey in order to discuss the project's overall scope. Survey conditions were excellent, with temperatures in the high 50's, sunny skies with no precipitation, and light breezes.

The crew conducted a pedestrian survey over the Project Area (Figure 7). Pedestrian survey transects were spaced no greater than 20 m (66 ft) apart. All subsurface probes (SSPs) were excavated within the Project Area as 40-cm holes (see Figure 7). SSPs were distributed evenly across the Project Area, with individual SSPs spaced approximately 35 m (115 ft) apart. The archaeologists removed sediment in arbitrary 10-cm levels, screened spoils through ¼-inch wire mesh, and recorded sediment characteristics on standardized forms with the color, composition, and degree of compaction noted. The archaeologists took representative photographs of the Project Area, and all SSPs and other relevant geospatial data were recorded using a handheld GPS unit.

RESULTS

Cultural Resource Survey

The Project Area includes the entirety of parcels #807100000000184 and #807100000000193, located north of East Bartlett Street, east of 1st Street, and south of Jackson Street. The J. C. Barron Flour Mill is located in the northwest corner of the Project Area. The rest of the Project Area is relatively flat and vegetated with manicured grass, four pine trees (*Pinus* spp.), and one maple tree (*Acer* spp.). Vegetation within the Project Area does not match native vegetation as described in the Environmental Setting section of this report.

The archaeologists conducted pedestrian survey over the entirety of the Project Area using 20-m (66-ft) east/west transects. Ground surface visibility varied between 0–10% throughout the Project Area due to vegetation (Figure 8 and Figure 9).

A total of five SSPs were excavated throughout the Project Area (Table 6). Soils observed within excavated SSPs consisted of clayey loam with minimal gravel inclusions. Of the five excavated SSPs, three were terminated due to encountering the water table. Soils observed within excavated SSPs generally matched those predicted by the NRCS soil model. SSPs ranged in depth from 54–100 cm (21–39 in), averaging 82 cm (32 in).



Figure 7. The Project Area and field investigation inventoried on an aerial photograph



Figure 8. Overview of the Project Area. View to the north.



Figure 9. Overview of the Project Area. View to the south.

Table 7. Shovel Probe Results.

SSP#	NAD83 UTM Zone 11	Depth (cmbs)	Strats and Description	Results
1	0481680 E, 5219652 N	100	0–100 cmbs: Strat I: 10YR 2/1, black, clayey loam with trace subrounded fine to coarse gravel.	Negative
2	0481690 E, 5219620 N	54	0–54 cmbs: Strat I. Terminated due to water table inundation.	Negative
3	0481700 E, 5219584 N	100	0–65 cmbs: Strat I. 65–100 cmbs: Strat II: 10YR 4/4, dark yellowish brown, clayey loam with trace subrounded fine to coarse gravel.	Negative
4	0481664 E, 5219583 N	94	0–62 cmbs: Strat I. 62–94 cmbs: Strat II. Terminated due to water table inundation.	Negative
5	0481650 E, 5219619 N	62	0–62 cmbs: Strat I. Terminated due to water table inundation.	Negative

No precontact or historic-era cultural materials or features were observed during the pedestrian survey or excavations.

HISTORIC PROPERTY INVENTORY: BARRON, J.C., FLOUR MILL (15687)

Mill Proper

The mill proper measures 40 x 68 ft and rests upon a common bond brick foundation, topped by thick heavy timber bottom sills seen at the interior of the mill (Figure 10). The main mill structure is rectangular in plan, consisting of three stories. The roof mass is end gabled and clad with wood shingles. Exterior walls are shiplap cedar siding, once painted but now extremely weathered; the southeast elevation also reveals a centrally-placed wood slide door at each floor level. The roof is a medium gable pitch. A number and variety of old windows and doors appear around the wing (Manring 1978).

The elevator addition at the northeast elevation is a short rectangle in plan measuring 50 x 40 ft resting on both a heavy post and pier and poured concrete foundation. Roof mass mirrors the mill proper with end gabling and clad with wood shingle material. A small head house structure that houses the uppermost cup/conveyor system, sits at the roof ridge line, is also end gabled with similar wood shingle cladding.

All exterior wall cladding consists of shiplap siding and mirrors the main mill. A single large slide door is also on the lower floor at the northeast elevation above the drive-on scale area which has since been removed and covered with wood panels. The northwest elevation is basically a blind wall other than the entrance/exit ramp similar to the one at the southeast elevation with a single sliding door. Wedged between the elevator addition and the smaller warehouse sits the dust room.



Figure 11. View of the Mill Proper

The basement level below the main mill features a continuation of the belt assembly which operates in tandem with the third floor. The basement floor is dirt with the exception of where the machinery is placed, where concrete has been placed. The belt assembly is situated within the massive post and beam timbers, some measuring 14 x 16 in thickness; it appears that added support posts have been installed over the years. No other features were noted.

When the mill complex was recorded in 1978, the following features of the first floor were documented; "Machinery on the first floor includes four sacking machines, two for flour and two for livestock feeds: a small stone buhr mill (dated 1871); four double stands for roller mills; a feed governing device for the first break roll; a feed mixer and Carter disc cleaning machine. The roller mills contain seven by twenty inch cylindrical rollers and were among the first to employ ball bearings, circa 1909..." (Manring 1978). Unfortunately, as of March of 2026, none of the mill operational machinery is still in place. In fact, the first floor is now empty. It is unknown at this time when the machinery was removed.

The second floor of the mill is also devoid of most of the original machinery, such as separators, purifiers, dust collectors, and reel sifters. Two work benches, several miscellaneous small electric motors are seen near the second floor stair access, along with one original fabric dust collector that rises from the floor to ceiling. A suspended fly/belt wheel is also noted to the left of the fabric dust collector; a water tank and newer dust collector are found near the stairway leading to the third floor.

The main feature on the third floor is the extensive wheel house with 18 fly/belt wheels suspended at the upper level raftering, contained within reinforced timber bracing. These wheels eventually acted in tandem with the basement level wheel complex. Two variable size white bins are also noted, all within the main mill house. The elevator section features another short stairway leading to the head house. The head house lifted grain from the bottom level to the top, returning the grain back down through the three-story level, some of which were dispersed into storage areas, while other actions went through the cleaning process. The main disbursement chutes are found at this top level. A belt wheel is noted at the apex of the head house, along with disbursement chutes and a wood enclosed belt cup assembly; the northwest part of the head house is devoid of features.

Warehouse

The warehouse building (1890) is attached to the southwest elevation of the main mill. Rectangular in plan, the structure measures 65 x 36 ft and is supported by a heavy post and pier foundation. The framing of this structure features 36 ft long beams joined with mortise and tenon, as well as wood pegs. The roof mass is end gabled and clad with wood shingle material, while the original board and batten exterior wall cladding has been covered with corrugated metal panels.

The southwest elevation features one symmetrically-placed sliding door flanked by two, two over two double hung sash lights, mirroring the rest of the complex. The lower quarter of this elevation shows horizontally-laid timber board, which is the unloading side of the warehouse; a similar light and smaller wood door is located at the southeast elevation.

