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**To:** [NWS-Skagit-River-GI](#)  
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Ted Cook  
Mount Vernon, WA

Thank you for your wonderful presentation of June 19. It was a nice overview and good to hear what others had to say.

What I picked up was:

- people want it to be fair, not a we win you lose scenario
- Burlington wants to protect commercial real estate
- protecting Burlington is artificially shifting the problem to the Samish basin
- how does water get off the flood plain and into the Sound?
- In 1903 it was evident that building in the flood plain was a bad choice

Here is my view of the problem. At flood stage the Nookachamps pool fills up, then the outflow has to be 200K cfs, or whatever the exact number is. Then, that flow has to get across the railroad and I-5 somewhere, then that flow has to get to the Sound somewhere. The engineer's job is to trace that path.

Two or three questions:

- what is the max cfs channel capacity at the railroad bridge?
- what is the max cfs channel capacity at the downtown MV bridge?

And, is this assuming water passes over the bridge deck and through the steel structure? Is that a code compliant way to pass flood water?

Once those numbers are known:

- the overflow over hwy 20 to the north is the 100 year flood minus the railroad bridge capacity.
- the overflow overtopping the dikes at riverbend to the west is the railroad bridge capacity minus the downtown MV bridge capacity.

So, taking all that into consideration, I think the CULI is a good choice, but I think spilling water east of Sterling Hill is a bad idea.

Rather than ring dike the hospital, I believe a better plan would be to build a dike along hwy 20 and then north to Sterling Hill. Then build a dike from Sterling Hill just south of the Cook Rd. interchange. This would protect the hospital, the nursing home, many acres of farmland and houses, the eastern Samish, and most importantly, keeps the vital road link of Cook road to Sedro Wooley, since hwy 20 out of Burlington is submerged.

In this scenario, all the water spilling north is between Burlington business park and the Cook road containment levy. Once that 30cfs or so floods over I-5, however deep that would be, the water would spread out into Joe Leary Slough and the Samish River and into the Sound.

From an economic perspective I would hope for specific fairness. The people who receive the benefits should pay for them, and the people who absorb the damages should be compensated. In the natural state, the 100 year flood went down Guages Slough. There is photographic evidence of this, and apparently this is where the railroad was naturally washed out when the capacity of their main bridge was exceeded in 100 year events. So, maybe, any property within a 1/2 mile of Guages Slough should be levied at the highest rate, properties that are removed from the 100 year flood at the next rate, and everyone else in the county at a lower rate, for this flood project.

And lastly, the National Flood Insurance Program has to be mathematically solvent, where insurance premiums are equal to claims. Right now, there is no economic case for building a project, because the risk premiums are a government subsidized welfare program, so the rates are cheaper than building. When the risk premiums accurately reflect damages, then communities can better see the rational payback on taxing themselves for flood projects.