

**SKAGIT RIVER FLOOD CONTROL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

April 2, 2007

Flood Control Committee Members:

Charles Bennett – Present	Dave Olson – Not Present
William LaRue – Present	Neal Hamburg – Present
Jack Billman, Jr. – Not Present	Fred DeVries – Not Present
Ed Lipsey – Not Present	Herb Hanson – Not Present
Dan O'Donnell – Present	Ken Johnson – Present
Eileen Warchow – Not Present	Leonard Halverson – Present
Esco Bell – Present	Bob Dean for Don Moe - Present
Chris Hagedorn - Present	Richard Smith – Not Present
Rick Blair – Present	Konrad Kurp – Present
Chal Martin for Gus Tjeerdsma – Present	

Others in attendance: Arn Thoreen, Brian Faber, Gary T. Jones, Melissa Hagedorn, Jason Vanderkoy, Duane Clocksin, Conrad Rodney, Jim Kubbs, Bob Helton, Jim Martin, Ric Boge, Chuck Steele, Torey Nelson, Lorna Ellestad and Kathy Bowen.

Chairman Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Roll was called

Chal Martin requested that the following addition be made to the March 5th meeting minutes:

“Chal expressed concern about the County’s endorsement-by-default of the COE hydrology, since the Corps’ position is that it will not continue the GI process with its local sponsor unless its local sponsor accepts the COE hydrology and hydraulic model. Chal pointed out that the Corps hydrology would likely drive a much different and more expensive set of flood control measures, and in particular cause the additional flood storage proposed in the Settlement Agreement, to be chosen for elimination, thereby excluding this measure even though it had already been independently agreed to by all of the parties to the Settlement Agreement. He stated that this issue is not being addressed by current County policy and that the GI study should not continue until the foundational issue of the hydrology, as affected by the historic unrecorded flood estimates, was resolved.”

It was moved and passed that the above paragraph be added to the 2nd paragraph of the March 5th meeting minutes.

FEMA Flood Map Review & Schedule

Ric Boge reviewed the Corps flood maps created for FEMA which were displayed on the conference room tables. They also sent these same maps to the surrounding jurisdictions. The County’s GIS Department will make the maps user-friendly with identifying details so they can be easily read by the public hopefully sometime in May. These maps will eventually determine flood insurance rates for Skagit Valley.

- The preliminary FEMA flood maps are due out in June.
- Public meetings held in the community over two to three months ending in September
- After the second published notice in a local newspaper, which is expected to be about the end of September, there will be a 90-day appeal period beginning about the end of September and would end about the end of December 2007.
- If there are no appeals or limited protests, in January or February of 2008 FEMA will issue their letter of final determination to the affected communities and by June or July of 2008 the maps would become effective. The map data and study must be adopted by the communities before that time.
- If there are appeals and protests, during January 2008 FEMA will review the data provided which could take one to two months.

- By February or March FEMA would issue a revised preliminary FIRM, (Flood Insurance Rate Map), panel incorporating the appeal data resulting in a new base flood elevation. This panel will be re-released to the public with a 30-day comment period ending in approximately April of 2008.
- If comments are received, FEMA will address them, if no further input is offered, FEMA will send its letter of final determination to the communities. Then in approximately October 2008 the maps would become effective.

Gary Jones asked if, when challenging the panel would it include one or all of the panels? Ric suggested that Gary call Ryan Ike and ask that question.

Chuck Bennett requested that the Dike Districts also receive the maps the County has received. Ric suggested that Chuck review the maps that our GIS Department is working on and then broach the subject with FEMA. If anyone would like a copy of the existing Corps maps, as displayed at the Flood Committee Meeting, Ric would work with them. A draft handout from FEMA was available entitled *Frequently Asked Questions*.