The warehouse interior is basically empty aside from two small fanning mills, a scale, and one other piece of unknown machinery (Figure 11).

Shed

The small shed roof, rectangular structure features two, four over four double hung sash lights, with a small access door at the northwest elevation. Roof cladding here is corrugated metal panels, while the exterior cladding is a mix of shiplap/Dutch lap horizontal siding. The structure slopes up and attaches to the elevator house.

NRHP Evaluation

The Oakesdale Flouring Mill (aka J. C. Barron Flour Mill) was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in February of 1978, eligible under Criteria A and C. Since its registration on the NRHP, significant changes have been made to the resource, the main issue being the demolition of one of the mill's primary attributes, the original steam plant. The steam plant was essentially the heart and soul of the mill proper, as it was the only source of power from 1890-1907, nearly 20 years of operation. The demolition of the steam plant in 2021 has created an adverse effect, diminishing the mill's original integrity insofar as Criterion C is concerned. The current deterioration of the mill is also concerning with regard to its structural integrity.

While the superstructure's post and beam construction seems adequate, the exterior cladding, the headhouse, and roof massing will need to undergo significant restoration to ensure structural integrity and NRHP eligibility. The elimination of the steam plant in 2021 and applied corrugated metal siding over the original board and batten on the warehouse structure has greatly diminished the mill's original architectural integrity. Though the complex still retains its setting and feeling as a flouring mill consistent with its mid-to late-19th century construction, the elimination of the steam plant cannot go unnoticed. The mill's continued significance under Criterion C should be delisted under Criterion C due to this subtraction.

Additionally, under Criterion A, a resource must demonstrate its significance and association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. This criterion has been maintained at the local level despite the demolition of the steam plant. The mill complex is still representative of mid to late 19th century mill style and construction, as well as its association with historic milling businesses within the Palouse country, and eastern Washington in general. The mill's economic impact to the region was also significant. For these reasons, the mill would continue its eligibility under Criterion A.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Plateau CRM archaeologists conducted a pedestrian survey over the entire Project Area and excavated five SSPs. The SSPs ranged in depth from 54–100 cm (21–39 in). The pedestrian survey and subsurface investigations for the project resulted in no newly recorded archaeological resources.

A Plateau CRM architectural historian evaluated the Barron, J.C., Flour Mill (15687) and recommends that the resource is eligible only under Criterion A due to the historical importance of the mill to the town of Oakesdale. Due to the demolishing of buildings associated with the mill, Plateau CRM recommends that the mill is not eligible anymore under Criterion C. The elimination of the steam plant in 2021 and applied corrugated metal siding over the original board and batten on the warehouse structure has greatly diminished the integrity of the mill's original architecture. As such, any changes to the interior or exterior of the building will not affect the historical importance of the building. Plateau CRM recommends **that the undertaking will have**

no adverse effects to historic properties. An Unanticipated Discovery Plan (UDP) has been prepared and included in this report for use during all ground-disturbing work on the project. It is suggested that the UDP be included with the contract documents. The UDP is included in Appendix A.

Should ground-disturbing activities reveal any cultural materials (e.g., structural remains, European American artifacts, or Native American artifacts), activity will cease, and the Washington State Historic Preservation Officer should be notified immediately. The results and recommendations in this document concern the specified Project Area. The proponent is advised that the results and recommendations reported herein do not apply to areas of potential effect altered or expanded after the cultural resource survey. A supplementary cultural resource review will be necessary should the Project Area be altered or changed, as per 36 CFR 800.4.

If ground-disturbing activities encounter human skeletal remains during the course of construction, then all activity *will* cease that may cause further disturbance to those remains. The area of the find will be secured and protected from further disturbance until the State provides notice to proceed. The finding of human skeletal remains *will* be reported to the county medical examiner/coroner *and* local law enforcement in the most expeditious manner possible. The remains will not be touched, moved, or further disturbed. The county medical examiner/coroner will assume jurisdiction over the human skeletal remains and determine whether those remains are forensic or non-forensic. If the county medical examiner/coroner determines the remains are non-forensic, then they will report that finding to the DAHP who will then take jurisdiction over the remains. The DAHP will notify any appropriate cemeteries and all affected tribes of the find. The State Physical Anthropologist will determine whether the remains are Indian or Non-Indian and report that finding to any appropriate cemeteries and affected tribes. The DAHP will then handle all consultation with the affected parties as to the future preservation, excavation, and disposition of the remains.

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APPENDIX A

Historic Property Inventory



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687

Location



Address: First and Jackson Streets, Oakesdale, WA

Geographic Areas: Whitman County, T19R44E22, OAKESDALE Quadrangle, Congressional District 5, 9, moderate to high, Site class D to E

Information

Number of stories:

Construction Dates:

Construction Type	Year	Circa
Built Date	1890	☒
Addition	1892	☒
Demolished	2021	☐

Historic Use:

Category	Subcategory
Industry/Processing/Extraction	Industry/Processing/Extraction - Manufacturing Facility
Industry/Processing/Extraction	Industry/Processing/Extraction - Manufacturing Facility

Historic Context:

Category
Agriculture
Commerce



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687

Architect/Engineer:

Category	Name or Company
Builder	Porter, J.C.

Registers:

Register Type	Listed Date	Removed Date	Period of Significance	Level of Significance	Criteria
National Register	2/8/1978		-	Local	C
Washington Heritage Register	2/8/1978		-	Local	C

Thematics:

Local Registers and Districts

Name	Date Listed	Notes
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Project History

Project Number, Organization, Project Name	Resource Inventory	SHPO Determination	SHPO Determined By, Determined Date
2026-02-01210, , Port of Whitman: Oakesdale Mill Phase 1		National Register	Maddie Levesque, 2/25/2026
2026-02-01210, , Port of Whitman: Oakesdale Mill Phase 1		National Register	Maddie Levesque, 2/25/2026
2026-02-01210, , Port of Whitman: Oakesdale Mill Phase 1		Survey/Inventory	
2026-02-01210, , Port of Whitman: Oakesdale Mill Phase 1		Survey/Inventory	



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687

Photos



Oakesdale Mill #1.png



The Oakesdale Flour Mill Under Ownership of Gray & Gray ca. 1901 copy.jpg



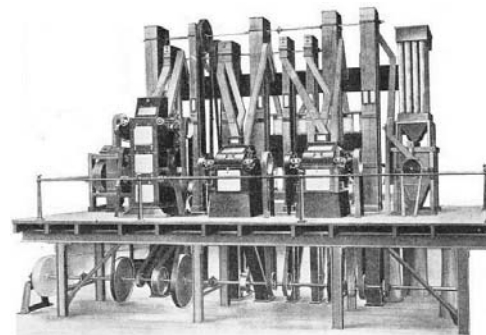
JC Barron Flour Mill ca 1910.jpg



Interior Of Flour Mill ca 1910.jpg



Flour Mill Complex ca 1987.jpg



Typical late 19th Century Rolling Mill Set UP.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



