



SKAGIT COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273-5625
(360) 336-9400 FAX (360) 336-9478

Skagit River General Investigation Congressional Briefing Friday, January 11, 2013 2:30 p.m. Skagit County Commissioners' Hearing Room

The meeting started approximately 2:30 p.m. with Dan Berentson providing introductions. Commissioner Dillon continued the opening with thanks to all in attendance. This was followed by everyone introducing himself/herself, including name and entity.

Berentson started with a chronology of the past few years of the Skagit River General Investigation (Skagit GI). After a funding crisis and the reset meeting, the Skagit GI is back on track. This is in great part due to Congressman Rick Larsen's office stepping in to continue support of the study. This was further cemented by a letter of support from all cities and towns. Of 650 studies, the Skagit GI is one of a few chosen to proceed with the "3x3x3" goal; the study to be complete in a 3 inch binder, within 3 years, for the cost of \$3 million.

Kara Symonds carried the message by giving an overview of the past year. Her presentation 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 Northwest Hydraulic Consultants 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. An alternative analysis and selection of a plan will take place this year. The three most reasonable alternatives, thus far, include two bypasses and levee setbacks. Of course, the "no action" alternative is always reviewed in every study. A report should be finalized by the fall of 2014, with the Chief's final report being finalized in the fall of 2015.

Congressman Larsen spoke to the budget process in Congress. The study is currently working under a resolution that expires in March of this year. Though funding sources maybe available from time to time, it is very clear the community will have to continue to financially support the process, as well. There are some construction funding sources that may be available at some point. The community and Congressman Larsen has made clear to the USACE that they want the study completed.

Congresswoman DelBene echoed the thought of needing to ensure funding for the Skagit GI. She requested information be routed to her in order for her to be better educated in what's taken part thus far.

Sally Hintz, liaison for Senator Maria Cantwell, and Max Brown, liaison for Senator Patty Murray, both supported the concern for finishing the study. They understand much is at risk and the flood issue is a priority. Adam LeMieux, Deputy Director for Congressman Larsen, stated it would be a bigger waste to not finish the study.

Berentson invited those in attendance to speak. Mayors Ramon Hayes (Town of LaConner), Steve Sexton (City of Burlington), Jill Boudreau (City of Mount Vernon), and Dean Maxwell (City of Anacortes); Skagit County Commissioners Sharon Dillon, Ron Wesen, and Ken Dahlstedt; Daryl Hamburg (Dike District 17); John Shultz (Attorney for Dike District 1 and Dike, Drainage, and Irrigation District 12); Eron Berg (City of Sedro-Woolley); and Lorna Ellestad (Dike, Drainage, and Irrigation District 12) all voiced variations of the following:

- Finishing the Skagit GI is very important to the community, because flooding affects everyone.

- Staying unified within the community is extremely critical.
- Congressional support is extremely critical, as well.
- The Skagit GI is the “poster child” for the local and global issue of flood risk reduction.
- The Skagit GI will be a great tool to not only fund flood risk reduction projects, but will also boost transportation, economic, and recreational opportunities in Skagit County.

Mayor Sexton stated Burlington is providing \$75,000 to the study this year. Mayor Boudreau mentioned the Flood Wall in Mount Vernon as contribution.

Mayor Debra Heinzman, Town of Lyman, and Irena Netik, Puget Sound Energy, are glad to be part of the process.

Meeting adjourned around 3:25 p.m.

Name	Affiliation
Aylor, Jennifer	Eldred & Associates
Bell, Esco	City of Mount Vernon
Berentson, Dan	Skagit County Public Works
Berg, Eron	City of Sedro-Woolley
Boudreau, Mayor Jill	City of Mount Vernon
Brown, Max	Liaison for Senator Patty Murray
Carlson, Wendell	Dike District 25
Cromley, Joan	Town of Hamilton
Dahlstedt, Commissioner Ken	Skagit County
DelBene, Congresswoman Suzan	WA 1 st District, U.S. House of Representatives
Dillon, Chair Sharon	Skagit County
Ehlers, Carol	Skagit County Planning Commission
Ellestad, Lorna	Dike, Drainage, and Irrigation District 12
Gentry, Brian	Puget Sound Energy
Hamburg, Daryl	Dike District 17
Hash, Henry	Skagit County Public Works
Hayes, Mayor Ramon	Town of LaConner
Heinzman, Mayor Debra	Town of Lyman
Hintz, Sally	Liaison for Senator Maria Cantwell
Hoffman, Norm	Dike, Drainage, and Irrigation District 5
Larsen, Congressman Rick	WA 2 nd District, U.S. House of Representatives
Lefeber, Dan	Dike, Drainage, and Irrigation District 12
LeMieux, Adam	Deputy Director for Congressman Rick Larsen
MacMullen, Meghan	Skagit County Public Works
Martin, Kate	Skagit Valley Herald
Maxwell, Mayor Dean	City of Anacortes
Moe, Don	Dike District 1
Nelson, Jerry	Dike District 25
Netik, Irena	Puget Sound Energy
Randall-Grutter, Paul	Skagit County Public Works
Semrau, John	Semrau Engineering & Surveying
Sexton, Mayor Steve	City of Burlington
Shultz, John	Attorney for Dike Districts 1 and 12
Sullivan, Jim	Dike, Drainage, and Irrigation District 5
Symonds, Kara	Skagit County Public Works
Thomas, Scott	City of Burlington
Vanderkooy, Jason	Dike District 1
Wesen, Commissioner Ron	Skagit County
Wick, Don	Economic Development Association of Skagit County