

# Skagit River General Investigation Study

Public Outreach on Preliminary Range of Alternatives

April/May 2012

## ***We want to hear from you!!***

Please take the time to respond to the questions below. You can provide your comments by:

- ✓ Leaving this form with us today or at Skagit County Public Works
- ✓ Putting a stamp on this form and sending by regular mail
- ✓ Contacting Daniel Johnson at [REDACTED]

What are your thoughts regarding the preliminary alternatives for the Skagit River Basin?

First, my thoughts are those of Josef A. Kunzler and speak for nobody else nor any government nor any nonprofit entity. I have dealt with Skagit River Flood Risk issues as a consultant, photographer, researcher and webmaster for a decade now.

Second, my main concerns are affordability and effectiveness so my generation may have flood risk management. There is no sense planning for the Swinomish Bypass when between necessary environmental studies, the ever-present threat of Swinomish litigation which would drive up costs and delay, and the limits of Skagitian fiscal capacity the project is a nonstarter. Being 30 and realizing the last time we the people had a vote was 1979 – 33 years ago – we must get a viable project to voters and started. There IS truly an ‘urgency of now’ for my generation as many of us start families and remember 1990, 1995 plus the near-catastrophe only effective dam storage prevented in 2003.

Please rank the preliminary alternatives 1-6, with 1 being your most favorable preliminary alternative and 6 being your least favorable alternative.

|   |                                 |   |                                    |
|---|---------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 6 | No Action -Alt. 1               | 5 | Swinomish Bypass –Alt. 4           |
| 1 | Non-Structural -Alt. 2          | 2 | Urban Area Protection-Alt. 5       |
| 4 | Joe Leary Slough Bypass –Alt. 3 | 3 | System-wide Levee Setbacks –Alt. 6 |

Based on the above rankings, which preliminary alternative(s) did you favor and why?

- 1) I absolutely favor the non-structural alternative coupled to dam storage. We need dam storage as the most cost-effective, environmentally friendly flood protection measure. Only those advocating for dam removal, profits before people or fish before people could possibly oppose logical drawdown and storage requirements for public safety. We also need to limit development in the volcanic floodplain for safety & agriculture, which is what the nonstructural alternative does.
- 2) Urban area protection coupled to dam storage could be viable IF coupled to land use policies that cease further encroachment on the volcanic, agricultural floodplain and IF a local match only from the cities receiving protection. Please remember – we Skagitians will have to provide a local match and our fiscal capacity is limited.
- 3) Levee set-backs are intriguing but if carried out, the old levees should be removed. Otherwise this is a waste of time because the Skagit River will remain constrained.

Based on the above rankings, which preliminary alternative(s) did you least favor and why?

- 4) The Joe Leary Slough-Bypass is an intriguing proposal. Perhaps this proposal will have more public support than the Swinomish Bypass/Avon Bypass proposal lasting 90 years this September. However, I wonder if Skagitians can afford this proposal and if the science stacks up.
- 5) The Swinomish Bypass has triggered fierce opposition over the decades from landowners – both “white” and Tribal – plus fiscal watchdogs (Please see <http://www.SkagitRiverHistory.com/Avon Bypass Issues.htm> for historical background.). To me, although this is a rather great flood protection measure – the political reality is at the ballot box, between the controversy and the large tax increases necessary Skagitians will sadly reject this. My question is... then what?
- 6) Then what is option six – “No Action” – which is an absolute, incredible failure and betrayal. Millions of dollars, thousands of human-hours both paid (e.g. Seattle District staff, Skagitian local governments’ staff) and volunteer (e.g. my father Larry) invested to get nothing but gigabytes and dead trees full of data but no project. Furthermore, with “No Action”: What do you tell my generation and the one coming behind mine: You took our tax money and indebted my generation with your salaries & benefits doing studies *and* overstaffing too many meetings while we Skagitians have to wait for a catastrophic flood to make us the New Orleans of Washington State complete with catastrophic environmental damage, utter economic destruction, a diaspora and worse yet thousands of completely preventable deaths before the Corps of Engineers can truly lend a hand? Absolutely, positively, definitely unacceptable!!!



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Are there any additional features or concerns that should be considered in the study? Please be specific.

How about just plain dam storage? That should be option #1. We know dam storage works – just see your agency's records from the October 2003 flood event. We know dam storage is also likely the most fiscally efficient measure out there and will have long-lasting impacts on all levels of flooding short of the catastrophic. Even if dam modifications have to be made to Lower Baker Dams, a thoughtful contribution from Puget Sound Energy to this project is arguably in the long-term interests of Puget Sound Energy shareholders to ensure the dam's long-term viability and continuing returns to Puget Sound Energy shareholders.

Here's another feature: Just pare the study down to genuinely feasible options and get it done ahead of schedule, below budget. Cut the amount of staff at meetings billing to the Skagit GI to the bare minimum as well please.

Do you reside within the Skagit River Basin?  Yes  No

I live inside Sedro-Woolley city limits where the flood risk is not so great.

Would you like to be added to the Skagit River General Investigation Study mailing list?  Yes  No

If yes, provide us with your contact information so we can add you to the project mailing list (please print):

Name: Josef A. Kunzler Affiliation (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State WA Zip: 98284

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information or to submit other comments, please contact Daniel Johnson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers \_\_\_\_\_ Please send your comments no later than May 24, 2012. Thank you!

*Affix  
Postage  
Here*

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