Oaksdale Flour Mill 1978 SP Review.jpg



Oaksdale Flour Mill 1894.jpg



JC Barron Flouring Mill ca 1910s.jpg



Window Detail.jpg



Window at Basement Level of Elevator Structure NE Elevation.jpg



Warehouse Structure Showing a Scale and Two Fanning Mills at the Far Right Looking West.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



Warehouse Structure Looking East.jpg



Warehouse Looking SW Into Main Mill Structure.jpg



NW Corner of Main Mill Looking Down to 1st Floor NW Corner.jpg



NW and SW Elevations Looking NE.jpg



NW and NE Elevation of Warehouse and Smaller Dust House Looking SE.jpg



Northwest Elevation of Mill Proper and Warehouse Structure.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



NE and SE Elevations.jpg



NE and NW Elevations.jpg



Mixed Siding of Ship Lap/Dutch Lap on Warehouse Structure.jpg



Mill Proper and Elevator Addition Looking NW.jpg



Main Mill Electrical Works Looking East.jpg



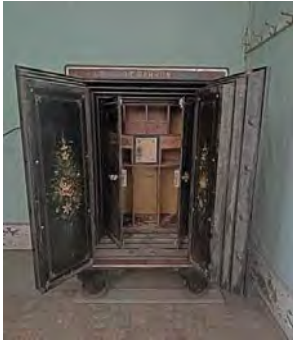
Looking SW.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



JC Barron Safe Located on 1st Floor.jpg



Interior SE Corner Main Floor of Elevator Structure.jpg



Interior of Warehouse Structure Looking West.jpg



Headhouse Looking South.jpg



Head House Located Atop the Elevator Addition Looking North.jpg



Head House Interior Looking West.jpg

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Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

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Head House Distribution Hoppers.jpg



Head House Atop Elevator Addition Looking East.jpg



Grain Warehouse Structure Looking SE.jpg



Grain Discharge Chute Looking South.jpg



Foundation Detail at Elevator Structure Looking North.jpg



Footprint of Former Steam Plant Demolished in 2021.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



Exit/Entry with Ramp Leading Into Elevator Structure Looking North.jpg



Exit/Entry Ramp at NW Elevation.jpg



Entrance Ramp to Elevator and Pit Area.jpg



Elevator to Mill Proper Addition Junction Looking North.jpg



Elevator Lower Level Showing Pit Looking West Toward Main Mill copy.jpg



Distribution Chutes from Head House to Storage Bins Looking East.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



Common Bond Brick Foundation Detail supporting Mill proper.jpg



Brick Foundation Main Mill with Timber Bottom Sill Looking South.jpg



Belt Assembly and Stairway Looking Towards Head House.jpg



Basement Level of Main Mill Showing Post and Beam Construction and Basement Wheel House.jpg



Basement Level Electric Motor Located in Basement of Main Mill.jpg



Basement Level Belt: Flywheels Looking East.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



Basement Level Belt Wheels Looking NE.jpg



3rd Floor Stairway To Head House Showing Metal Distribution Piping Looking East.jpg



3rd Floor of Main Mill Looking Towards Stairway to Head House Looking East.jpg



3rd Floor Multiple Wood Clad Metal Disbursement Chutes Atop Elevator Looking North.jpg



3rd Floor Main Motor and Hopper Top of Elevator Looking North.jpg



3rd Floor Level Wheel House with Heavy Timber Bracing Main Mill Looking East.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



3rd Floor Level Grain Collector Housing Elevator Section Looking North.jpg



3rd Floor Disassembled Dust Collector Main Mill Looking South.jpg



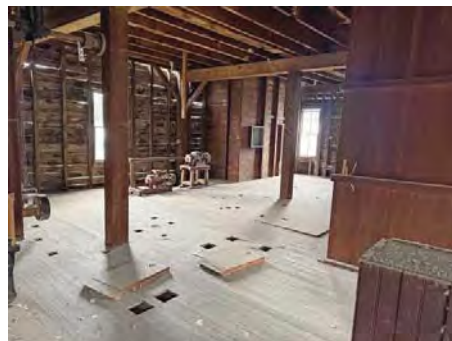
2nd Floor Stair Case Leading to 3rd Floor Level of Main Mill Showing Water Tank and Dust Collector at Foot of Staircase Looking NE.jpg



2nd Floor Main Mill Belt Wheel Assembly Looking NW.jpg



2nd Floor Main Mill Machinery Looking SE.jpg



2nd Floor Main Mill Looking SW.jpg



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



2nd Floor Dust Collector in Main Mill Looking SE.jpg



2nd Floor of Main Mill Workshop Area Looking East.jpg



1st Floor of Original Mill Looking East.jpg



Register Image



Register Image



Original HPI form(s)



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687



Register nomination form



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687

Inventory Details - 1/1/1900

Common name:

Date recorded: 1/1/1900

Field Recorder:

Field Site number: 38-802

SHPO Determination

Detail Information

Styles:

Period	Style Details
No Style	No Style

Surveyor Opinion

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: No



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687

Inventory Details - 2/12/2026

Common name:

Date recorded: 2/12/2026

Field Recorder: Janea Stark

Field Site number:

SHPO Determination



Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

Property ID: 15687

Inventory Details - 4/13/2026

Common name:

Date recorded: 4/13/2026

Field Recorder: Jeff Creighton

Field Site number:

SHPO Determination

Detail Information

Characteristics:

Category	Item
Foundation	Brick
Foundation	Concrete - Poured
Foundation	Post & Pier
Form Type	Commercial
Roof Type	Gable - Side
Roof Material	Wood - Shingle
Cladding	Wood - Shiplap
Cladding	Wood - Board & Batten
Structural System	Wood - Post and Beam
Structural System	Wood - Braced Frame
Plan	Irregular

Styles:

Period	Style Details
No Style	No Style

Surveyor Opinion

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: Yes

Significance narrative: The town of Oakesdale (originally "Oakdale") was by all accounts a small ranch community in 1886, but at the same time growing like a weed. The first known mention of the community in the local press was a half-page advert in the December issue of The Commoner, announcing the opening of the Bargain House, a venture started by M. Kaminsky & Sons, an enterprise that was also involved in the grain warehouse business. The Kaminskys were paying fifty cents for wheat, of which accounted for 140 bushels of grain in 1886 alone (The Commoner 1886).

Other businesses included the Oakes House, consisting of up to a dozen boarding rooms, a harness shop, a postal system that "works like a charm," as well as a new blacksmith, who is "drawing a trade far and near," and several companies "organized here for boring coal, or whatever may be hidden by mother earth" (The Commoner 1886).

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Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Barron, J.C., Flour Mill

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In May of 1888, the town was on the rise with the erection of a new schoolhouse, a large church, and a plethora of other such buildings going up "in all directions." At the same time, surveyors for the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company (OR&N) were locating their roads just outside of town. A correspondent for the Spokesman-Review quipped, "Who can any longer doubt that Oakesdale is the coming town of the great Palouse country. It is now the great wheat center" (Spokesman-Review 1888). The talk of a flouring mill was also discussed, citing that farmers were simply buying flour instead of travelling up to 20 miles to the nearest mill. Indeed, for many it was a foregone conclusion that Oakesdale would be a prime location for such a venture. And at last the railroad. It was announced in November that the OR&N would be constructing a depot within a few days (Spokesman-Review 1888a).

