

MEETING SUMMARY

Advisory Committee Meeting Flood Control Zone District February 19, 2013 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Location

Hearing Room, Skagit County Administrative Building, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA.

Meeting Purpose

For the Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) Advisory Committee (AC) members to conduct normal business and:

1. Skagit River General Investigation (Skagit River GI) Update
2. Congressional Briefing
3. To determine next steps and assignments, if any, for Technical Committees (TC)

Attendance

Daryl Hamburg stated Shirley Solomon resigned from her position with the Skagit Watershed Council, and the Flood Control Zone District Advisory and Environmental Technical Committees. Hamburg asked Dave Pflug to find a member from the Environmental Technical Committee to take her position.

Hamburg also mentioned member Mayor Mike Anderson, City of Sedro-Woolley, has been absent from the AC meetings for more than three consecutive times. If Anderson chooses to no longer participate in the AC, Hamburg recommended Ramon Hayes, Town of LaConner, be invited to participate again. He had stepped down from his position to allow the City of Burlington to be a member of the AC instead.

Hamburg opened the floor for discussion. Esco Bell asked if the City of Sedro-Woolley had been contacted recently to clarify the status of the entity's membership. It had, but Dan Berentson volunteered to send a letter to Mayor Anderson, via the Skagit County Board of Commissioners (BCC), requesting an update.

As discussion continued, Leonard Halverson mentioned the new Mayor of Hamilton might be someone to consider. Berentson suggested the upriver Mayors are due for a meeting regarding a Skagit River GI update. This meeting would provide a good opportunity to find other interested participants to be considered by the BCC.

Membership changes will be put on hold until Mayor Anderson confirms his entity's status with the AC.

Acceptance of December 10, 2012 AC Meeting Summary

Meghan MacMullen mentioned she changed "levee" to "levy" on page three, paragraph four. The version, previously emailed, had the incorrect word.

Larry Kunzler stated the word "floodways" should be listed in the last paragraph of page one. Sentence should read: "NHC will be studying the economic impacts and hydraulic effectiveness of floodways, overland flow bypasses, and levee setbacks."

Kunzler also requested a change be made to paragraph six of page two to clarify Gary Jones' idea regarding drainage. New sentence should read, "Kunzler suggested the Skagit GI be redirected based on Gary Jones' suggestion of putting in a proper drainage system that local farmers could use year-round, thereby contributing to the preservation of farmland."

Berentson and Jones mentioned the first sentence of paragraph six, on page two, should read, "The tide gate initiative requires the agricultural community to convert 2,700 acres of land to fish habitat in the floodway."

With the above-mentioned amendments, Jason Easton made the motion to accept the meeting summary. Jones seconded. Motion passed (11/0/0).

Skagit River GI Update

Kara Symonds reiterated NHC is under contract with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct the alternatives analysis for the Skagit River GI. The work was slightly delayed, but work is still expected from NHC. The consultant is studying the effectiveness of storage at the Upper and Lower Baker Dams, some issues with modeling at the Burlington-Northern Santa Fe Bridge, and modeling all three alternatives. Alternatives will be analyzed and compared further when the information is complete. The public outreach plan will most likely include the USACE providing a presentation to the AC, City Councils, and upriver groups.

Berentson asked Symonds to speak to the real estate component of the alternatives. Symonds stated the preliminary information currently being gathered will be used to get an idea of which properties could be affected by overland flows and levee setbacks.

Easton asked when the public outreach effort will begin. Symonds estimated outreach to take place during April, May, and June. Carol Ehlers asked when the public will be given a presentation. Symonds stated there will be a public meeting during that same time frame. Berentson added there will be roughly 25 – 30 presentations provided to varying groups.

Ehlers also inquired about a schedule to work with the Skagit County Planning and Development Services Department. Berentson said discussions have been held regarding Skagit County Public Works (SCPW) coordinating more effectively with the department. Ehlers added SCPW should review the draft *Shorelines Master Plan* and how it may affect levees. The County should also review the shoreline analysis as it pertains to every reach in the system. The analysis should be considered an inventory.

Kunzler asked that all speakers announce who they are when talking at the upcoming public meetings, especially during public comment. He also thinks the meetings should be recorded. He felt the USACE's log of comments from previous meetings was inadequate. Kunzler would like a copy of the minutes from the National Environmental Protection Act meeting last August, as well.

Lorna Ellestad suggested the landowners who may be impacted by the alternatives be contacted. Symonds and Berentson agreed it was a good idea. Symonds added clarification that NEPA will be reviewing the alternatives too. The end goal is a document that integrates the Feasibility Report and an Environmental Impact Statement.

Henry Hash stated public outreach is critical and there can never be too many public meetings when it comes to discussing the alternatives. Hamburg asked for suggestions to broaden the

group of those being included in public outreach. Jones feels drainage district commissioners should definitely be involved, because some of the alternatives will impact their areas. Hamburg, Kunzler, and Dean Flaig echoed the sentiment that everyone who could be affected by the alternatives be informed.

Flaig pointed out Hawaii has simple waterways, about 21' deep by 50' across, that hold water when needed. Hamburg encouraged that people should visit the flood gates at the Stillaguamish River. It was very effective in emptying the flood plain.

