Blanchard River Watershed Deepening and Widening Measure

How does deepening and widening work?

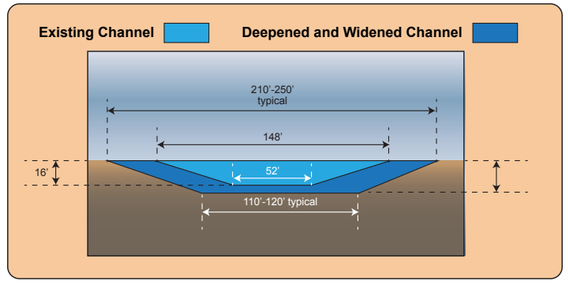
Deepening and widening works by creating a larger cross-sectional area of flow within the Blanchard River, reducing the amount of water that flows in the floodplain, and lowering water levels within the city of Findlay.

Is deepening and widening technically feasible?

An option to deepen and widen the Blanchard River was developed with the goal of achieving a similar level of flood risk reduction as presented in the April 2015 Recommended Plan.

The team began by considering existing constraints:

1. In order to avoid the potential expense of bedrock excavation, the team limited the depth of deepening to just two feet
2. To avoid potential issues with the listing of the Blanchard River on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory, Rt 140 was selected as the end point of the measure
3. Finally, since the existing channel has 3:1 (horizontal:vertical) side slopes, the same side slopes were retained



After the limits were set, channel widths were increased until the 100 year flood plain, within the city of Findlay and downstream, was equivalent to that of the April 2015 Recommended Plan.

The resulting channel would be:

1. Widened to a top width of 210'- 250'
2. Have bottom with of 110'-120'
3. Deepened to 18'
4. A length of three miles

The deepened and widened channel would be twice the size of the existing channel for three miles through downtown Findlay.

Deepening and widening Eagle Creek would also be required to achieve the same flood risk reduction as presented in the April 2015 Recommended Plan. This action was determined to be impractical because of extensive and costly bridge work and environmental impacts.

To provide written comments related to the Blanchard River Watershed Study, please contact the study team at:

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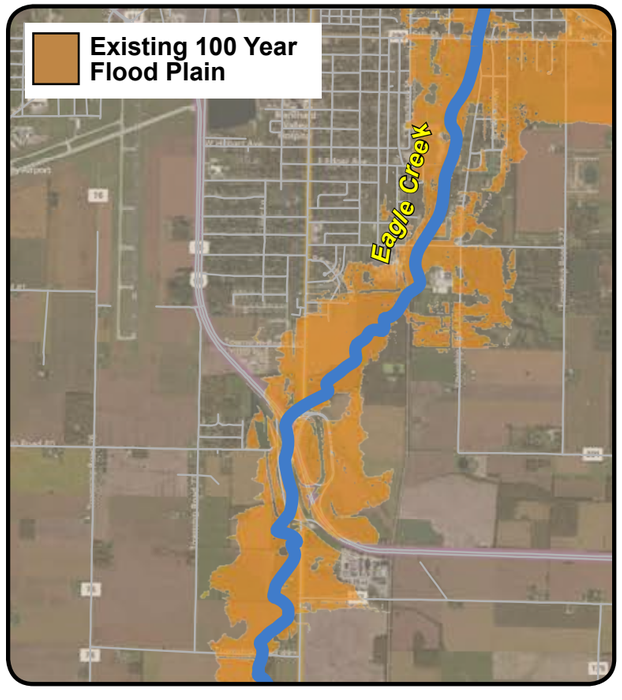
Deepening and widening the Blanchard River and Eagle Creek cannot be implemented

The study team conducted extensive coordination with state and federal resource agencies to quantify and compare environmental impacts associated with the deepening and widening measure and the current recommend plan.

Per Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act, the current recommended plan is considered the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) because it provides an equal or greater level of flood risk reduction and fewer adverse environmental impacts compared to the deepening and widening measure. Because The deepening and widening measure is not the LEDPA, the Clean Water Act prohibits federal and non-federal entities from implementing this alternative.



In the expert opinion of project planners, the deepening and widening measure would also be economically unjustified because benefits would decrease while operations and maintenance, and construction costs would increase compared to the current recommended plan. Because the study team determined the deepening and widening measure was not permissible under the Clean Water Act, investing additional time and resources to conduct a complete cost analysis was also unjustified.

Compared to the August 2015 Recommended Plan, the deepening and widening measure would:

- Result in roughly three times the acreage of riparian wetland impacts
- Adversely impact more than three times the linear footage of stream
- Adversely impact the Findlay Downtown Historic District
- Potentially impact state and federally listed threatened and endangered species
- Likely result in the excavation and exposure of contaminated soils
- Require significant mitigation and associated costs

Impacts to cultural resources include:

- Nineteen individual architectural resources
- Four archaeological sites
- Five neighborhoods w/archaeological potential
- A portion of the Findlay Downtown Historic District (a National Register of Historic Places property)

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