By late November 1888, Oakesdale would be officially incorporated, with city fathers consisting of G. Comeggs, W. Freiner, Dr. Baker, H.H. Selfridge, and the man who donated much of the land for the town, James McCoy.

James McCoy, one of the earliest pioneers to settle in Oakesdale, had taken out a land patent consisting of the E1/2 of the E1/2 of section 22 in township 19, range 44, much of which became the town of Oakesdale (BLM /GLO 1890). Born 1829 in Ohio, he would migrate with family to Missouri and by 1853 was enroute to Oregon, taking advantage of the Oregon Land Donation Act. The family located in Benton County Oregon where they continued in farming as well as logging. Still seeking greener pastures, McCoy left Oregon in 1876 for a homestead in Whitman County, that he eventually acquired in 1879 (Spokesman-Review 1913). McCoy would remain in Oakesdale until his death at age 89 in 1896 (Lever 1901).

Oakesdale Flouring Mill

The discussion of acquiring a substantial flouring mill in Oakesdale actually began in 1888, but floundered due to funds. An article in the Oakesdale Sun in 1890 was hopeful that a mill would become a reality. Apparently upwards of \$20,000 had been subscribed, with the hope of that number increasing to \$30,000 to get "a contract closed" (Oakesdale Sun 1890). The contract did eventually come and a mill was purchased...from Illinois. One J G Porter hailing from Harrisburg, Saline County, Illinois would dismantle and send by rail an entire flouring mill. It is not known when the mill was originally constructed in Illinois, but up until its dismantling it was a functioning resource for some time (Spokesman Falls Review 1890).

J G Porter-Oakesdale Flouring Mill-1890-1892

The first we hear of Mr. Porter is his arrival at the Grand Central Hotel in Spokane, Washington, cited in the Spokane Daily Chronicle as the "Illinois Excursionists." The party included Porter's family and other associates, touring the Big Bend, Palouse region, as well as the Puget Sound, though his intention was to locate in eastern Washington (Spokane Daily Chronicle 1890).

Porter, a longtime mill man, had made up his mind and by August of 1890 was on the ground "with fifteen or sixteen others to locate in Oakesdale." The arrival of machinery was expected within days, locating the mill on the newly-constructed Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) line, and to have the flour mill up and running within 90 days. Porter was hoping for a production of a 150 barrels a day (Spokesman Falls Review 1890).



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True to his word, the flour mill would be up and running in December of 1890, a little over 90 days to completion. As the Spokane Daily Chronicle reported:

"The Oakesdale roller mill was started up Monday to grind it's first grain. Everything worked smoothly, and the many people who visited the establishment were delighted. Many samples of the flour turned out were given away, in order that all who felt disposed might test its quality. All our citizens as well as J. G. Porter, are very proud of the mill, and will doubtless have all the work it can manage. Many trains pass over the tracks of the Spokane & Palouse railroad every day, and the supposition is that some of the blockaded grain will now be carried out" (Spokane Daily Chronicle 1890).

For some unknown reason, Porter would sell the mill in February of 1891 to James McCoy, J. S. Rhodes, J. J. Hogaboam, and William Helmer. This would not be the only business transfer, as at least a dozen other firms changed ownership in that month alone (Spokane Falls Review 1890a). But Porter hadn't gone away, as it was reported in April of 1891 that he had purchased a home in the McCoy Addition of Oakesdale, planning on making it "his home for life." In addition, it seems his mill days were not over as he acquired a new location for another mill. According to the Spokesman-Review, "he will start east in about ten days to purchase the plant for a 100-barrel mill, with all the latest improved mill machinery..." (Spokesman-Review 1891). It is unknown exactly where this mill was located or if it was actually erected in Oakesdale at all.

Regardless, the Oakesdale flouring mill was indeed a success. In fact the by May of 1892, the volume of business transacted made Oakesdale the "largest mill in the Palouse country...its capacity being 150 barrels per day" (Spokesman-Review 1892).

J A Henry/Donly & Hailey-Oakesdale Flouring Mill-1892-1898

In April of 1892, the consortium of McCoy, Hogaboam, et al, employed J A Henry as head miller. Henry would manage the mill up until his departure in 1897 to take a like position in Oregon (Spokesman-Review 1892a). The years between 1892-1898 were trying to say the least due to the Panic of 1893, which in the American west lingered for nearly four years. The mill was basically on again off again with boom and bust years. The silver problem along with the vast Reading Railroad collapse preceded the economic downturn which in turn effected farm prices; for a time milling wheat and other grains was simply unprofitable.

When the mill was operating other problems arose. In 1895 a shutdown was needed as a boiler failed in the steam plant, prompting a trip to the Puget Sound for a replacement (Spokesman-Review 1895). However, by December of 1895, the plant would completely shut down again, this time due to the effects from the economic panic. Wheat had now dropped to a mere thirty five cents. The manager at the time, Hailey, stated that the mill was losing far too much money. Hailey commented that "all the mills in the Palouse country will shut down in the near future unless there is a change in the price of wheat" (Spokesman-Review 1895a).

Though the mill would briefly open, it would once again shut down due to ongoing financial problems in 1897. J A Henry, who had been associated with the mill in various capacities since it began operation in late 1890, left for Athena, Oregon. According available records, once the mill did reopen, the duo of Donly & Hailey would take over operation by lease, but the actual ownership became cloudy (Spokesman-Review 1897). By September 1898, it was reported that the mill was back up and running at "full blast"



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with the mill being supervised by Donly & Hailey. The mill had been closed for months, and was recently sold under mortgage foreclosure to a Mr Vrick of Illinois. Vrick's ownership, however, would not last long (Spokesman-Review 1898).

Gray & Gray Flouring Mill-1900-1907

Eventually, the experienced millers of William C Gray & Sons (aka Gray & Gray) purchased the Oakesdale mill in 1900. A longtime mill owner in Palouse dating back to 1892, the mill in that town was destroyed by fire in late November of 1900. Though the main warehouse was spared, the mill proper was a total loss. While Gray & Gray maintained the Palouse warehouse, they opted not to rebuild and proceed with the purchase of the mill in Oakesdale (Spokesman-Review 1900). William C Gray stated that the mill will be retrofitted with new machinery and that the mill would continue to be "one of the largest and best in the Palouse country..." The mill had been idle for some time except for the fall months "owing to the fact that it was owned by an estate and was in litigation" (Spokesman-Review 1900a).

By early January 1901, leasees Donly & Hailey were tying up loose ends in order to turn the property over to Gray & Gray. Papers for the transaction were signed in Colfax, while the new machinery was already on the way (Spokesman-Review 1901). Unfortunately, not long after the purchase of the mill, William C Gray had taken ill and was apparently in poor health at the time he acquired the mill. The elder Gray had removed to Myrtle Creek, Oregon in the fall of 1901 with the hope of regaining his health due to consumption. Two months later on January 13 1902, he succumbed to heart failure. Gray was not only the owner of the once successful Palouse mill, but in addition to the Oakesdale enterprise, also founded the Golden Rule mill which his sons would take over (Spokesman-Review 1902; Tacoma Daily Ledger 1902).