Baker Dam Shorelines Hearing – Town of Concrete

The Town of Concrete will hold a public hearing April 9th at 7:00 p.m. The County's attorney, Davis, Wright, Tremaine, will be submitting a list of comments which, while remaining consistent with the Baker Settlement Agreement, will seek to further clarify the County's expectations. Highlights may include a request to place conditions on the proposed Shoreline Permit as follows:

1. Section 4.1 whereby PSE shall employ reasonable and best efforts to achieve reservoir draw down targets when a flood event is imminent within the operational buffer range that is used by Puget Sound Energy.
2. Section 4.1.2 require PSE to work with Skagit County to seek an agreement with the Corps to amend the Baker Water Control Manual to reflect a specific protocol for reservoir draw down.
3. All elements of the Memorandum of Understanding between Skagit County and PSE signed September 7, 2004, including Exhibit A. B. subset 1. Drawdown Targets and B. subset 2. Recreational Facilities at Lake Shannon.
4. Require PSE to work collaboratively with the County and the Corps in sharing information needed to fully evaluate the potential use of either Upper or Lower Baker for additional storage.
5. Require PSE to disclose any concerns related to dam safety or scheduled modifications to retrofit the existing facilities that could serve as an opportunity to enhance the operational flexibility at Lower Baker.

FCAAP Grants

Department of Ecology released its schedule of grants on the Flood Control Assistance Account Program. Ric Boge noticed that their website has improved with easy access and all of the forms included. Ric made handouts available to anyone representing a dike district or city.

- The grant applications have to be submitted to the Skagit County Engineer and the Department of Ecology no later than May 8th. Submissions will be prioritized and sent to the Department of Ecology for review by June 5th.
- By July 11th the applications will be ranked with awards being proposed July 23rd on their website.
- August 8th is set aside for public hearings on the proposed awards with August 15th the last day to submit written comments.
- The final award list will be issued August 22nd and posted on the Department of Ecology's website with September 1st as the first effective date of the grants issued. The grant schedule has been set back a couple of months and will need to be managed with two years (minus two months) to utilize the grant money on the project.

Ric made grant guidelines and the schedule available as well as pointing out that the website had all of the forms necessary. The County may apply for the Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan as well as matching funds for the Flood Study.

Chris Hagedorn – City of Mount Vernon

The City of Mount Vernon expects to take possession of a mobile flood wall called the AquaFence during June of 2007. This fence was manufactured in Norway with Dwayne Clockson, as Seattle's representative. Materials, foundation, and

construction will run approximately \$250,000. AquaFence requires a rigorous inspection program throughout the life of the wall. The foam pad underneath the AquaFence would need to be replaced every few floods but the other parts should last indefinitely. They consist of marine plywood with an epoxy coating and aluminum. The foam pad is relatively easy to replace according to Dwayne Clockson and could be done by the City's maintenance crew.

Chris stated there are over 12,000 structures at risk valued at over \$2.8 billion dollars in the downtown Mount Vernon area and the potential for losses from one flood upwards to \$1.4 billion dollars. Present strategy utilizes 30 to 40 city staff members, sandbagging efforts by citizens volunteering. The sandbag construction takes at least 12+ hours and depends upon 1,500 to 2,000 volunteers.

The AquaFence would begin on Main Street at the Division Street Bridge and run southward to Kincaid Street. Other strategies would be used from that point southward to the water treatment plant. Assembly and disassembly of the entire wall would take only a couple of hours. The AquaFence is very efficient needing only 30 to 40 people to deploy, and given the short time it takes to assemble, the AquaFence would allow a greater length of time to 'pull the trigger on a flood fight' compared to the traditional sandbag construction which is very labor-intensive and requires a public announcement of a flood fight needing 12+ hours for preparation.

NW Hydraulic Consultants' Findings

Torey Nelson gave a recap of why the County has taken another look at the flood estimates of the last four floods in the Valley. The County has retained NW Hydraulics to look at the data and assist the County in coming to a conclusion regarding the estimates. A draft report by NW Hydraulic Consultants, (NHC), was distributed. A presentation of the results of this report was given to the Board of County Commissioners last week by the President of NHC, Malcolm Leytham. The recommendations were that the estimates of the four unrecorded historic floods remain in the 100-year flood analysis but uncertainty of the magnitude of these floods should also be incorporated. Consultations with USGS and the Corps are needed to look at the data and agree upon ranges of uncertainty. The report will be finalized later this month.

Flood DVD

The 1 hour Flood DVD was postponed to a future meeting.

Dike District Representatives

Chuck Bennett said the newspaper article listing the areas where we are lacking representatives has been successful. Several interested parties have contacted Chuck but we have yet to hear from Rockport, Marble Mount, Allen Samish and Lyman.

Miscellaneous

Lorna Ellestad prepared and distributed a handout, 3/6/07 *Addendum to Project Management Plan – Interim PMP – Skagit River GI*.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.