

Consolidating Motions for Identifying Measures to Move Forward in Draft CFHMP

The FCZD Advisory Committee met on 8/17/09 to consider motions from the Environmental and Land Use Technical Committees regarding projects and measures that those committees believe should move forward on a draft CFHMP short list. The projects have potential for both significant flood risk reduction and environmental restoration. The AC had previously (7/20/09) considered, and had taken action to approve (as amended), a short list of projects that had been brought forward by the Dike and Drainage Technical Committee (see below).

At their 8/17/09 meeting the AC took action to approve (first vote) the ETC motion as proposed. The AC also took action to amend and approve (first vote) the LUTC motion. The amendment removed the Nookachamps and Harts Slough storage projects from the original LUTC motion.

The AC requested that County staff consolidate the motions, and reconcile the ETC and amended LUTC motions for further discussion and a second vote at the next meeting. Following the AC meeting the ETC reviewed and approved modifying its original motion for purposes of clarification (no substantive changes) in order to clarify its intent (as requested by the LUTC and AC).

The AC approves the following short list of projects/measures to be included in a first draft, of a future CFHMP.

Short list projects already approved by the AC (from DDTC recommendations):

1. Hamilton Relocation and Property Buy-out...The community has been working on this for many years. This project is vital to the continuing survival of the community and will provide salmon habitat restoration benefits.
2. Ring Dike - Sedro Woolley Waste Water Treatment Plant... Makes sense. Keep the raw sewage in the plant. Keeps Sedro Woolley's city sewage system functioning?
3. Ring Dike - United General Hospital... Design needs to include access to the hospital during an emergency. Needs additional hydraulic modeling.
4. Burlington Levee Certification... Design will not remove City from 100-year flood plain but will reduce base flood elevations within City limits and the flood risk to critical infrastructure with the least amount of impact to the environment. Water running through the city and then back to the river or the sound... not good. Life and property! The dike district and the City of Burlington have an interlocal agreement and have hired PIE and Golder Engineering as primary consultants. They are in the process of completing the geotechnical engineering and hydraulic modeling work; work is 60% complete. Dike 12 has been actively purchasing right of way for this project.
5. Three Bridge Corridor Levee Set Back and Certification... This project ties into the Burlington Levee Certification project. Project is currently in NEPA review utilizing Federal Highways Administration funding. Skagit County is the lead agency in cooperation with the Cities of Mount Vernon and Burlington and Dike Districts 12 and 17. Current design will set levees back 200 – 500 feet from bank of the river between the BNSF and the I-5 bridges and increase conveyance. Dike Districts 17 and 12 have invested several million dollars for purchasing right of way for this project since the 1995 flood and the City of Burlington has established a 600' building moratorium for this project to help insure its success.

6. Ring Dike - Anacortes Water Treatment Plant... This is a vital facility providing the water supply for the City of Anacortes, Oak Harbor and LaConner as well as the Anacortes refineries and Whidbey Island Naval Air Station. Water surcharge has been put in place by the City of Anacortes to fund facility improvements including flood control.
7. Down Town Mount Vernon Flood Wall and water front redevelopment...Project includes 9,300 linear feet of floodwall and levee to protect historic downtown Mount Vernon and the Mount Vernon Waste Water Treatment Plant (MV WWTP). The project is designed using the COE hydrology and the FEMA FIS FLO-2D model. As designed, the flood protection measure will remove select areas from the 100-year floodplain. Benefits of this project include protection of County and City essential public facilities; portions of I-5 and State Rt. 536, freight, passenger and commuter corridors through the protection of I-5 and the BNSF rail line. Flooding will also be reduced for several square miles south of downtown Mount Vernon. Preliminary engineering design, environmental review (SEPA, EIS and NEPA), Shoreline Substantial Development permit and the Hydraulic Project approval have been completed. With more than 50% of the funding in place, five of the required seven right-of-way properties have been acquired and the final design is currently under contract.
8. Ring Dike – La Connor...Existing levee will be expanded and improved to keep flood waters out of the Town of LaConner.

Short list projects approved by the AC (first vote) from ETC recommendations:

Note - Minor amendments have been made to this proposal by the ETC for purposes of clarification.

9. Setback Levees with Restoration

Measures #7 Levee setback below 3-Bridge (Main stem, S. & N. Fork), #8 Levee setback 3-Bridge, #10 Levee setback below 3-Bridge (Main stem and N. Fork), #13 Setback levees entire system, and/or #24 Riparian restoration. By setting back levees, removing the existing levees and rip rap, and restoring riparian vegetation between the new levee and the riverbank, flood water conveyance could be greatly increased while providing a riparian corridor that is important for fish and wildlife. All five of these Skagit GI measures have the potential to create these critical benefits but not all would need to be implemented. Which portions of which of these measures provide the best balance of flood water conveyance, environmental benefit, and feasibility needs to be determined through thorough analysis.

10. Fir Island Bypass

The Fir Island Bypass reduces flood risk by conveying flood waters directly to Skagit Bay thereby reducing flood elevations at Mount Vernon. If properly designed the project could provide off channel and riparian habitat for fish and wildlife. The project would improve existing estuarine habitat by restoring sediment supply, large woody debris, fresh water input, and fish access to the middle Skagit Delta.

Short list of projects approved by the AC (first vote) from amended LUTC

recommendations: Note - LUTC motion items #1 (endorsing the approved DDTC list of projects) and #2 (conditionally endorsing ETC list of projects) have been removed.

11. All the following storage measures identified in the Skagit GI list of preliminary flood reduction measures: #1 Upper Baker, #2 Lower Baker, and #3 Ross should be in the draft CFHMP short list. Storage continues to have the potential to be the most cost effective method of flood risk reduction. Storage should not be discounted due to design uncertainties, at least not at this time.