By 1906, the Gray & Gray enterprise would go through a significant change as the brothers filed for dissolution of the company. As reported in the press, "E. J. and H. A., mother and son, are to continue the business at Oakesdale, while W.B. and R. J. Gray, cousins, take over the company's interests at Palouse." This dissolution had come about due to W. B. Grays poor health and a desire to retire from the business (Spokesman-Review 1906).

J C Barron Flouring Mill-1907-1997

In January of 1907, it was decided that the mill should be sold to Pennsylvania-born J. C. Barron who operated a successful mill in Asotin, Washington. An accomplished miller in his own right, who initially was on course to joining the ministry, Barron decided to fall back on what he knew best. Barron had been operating in Asotin for quite some time but decided to take on one of the largest and most successful mills in the Palouse. The plant's current capacity was 100 barrels per day, down from 150 from past years. Barron would also convert the plant from steam to electrical power, as the Moscow Electric Light and Power company lines had finally reached Oakesdale shortly before Barron's acquisition. Barron was scheduled to take over the mill by mid-February 1907 (Spokane Daily Chronicle 1907).

With the plant converting to electrical power, Barron repurposed the steam plant building into living quarters, which was utilized in that capacity up until 1974 (Manring 1977). According to Manring:



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"Barron successfully ran the Oakesdale flour mill for over 30 years, contributing significantly to the economic stability of the town. During the 1920s the enterprise was expanded to include the coal business. Several coal sheds dating from this period, stand east of the mill and are in the process of being permanently dismantled [1977]. One of the last operating flour mills in Whitman County, the J C Barron Flour Mill went out of business in 1939, unable to compete with larger, interstate mills. At the time of World War II, the grain storage and cleaning portions of the mill building were once again employed. This use was continued for several years after the end of the war" (Manning 1978).

Though the mill officially ceased full scale operation in 1939, Joseph Barron Jr operated a small scale milling project on and off for several years until complete shutdown in 1960. As of 1978, all original equipment was still intact, including office furniture. In and around 1997, Barron had offered to hand the mill over to the city for preservation, but they declined. Shortly after this time, the mill would be sold in December of 1997 to Mary Jane Butters, an organic farmer operating in Moscow, Idaho. Butters then transferred the mill in 1998 to Gristmill LLC, of which she was listed as both governor and member. Gristmill LLC operated in both property ownership and rentals; the LLC was dissolved in 2025. (News Tribune Whitman 1998; Whitman County Auditor 2026; SOS 2026; Palmer 2026).

The mill was actually sold by Gristmill LLC (Butters) for a \$10.00 filing fee in 2024 to the Innovia Foundation, a non-profit organization (formerly known as Spokane Community Foundation) in May of that year, and by December, Innovia in turn, sold the property to the Port of Whitman for the price of \$150,000 (Spokesman-Review 2024; Spokesman-Review 2024a); Whitman County Auditor 2024; Whitman County Auditor 2024).

Significance Update

The Oakesdale Flouring Mill (aka J C Barron Flour Mill) was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in February of 1978, eligible under Criteria A and C. Since its registration on the NRHP, significant changes have been made to the resource, the main issue being the demolition of one of the mills primary attributes, the original steam plant. The steam plant was essentially the heart and soul of the mill proper, as it was the only source of power from 1890-1907, nearly 20 years of operation. It's demolition in 2021 has created an adverse effect, diminishing the mills original integrity insofar as Criteria C is concerned. The current deterioration of the mill is also concerning with regard to its structural integrity. While the superstructure's post and beam construction seems adequate, the exterior cladding, the headhouse, and roof massing will need to undergo significant restoration to insure structural integrity and NRHP eligibility.

The elimination of the steam plant in 2021 and applied corrugated metal siding over the original board and batten on the warehouse structure has greatly diminished the mills original architectural integrity. Though the complex still retains its setting and feeling as a flouring mill consistent with its mid to late 19th century construction, the elimination of the steam plant cannot go unnoticed. The mill's continued significance under Criteria C is debatable, and should in all likelihood be delisted under Criteria C due to this subtraction.

Additionally, under Criteria A, a resource must demonstrate its significance and



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association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. This criteria has been maintained at the local level despite the demolition of the steam plant. The mill complex is still representative of mid to late 19th century mill style and construction, as well as its association with historic milling businesses within the Palouse country, and eastern Washington in general. The mill's economic impact to the region was also significant. For these reasons, the mill would continue its eligibility under Criteria A

Physical description:

Physical Description: Exterior

Original construction of the Oakesdale Flouring Mill took place in the summer of 1890, after the structure was reassembled from its original location in the state of Illinois. Shipped by rail, the disassembled mill arrived in July and re-erected shortly thereafter. The mill proper measures 40 x 68 feet and rests upon a common bond brick foundation, topped by thick heavy timber bottom sills seen at the interior of the mill (the bricks were manufactured in Oakesdale).

The main mill structure is rectangular in plan, consisting of three stories. The roof mass is end gabled and clad with wood shingles. Lights are symmetrically placed at the southwest, southeast, and northwest elevations at all three levels. All lights are original two over two double hung sash, with plain board surrounds and a shaped, thin cornice at the top. Interestingly, some of the panes appear to be a form of cylinder-made glass as wavy distortions are clearly seen at several locations within the building. Exterior walls are shiplap cedar siding, once painted but now extremely weathered; the southeast elevation also reveals a centrally-placed wood slide door at each floor level.

Additional construction in 1890 included a companion steam plant, originally attached to the facade (southeast elevation), but was razed in 2021, for the repurposing of the massive timber post and beam elements; a gable imprint on the mill wall and the foundation footprint is all that remains. A description of the structure is taken from the National Registry Nomination in 1978:

"The one and a half story steam plant is 40 feet wide and extends 50 feet to the south [southeast] of the mill proper. Corniced boxed eaves and verges project two-feet. The roof is a medium gable pitch. A number and variety of old windows and doors appear around the wing. Direct access to the mill proper from the steam plant, used since 1907 as an apartment, is via a doorway between the ground floor of the steam plant and the basement of the mill. Other openings between the two structures once accommodated the long, wide drive belt, but have since been sealed (Manring 1978).

Shortly after erection of the main mill and steam plant, a timber-constructed elevator house was added to the northeast wall of the mill proper sometime prior to 1894. Though the National Registry information of 1978 cites the date of construction in 1898, available Sanborn Company fire insurance information clearly shows the elevator on the 1894 map (Sanborn-Perris 1894).

The elevator addition at the northeast elevation is a short rectangle in plan measuring 50 x 40 feet resting on both a heavy post and pier and poured concrete foundation. The concrete foundation was added after Barron assumed ownership in 1907. Roof mass mirrors the mill proper with end gabling and clad with wood shingle material. A small head house structure that houses the uppermost cup/conveyor system, sits at the roof



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ridge line, is also end gabled with similar wood shingle cladding. The southeast elevation (facade) features four asymmetrically-placed lights similar to those at the main mill, while just two symmetrically-placed lights within the upper gable at the northeast elevation. All exterior wall cladding consists of shiplap siding and mirrors the main mill.

