



February 12, 2010

Congressman Rick Larsen
U.S. House of Representatives
108 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Request for Technical Conference to Resolve Skagit River Hydrology

Dear Congressman Larsen,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Skagit County, the City of Mount Vernon, the City of Sedro-Woolley, the City of Burlington, the Town of La Conner, and Skagit County Dike Districts 1, 3, 12, 17, and 22.

These local governments and special purpose districts, which together are responsible for flood protection and flood emergency planning for their constituents in the highest flood risk areas of the Skagit Valley flood plain, share a common interest in ensuring the underlying hydrologic analysis of the Skagit River basin is as accurate as possible. To that end, we have developed significant new technical information regarding the hydrology. We would like an opportunity for both FEMA's experts and our experts to sit in the same room, dedicate the uninterrupted and focused time necessary to go through the information, explain and discuss the technical arguments, defend technical positions, and then work together through all of the individual components of the analysis, point by point, to reach agreement if possible.

We have formally requested FEMA convene a 2-day technical conference March 17-18 in Washington D.C. to consider the Skagit River hydrologic analysis, with a specific emphasis on determining the nature of the historic floods of 1921, 1917, 1909, and 1897. So far, FEMA has listened but taken no action. We are requesting your office's involvement to facilitate convening such a conference.

We believe this request is consistent with the spirit and intent of FEMA's policy of working with local communities. Further, the situation with the Skagit hydrology is unique, and merits a special focus that this technical conference would provide. Finally, although it is the intent of the conference to try to reach agreement on the technical issues, we are not asking for any kind of binding outcome.

Our staff contacts for this request are Dan Berentson, Skagit County Surface Water Division Manager, (360) 336-9400; Lorna Ellestad, Skagit County General Investigation Project Manager, (360) 336-9400; and Chal Martin, Burlington's Public Works Director, (360) 755-9715.

Thank you for your consideration. This matter is of the utmost importance to our Community.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Brunz
Mayor

- c: Skagit County Commissioners
- City of Mount Vernon, Mayor and Council
- City of Sedro-Woolley, Mayor and Council
- City of Burlington Council
- Town of La Conner, Mayor and Council
- Commissioners, Dike District 1
- Commissioners, Dike District 3
- Commissioners, Dike District 12
- Commissioners, Dike District 17
- Commissioners, Dike District 22