Ellestad asked if NHC is modeling outlet structures. Symonds said outlet structures will be included later in the analysis, and what will be necessary for each alternative. She should have a list of the outlet strategy available by the next AC meeting.

Congressional Briefing

Berentson and Hash felt it prudent to hold a Congressional Briefing while both Representatives Rick Larsen and Suzan DelBene were in state. A briefing was scheduled in January in the BCC Hearing Room. Local Mayors and Dike District Commissioners were invited to attend. Senators Murray and Cantwell sent representatives. It was a good opportunity for people to dialogue regarding the status of the Skagit River GI and funding.

Hash added that Representative Larsen said the Community has federal support when ready to implement a flood project, as long as the local support is still present. Several entities are currently providing financial support for the Skagit River GI. Berentson continued by saying the City of Burlington will contribute \$75,000, and Town of Hamilton will monetarily contribute to the GI, as well. In the past, the Cities of Mount Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley have contributed monetarily.

Bob Helton inquired about notes from the Congressional Briefing. Symonds briefly presented on the alternatives and provided a summary of recent work. Consensus seemed to reveal the meeting should have been recorded by Skagit 21, because several elected officials were sharing the same thoughts regarding finishing the Skagit River GI.

Hamburg pointed out the Skagit River GI is like the "poster child" of feasibility studies in the nation. He feels the study has been referenced several times on a federal level. It is crucial to stay focused.

Ehlers pointed out the County is one of a few places that offers flood insurance. Several people say there should be no "protection" for those affected by natural disasters. Berentson said the County has maintained a Community Rating System ranking of "4". The County is one of about five communities in the country in which residents save about 30% on flood insurance cost.

Easton inquired about continued federal funding for the study. Berentson said the USACE has received an additional \$50,000 to use before it spends the money the County's contributed. When asked about federal funding, Adam LeMieux seemed somewhat optimistic about receiving money next year, due to the Skagit River GI being high-profile. David Radabaugh, Washington State Department of Ecology, added the department has asked for a capital program that mimics the Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP), since it has been underfunded. Radabaugh anticipates legislation in June or July that will make funding available again.

Public Comment

Ehlers, with the Planning Commission, was given the *Land Use Legislative Reform Ordinance of 2013*. She mentioned it is a document to which people should pay attention. The public was given about 10 days to review it, and Ehlers feels it should have been 30 days instead. The lesson learned from this is to give the public more time to review documents. Kunzler agreed, at times, the public is not given enough time to properly evaluate documents.

Ellestad mentioned chip sealing some roads is putting the houses, on those roads, out of compliance with the County flood ordinance. Ellestad asked if the County has plans to look at its roads, or if it has considered working in conjunction in order to demonstrate to the Congressionals that information is going to be realized as it is developed, and not wait for a federal project. She asked if it has been discussed to start building an annual maintenance schedule to identify and prioritize projects, and review where swales and flows paths can be incorporated. Hash stated the County is in preliminary stages to make improvements to two roads. He says the County will continue by collecting information from those who live in these areas.

Suggested Next Steps and Meeting

1. The next meeting's agenda should include time for updates on: public outreach, the CFHMP, and funding.
2. Follow-Up on attendance. Easton volunteered to contact Todd Carlson, Washington State Department of Transportation, to check on his membership status, as well.
3. The next meeting will take place on Monday, April 15.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

PRESENT AT FCZD ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING:

Name	Representing	Affiliation	Present	Absent	Proxy
Anderson, Mayor Mike	Cities and Towns	City of Sedro-Woolley		X	
Boudinot, Bob	ETC	Skagit Land Trust		X	
Boudreau, Mayor Jill	Cities and Towns	City of Mount Vernon			X Esco Bell
Carey, Bob	ETC	The Nature Conservancy		X	
Carlson, Todd	LUTC	WA Dept. of Transportation		X	
Easton, Jason	LUTC	LUTC	X		
Flaig, Dean	DDTC	Drainage District 21	X		
Halverson, Leonard	At-Large	Sterling Area	X		
Hamburg, Daryl	DDTC	Dike District 17	X		
Hughes, Robert	LUTC	Ag. Adv. Committee			X Gary Jones
Kunzler, Larry	At-Large	Skagit River Flood Historian	X		
Nelson, Stanley	DDTC	Dike District 22	X		
Pflug, Dave	ETC	Seattle City Light	X		
Sexton, Mayor Steve	Cities and Towns	City of Burlington			X Garnor Bensen

STAFF	
Name	Affiliation
Berentson, Dan	Skagit County Public Works
Hash, Henry	Skagit County Public Works
MacMullen, Meghan	Skagit County Public Works
Symonds, Kara	Skagit County Public Works

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES	
Name	Affiliation
Chesterfield, Blaine	City of Mount Vernon
Ehlers, Carol	Citizen
Ellestad, Lorna	Dike, Drainage, and Irrigation District 12
Ertel, Cory	Puget Sound Energy
Gentry, Brian	Puget Sound Energy
Helton, Bob	Citizen
Moore, Jack	SC Planning & Development Services
Netik, Irena	Puget Sound Energy
O'Donnell, Dan	Citizen
Olson, David	Dike District 3
Radabaugh, David	WA State Department of Ecology