The southeast elevation also features an entry/exit ramp and two large horizontal slide doors that allow entrance to the elevator and pit area. A single large slide door is also at the lower floor at the northeast elevation above the drive-on scale area which has since been removed and covered with wood panels. The northwest elevation is basically a blind wall other than the entrance/exit ramp similar to the one at the southeast elevation with a single sliding door.

Wedged between the elevator addition and the smaller warehouse sits the dust room. The small shed roof, rectangular structure features two, four over four double hung sash lights, with a small access door at the northwest elevation. Roof cladding here is corrugated metal panels, while the exterior cladding is a mix of shiplap/Dutch lap horizontal siding. The structure slopes up and attaches to, the elevator house.

The warehouse building (1890) is attached to the southwest elevation of the main mill. Rectangular in plan, the structure measures 65 x 36 feet and is supported by a heavy post and pier foundation. The framing of this structure features 36 foot long beams joined with mortise and tenon, as well as wood pegs. The roof mass is end gabled and clad with wood shingle material, while the original board and batten exterior wall cladding has been covered with corrugated metal panels. The southwest elevation features one symmetrically-placed sliding door flanked by two, two over two double hung sash lights, mirroring the rest of the complex. The lower quarter of this elevation shows horizontally-laid timber board, which is the unloading side of the warehouse; a similar light and smaller wood door is located at the southeast elevation.

Physical Description: Interior

The Sanborn-Perris documentation of 1894 describes the mill complex as producing 150 barrels per 24 hours. It is noted that buildings are substantial running day and night, with no watchman. Lights were powered by "signal oil, fuel: wood," with water "pumped from well by steam..." (Sanborn-Perris 1894). Original equipment listed consisted of five double set rollers, two packers, a Graham roller and scale on the first floor. The second floor housed one centrifugal reel and three purifiers, while the third floor contained, ten reels, two smutters, and three scalpers, as well as a receiving separator (Sanborn-Perris 1894).

1st Floor Description

When the mill complex was recorded in 1978, the following was documented;

"Machinery on the first floor includes four sacking machines, two for flour and two for livestock feeds: a small stone buhr mill (dated 1871); four double stands for roller mills; a feed governing device for the first break roll; a feed mixer and Carter disc cleaning machine. The roller mills contain seven by twenty inch cylindrical rollers and were among the first to employ ball bearings, circa 1909..." (Manring 1978).



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The narrative goes on to cite the fact that some of the machinery was used occasionally to mill corn. Unfortunately, as of March of 2026, none of the mill operational machinery is still in place, in fact the first floor is now empty. It is unknown at this time when the machinery was removed.

2nd Floor Description

The second floor of the mill is also devoid of most of the original machinery, such as separators, purifiers, dust collectors, and reel sifters. Two work benches, several miscellaneous small electric motors are seen near the 2nd floor stair access, along with one original fabric dust collector that rises from the floor to ceiling. A suspended fly/belt wheel is also noted to the left of the fabric dust collector; a water tank and newer dust collector is found near the stairway leading to the 3rd floor.

3rd Floor Description

The main feature at the 3rd level is the extensive wheel house with 18 fly/belt wheels suspended at the upper level raftering, contained within reinforced timber bracing. These wheels eventually acted in tandem with the basement level wheel complex below. Two variable size white bins are also so noted, all within the main mill house. The elevator section features another short stairway leading to the head house.

The head house lifted grain from the bottom level to the top, returning the grain back down through the three story level, some of which were dispersed into storage areas, while other actions went through the cleaning process. The main disbursement chutes are found at this top level. A belt wheel is noted at the apex of the head house, along with disbursement chutes and a wood enclosed belt cup assembly; the northwest part of the head house is devoid of features.

Basement Level Description

The basement level below the main mill features a continuation of the belt assembly which operates in tandem with the 3rd floor. The basement floor is dirt with the exception of where the machinery is placed, where concrete has been placed. The belt assembly is situated within the massive post and beam timbers, some measuring 14 x 16 inches in thickness; it appears that added support posts have been installed over the years. No other features were noted.

Warehouse Description

The warehouse interior is basically empty aside from two small fanning mills, a scale, and one other piece of unknown machinery. Interior walls are open, showing the exterior vertical wall cladding and open roof raftering. Flooring appears to be unchanged, with an entry ramp leading to the main mill first floor. An entry door to the northeast leads to the elevator pit area and exit/entry ramps.

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APPENDIX B

Unanticipated Discovery Plan



Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington

Unanticipated Discovery Plan Treatment of Archaeological Materials Discovered During Project Implementation

By:

Justin Fitzpatrick



May 2026

Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington

Unanticipated Discovery Plan and Treatment of Archaeological Materials

The Port of Whitman is preparing to rehabilitate the Oakesdale Flour Mill, located in Whitman County, Washington (Figure 1). The initial phase of the project will include replacing the roof and constructing utilities on the property. Anticipated impacts include excavations, compaction of sediments, and other ground-disturbing construction activities.

Port of Whitman retained Plateau CRM to complete the cultural resources survey and identify potential impacts to cultural and historical resources. The area of potential effect, referred to as the Project Area, covers approximately 1.8 acres and lies in Section 22 of Township 19 North, Range 44 East, Willamette Meridian (Figure 2). The survey was subsequently reported in *Cultural Resources Survey for the Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington* (Esen et al. 2026), and recorded with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) under Project Number 2026-02-01210.

Pre-field research consisted of a file review completed through the Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data (WISAARD) on February 12, 2026. The review covered an area of 1.0 mi (1.6 km) beyond the Project Area and included Sections 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, and 28 of Township 19 North, Range 44 East. This review revealed one cultural resource and seven previously conducted cultural resource surveys within 1.0 mile (mi) (1.6 kilometer [km]) of the Project Area. This database includes recorded archaeological resources, historic property inventories (HPIs), National Register of Historic Properties (NRHP) and Washington Heritage Register (WHR) properties, identified cemeteries, and previously conducted cultural resource surveys found throughout the state of Washington. Additionally, a review of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) records, both General Land Office (GLO) online records and land patent information, was completed. Topographic maps and aerial photos were reviewed to identify additional indicators of past land use.

Plateau CRM archaeologists conducted a pedestrian survey and excavated five subsurface probes. The pedestrian survey covered the entire area of potential impact and subsurface probes were dispersed throughout. No precontact or historic-era cultural materials or features were identified during the pedestrian survey or subsurface testing. A Plateau CRM architectural historian evaluated the Barron, J.C., Flour Mill (15687) and recommends that the resource is eligible only under Criterion A due to the historical importance of the mill to the town of Oakesdale. Due to the demolishing of buildings associated with the mill, Plateau CRM recommends that the mill is not eligible anymore under Criterion C. The elimination of the steam plant in 2021 and applied corrugated metal siding over the original board and batten on the warehouse structure has greatly diminished the integrity of the mills original architecture. As such, any changes to the interior or exterior of the building will not affect the historical importance of the building. Plateau CRM recommends **that the undertaking will have no adverse effects to historic properties.**

Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington
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Laws and Regulations Regarding Archaeological and Cultural Resources

Several laws and regulations, set forth on both federal and state levels, address concerns for burials, rock cairns, archaeological sites, historic structures, and other cultural resources. Those pertinent to this project are several chapters of the Revised Code of Washington and Washington State Governor's Executive Order 21-02.

