



# SKAGIT COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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December 1, 2004

Colonel Debra Lewis  
United States Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District  
P. O. Box 3755  
4735 East Marginal Way South  
Seattle, WA 98124-3755

Re: Skagit River Flood Reduction Project

Dear Colonel Lewis:

This letter is a follow up to the Vertical Team meeting held on November 17<sup>th</sup> at Corps Headquarters. The purpose of this letter is to formally make two requests:

The Seattle District work within the framework of the FERC NEPA process to meet its NEPA responsibilities relative to additional storage in the Baker River system, and

- 2 The Seattle District submit the County's Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) work to Hydrologic Engineer Center (HEC) Davis for independent technical review consistent with the recommendations of the Vertical Team.

The goal of the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting was to identify a process to resolve team differences that have arisen in the implementation of the Project Management Plan (PMP), detailed in Section 2 of that plan. The meeting agenda included two topics:

- 1 A discussion of the Corps role as a "cooperating agency" related to the FERC NEPA consideration of the additional storage included as part of the relicensing for the Baker River Project.
- 2 Identifying a process to solve Project Delivery Team (PDT) differences related to the H&H modeling process.

Regarding the Corps role as a cooperating agency for the Baker River Project: Skagit County, Puget Sound Energy, state and federal environmental agencies, Indian Tribes and others have signed a Baker River Project relicensing settlement agreement that provides for additional storage for flood control on the Baker River System. This additional storage has proven to be very effective in reducing downstream flooding. The settlement agreement recognizes that the Seattle District will be involved in the implementation of the additional storage, including compensation for lost power generation. It is the County's request that the Seattle District work within the framework of the FERC NEPA

process to meet its NEPA responsibilities regarding the flood control elements of the settlement agreement.

Regarding the process to resolve Project Delivery Team differences related to the H&H modeling process: for more than a year, Skagit County staff and our consulting engineer have been working with the Corps to develop and calibrate the basin H&H models. This work is needed to identify the synthetic 100-yr flood event to determine size and location of the flood control measures. At this time Skagit County and the Corps have reached a serious difference of opinion regarding the H&H models. The Vertical Team discussed the following process to resolve the differences related to development of the models:

The County's consultant (Pacific International Engineering) would submit the calibrated model it prepared for the County to the Seattle District for review (delivered on November 22<sup>nd</sup>).

2. After a Seattle District review (within 30 days) the County developed H&H models would be submitted to HEC Davis for an independent technical review.
3. Both the Corps and the County would have direct access to HEC Davis to address questions or make presentations regarding the models.
4. HEC Davis would make results of the independent review available to the Vertical Team.

As Local Sponsor, Skagit County is very pleased with the progress to date and wishes to continue working with the Corps on this very important project. Your immediate action on these two issues is very important to advance the project toward implementation.

Sincerely,



Chal A. Martin, P.E.  
Director/County Engineer

CAM/lc

Cc: Senator Patty Murray  
Senator Maria Cantwell  
Congressman Rick Larsen  
Congressman Norman Dicks  
Skagit County Commissioners