

From: [Brian Ferguson](#)
To: [NWS-Skagit-River-GI](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Skagit River Flood Risk Management
Date: Friday, July 18, 2014 10:48:56 PM

To whom it may concern,

I've been notified of a potential study to improve infrastructure to the Skagit River that would improve flood safety for specific areas. However, in doing so, it would pass the risk of flood to other communities. In this case, we are talking about the town of Sedro Woolley and other communities located farther east up the river.

Based on what I've read, I will not be directly affected by the plan since my property is near United General Hospital, one of the locations the improved infrastructure is intended to be safe. However, it is highly unethical to allow such an act to take place. What this is effectively doing is transferring flood risk from a developed area that has a stronger economy and larger population of people not only living there, but visitors to the general area as well, to another town and community which is smaller, lower income, older, and is home to people who would be hit a lot harder from such devastation as a flood than their counterparts, simply because of the far fewer resources they have access to in order to maintain themselves and their livelihood.

What this does is effectively discriminate towards the community and the individual people of Sedro Woolley inherently stating that because they are an older community, with a smaller economy, they aren't very important, or as important in protecting it's people, buildings, and business as other places such as Burlington and Mt Vernon. Basically this is stating that if you live around Sedro Woolley, your life is not as important as those who live and work in Burlington and the like. As a person, and as a community, you're not worth the effort to protect. This is the same as dumping nuclear waste in a remote lake with just a couple hundred people getting their drinking water from it, instead of storing it near a large reservoir because of the risk of contaminating a body of water that is used by hundreds of thousands of people.

This plan, should it continue, is doing nothing more than placing one group of people in danger in favor of another group of people. This is a horrible notion. In a situation like this, levies aren't the answer. "Transferring" risk from one community to another is not the way to help anyone. Especially when the group of people having to take the "risk" on are less able to help and fend for themselves in the event of a natural disaster. If people are really worried about the river flooding over, then dredge the river. Costs should be roughly the same if not less. And, instead of using up more raw materials from the earth to do the job, you can gain raw materials that can be used for other projects.

In the end, no one should have to bare a burden of destruction just so someone else can live without a "burden of risk."

I sincerely hope the USACE will come up with a far better solution than to place Sedro Woolley, it's people, and surrounding communities in greater risk of flooding, just so Burlington and Mount Vernon can be better protected from a disaster.