Chapter 27.44 of the Revised Code of Washington offers protection for Indian burials, cairns, glyptic markings, and historic graves on private and public property. This regulation provides civil and criminal penalties for the intentional disturbance or removal of these types of properties.

Chapter 27.53 of the Revised Code of Washington requires that a permit be acquired through the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) prior to the intentional disturbance, excavation, removal, or alteration of any known historic or archaeological resource through any means.

Chapter 68.50 of the Revised Code of Washington describes the investigations, treatment, scientific study, and final disposition of human remains. This chapter includes very little information that pertains to the inadvertent discovery of archaeological materials.

Chapter 68.60 of the Revised Code of Washington outlines protections for cemeteries, historic graves, and other human remains. This chapter further outlines procedures pertaining to the inadvertent discovery of human remains.

Washington State Governor's Executive Order 21-02 requires all state agencies implementing or assisting with construction or land acquisition projects that receive state funding to consider how the proposed projects may affect cultural resources. Prior to the expenditure of state funds, Executive Order 21-02 requires the lead state agency of a given project to consult with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (i.e., Washington State's SHPO), and all affected Tribes of a proposed project, "to take all reasonable action to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to archaeological and historic archaeological sites, historic buildings/structures, traditional cultural places, sacred sites or other cultural resources.."

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Unanticipated Discovery Plan

Proper application and management of this Unanticipated Discovery Plan requires that a professional archaeologist be contacted if ground-disturbing activities reveal potential Native American or historic-era cultural materials or features (Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 5). The archaeologist shall meet the Secretary of the Interior's standards for a professional archaeologist as defined at 36CFR61 Appendix A. Construction within 200 ft (60 m) of the discovery will stop, and the area will be secured to protect the find from additional damage. The archaeologist will document the find, prepare a brief written statement, and take photographs of the find for submission to the lead agency and the SHPO at the DAHP. The find will also be reported to the THPO of the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the THPO of the the Coeur d'Alene Tribe of Indians, the THPO of the the Nez Perce Tribe, the THPO of the the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and the Cultural Resource Program Manager of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation. It is the responsibility of the lead agency, Port of Whitman, to contact the affected Tribes. This consultation process will take place even if the pre-contact or historic-era cultural materials appear to have lost their depositional integrity. Work within 200 ft (60 m) of the find will not resume until a plan for management or preservation of the materials has been approved. Following the project, the archaeologist will provide a report detailing the procedures and results of the investigation.

During the investigation, the archaeologist will observe rules of safety and will comply with any safety requirements of the excavation contractor and project engineers. Entry into any excavation will only be done under the direct supervision and approval of the construction foreman (or his or her agent) and verification that entry and exit is safe.

Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington
Unanticipated Discovery Plan and Treatment of Archaeological Materials

Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains

If ground-disturbing activities encounter human skeletal remains during the course of construction, then all activity *will* cease that may cause further disturbance to those remains. The area of the find will be secured and protected from further disturbance to those remains. The area of the find will be secured and protected from further disturbance until the State provides notice to proceed. The finding of human skeletal remains *will* be reported to the county medical examiner/coroner *and* local law enforcement in the most expeditious manner possible. The remains will not be touched, moved, or further disturbed. The county medical examiner/coroner will assume jurisdiction over the human skeletal remains and determine whether those remains are forensic or non-forensic. If the county medical examiner/coroner determines the remains are non-forensic, then they will report that finding to the DAHP who will then take jurisdiction over the remains. The DAHP will notify any appropriate cemeteries and all affected tribes of the find. The State Physical Anthropologist will determine whether the remains are Indian or Non-Indian and report that finding to any appropriate cemeteries and affected tribes. The DAHP will then handle all consultation with the affected parties as to the future preservation, excavation, and disposition of the remains.

Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington
Unanticipated Discovery Plan and Treatment of Archaeological Materials

Protocol to Follow When No Archaeologist is Present

If an archaeologist is not on-site when cultural materials (e.g., pre-contact artifacts and/or features, historic-era artifacts and/or features) are uncovered, the following steps shall be followed:

Suspend work within 200 ft (60 m) of the find.

Take a photo of the artifact(s) or feature(s). Include a common object such as a quarter, a tape measure, a person, or a pickup as a scale to show the size of the find.

Take photos of the location of the find from several angles and distances.

Record a GPS point if possible.

Contact Plateau CRM by telephone to notify us of the find.

Provide an email with photos and any additional information you are able to gather.

Precontact Artifacts Precontact artifacts can include stone, wood, or bone tools. Stone tools are the most common artifact encountered since they do not deteriorate over time.

Precontact Features Precontact features can include fire pits, hearths, burn deposits, ash, rock alignments, rock mounds, and midden deposits.

Historic-Era Artifacts Historic-era artifacts may include various items manufactured from metal, glass, or wood. If an individual identifiable historic artifact is encountered, the above protocol should be followed. "Historic-era artifacts" does not include "recent" items such as chip bags, styrofoam, modern beverage cans and bottles, or other typical roadside debris.

Historic-Era Features Any identifiable remains of buildings, foundations, rock alignments, or rock mounds might be historic-era features.

Human Remains Human remains, suspected human remains, burials, funerary objects, sacred objects, or items of cultural patrimony are to be treated in the manner outlined above. **Additionally, Plateau CRM is to be notified by phone immediately.**

Oakesdale Mill Rehabilitation Project, Whitman County, Washington
Unanticipated Discovery Plan and Treatment of Archaeological Materials

