

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **Advisory Committee Meeting Flood Control Zone District September 19, 2012 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.**

#### **Location**

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

#### **Meeting Purpose**

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

1. Acceptance of Meeting Summary
2. Skagit River General Investigation Update
3. Dam Storage
4. Farm, Fish, Flood Initiative
5. To determine next steps and assignments, if any, for Technical Committees (TC)

#### **Acceptance of July 16, 2012 AC Meeting Summary**

Stan Nelson made the motion to accept the meeting summary. Jason Easton seconded. Motion passed (9/0/0).

#### **Ground Rules Revisited**

Daryl Hamburg, Chairman, provided a list of ground rules that revisited the way in which members of the AC and public should conduct themselves during a meeting.

#### **Skagit River General Investigation Update**

Kara Symonds provided an update on the Skagit River General Investigation (Skagit GI) through a presentation. Her overview of the year included milestones such as the Feasibility Scoping Meeting, Alternative Formulation Workshop, and the public outreach efforts regarding the alternatives. A contract has also been executed between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and NHC for the purposes of modeling, economic assessment, and an update on hydrology and hydraulics.

The next steps for the Skagit GI involve comparing the alternatives. Major aspects to consider include risk reduction to life, agriculture, and environment. Other items to be considered will be economic damage reduction, construction, operation and maintenance costs, and overall acceptability. In 2013, there should be an alternative analysis and selection of a plan. A report should be finalized by the fall of 2014, with the Chief's final report being finalized in the fall of 2015.

When asked about the modeling and variables, Symonds added HEC-RAS will be used with numerous parameters when running the scenarios; about four variables and five sub-variables will be considered.

#### **Dam Storage**

Dan Berentson started by reiterating there is a placeholder for an additional 29,000 acre feet of hard storage, and changing seasonality to October 15 under the Baker FERC license. The

County recently learned the Lower Baker could hold about 20,000 more acre feet without further dam modifications.

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) has provided preliminary analysis to USACE:

1. Seven years analyzed from 2003 to 2010
2. Period of analysis is from October 15 to February 28
3. Assumes constant daily inflow; ramping not included
4. Reservoir operation assumptions are built in and consistent with seven years of analysis
5. Downstream environmental lake productivity impacts have not been included

Irena Netik, PSE, provided an update on recent dam projects on the Lower Baker River. A power house will be complete in August of 2013. Abutments have been raised on both sides of the dam to direct water over the top of the dam in the event of high capacity.

### **Farm, Fish, Flood Initiative**

Berentson stated several agencies, tribes, and NOAA are working together regarding farming, fish habitat, and flooding. The three goals of the group are to establish restoration habitat in tidal areas to meet the requirements of the *Skagit Chinook Recovery Plan*, reduce flooding in the delta, and protect and improve agricultural land and infrastructure.

Some work products expected to come from this initiative include a hydrodynamic model to determine downstream restoration opportunities, and a critical mass study to determine the future needs of the agricultural community. The Skagit County Board of Commissioners will be asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding supporting the three goals of the Initiative.

The County has been involved in the dialogue for about three months. Conversations have taken place with the Swinomish Tribe, and are scheduled to continue with the Upper Skagit and Sauk-Suiattle Tribes. Also, a grant worth approximately \$300,000 has been secured through the Environmental Protection Agency to pay for things like the above mentioned work products.

### **Public Comment**

Lorna Ellestad asked how the new modeling will differ from the work NHC has produced thus far. Berentson stated the modeling will be directed where the best restoration opportunities exist; most likely lower Mount Vernon. Symonds added information from the Evaluation Areas Study will be incorporated.

Bob Helton inquired if it is too late or too uninteresting to develop a ration of floodway in order to salvage the rest of the system, and stated it appears the County is ready to request money from the citizens to fund the County's share of the Skagit River GI study. Berentson said the County is not ready to decide the funding mechanism for the study. Funding will be researched when the community preferred alternative has been determined. Symonds added the floodways are still being considered in the alternatives.

Dan O'Donnell asked if LaConner is a subset of the Swinomish Bypass Alternative. Symonds answered that LaConner is a subset of all the alternatives. LaConner will need added protection if water leaves the system and sheetflows. Larry Kunzler asked the term "sheetflow" not be use, because he feels it is misleading. Sheetflows occur on flat floodplains, and the valley's floodplain is not flat. The old swales of the river will fill up first. Also, he added that any restricted water will flow faster, referring to the Sterling Bypass project.

Helton mentioned Canada has a 200-year flood plan. He suggested, as part of the safety analysis, the County and USACE consider modeling for that size of a flood, as well. Symonds answered nine runs will be done that include a 250- and 900-year flood.

Easton asked Kirk Johnson to speak to the grant the Envision program recently acquired. The State Department of Commerce gave a \$200,000 grant to the County for the transferring of development rights in order to conserve lands. An advisory committee will be formed.

**Suggested Next Steps and Meeting**

1. The next meeting will take place in December; most likely December 10. A meeting notice will be sent in November.

**Adjourn:**

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

**PRESENT AT FCZD ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Proxy</b>
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		
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	
Solomon, Shirley	ETC	Skagit Watershed Council	X		

<b>STAFF</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Berentson, Dan	Skagit County Public Works
MacMullen, Meghan	Skagit County Public Works
Symonds, Kara	Skagit County Public Works

<b>OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Chesterfield, Blaine	City of Mount Vernon
Ellestad, Lorna	Dike, Drainage, and Irrigation District 12
Ertel, Cory	PSE
Helton, Bob	Citizen
Hintz, Sally	Liaison for Senator Maria Cantwell
Johnson, Dan	USACE
Johnson, Kirk	Skagit County Planning & Development Services
Netik, Irena	PSE
O'Donnell, Dan	Citizen
Shultz, John	Attorney for Dike Districts 1 and 12