Emergency Dispatch in Whitman County

Sheriff, non-emergency	509-397-5585
Whitman County Coroner	509-284-2423

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

Amelia Stanger, THPO	509-634-2695
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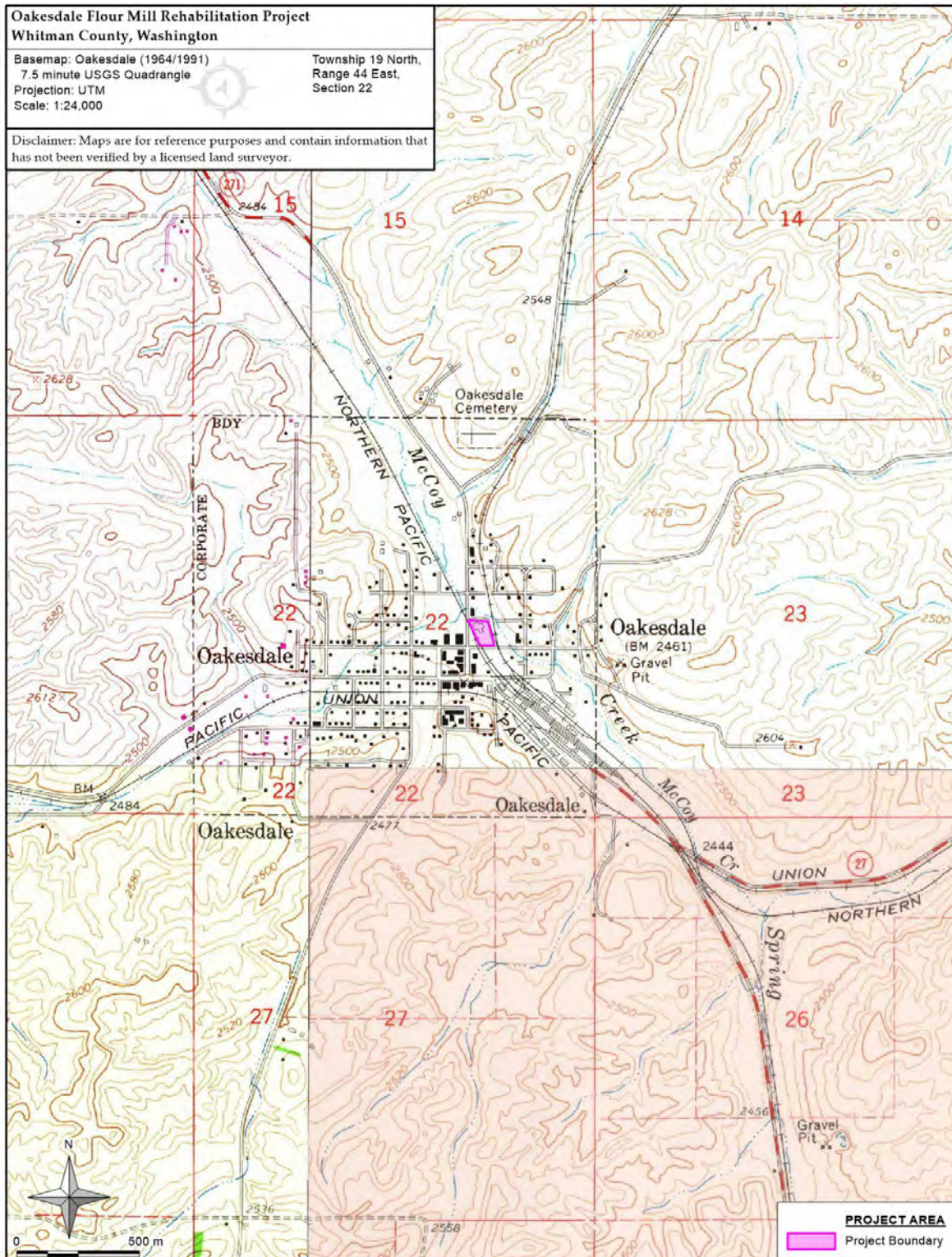


Figure 1. The Project Area on a portion of the Oakesdale USGS topographic map.

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Figure 2. The Project Area on an aerial photograph.

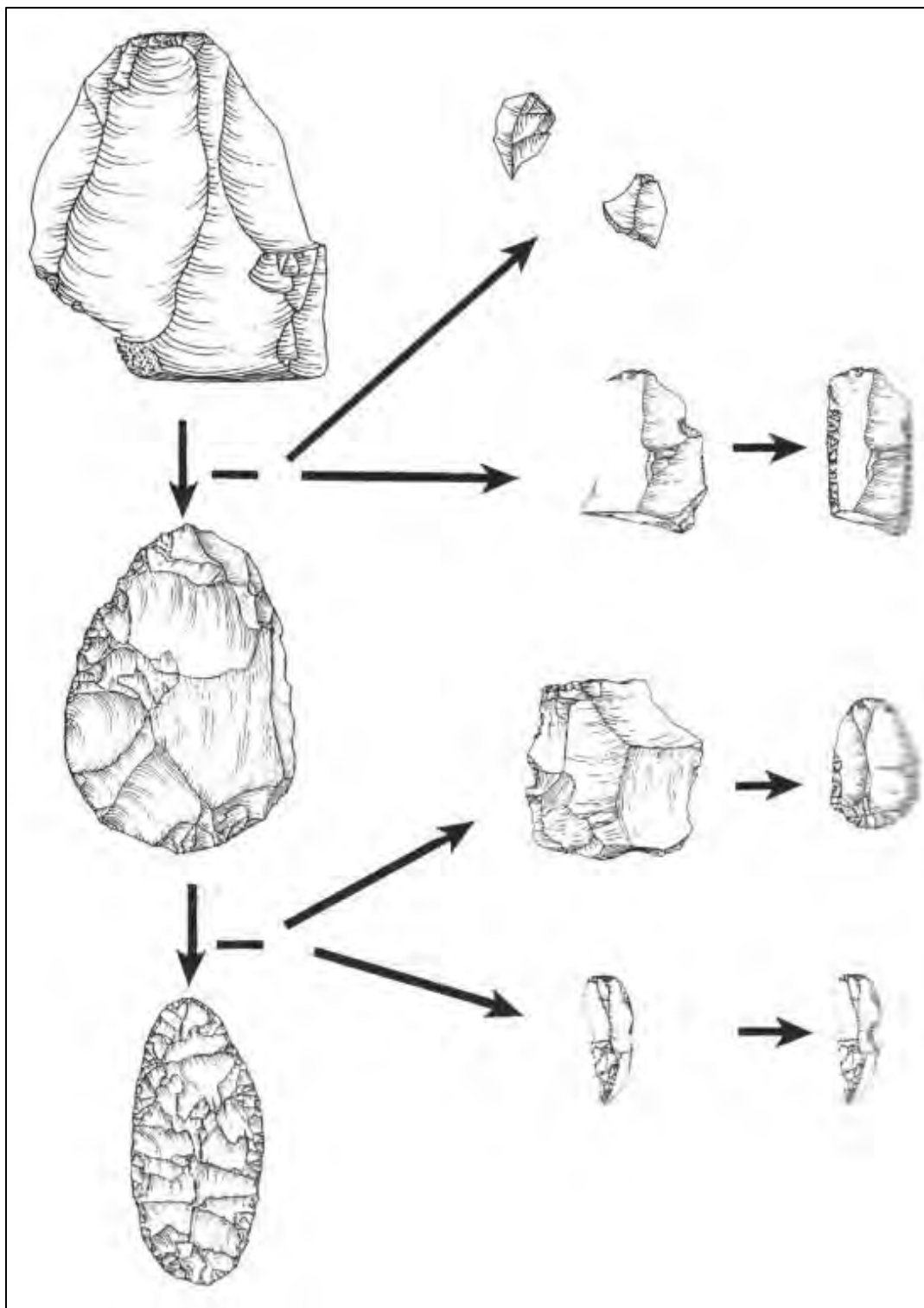


Figure 3. Reduction of a lithic blank to a tool (Andrefsky 1998:158).