

From: [REDACTED]
To: [NWS-Skagit-River-GI](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ms. Hannah Hadley - comment on Skagit River Dike improvement, due by July 21, 2014
Date: Friday, July 18, 2014 11:09:55 AM
Attachments: [Flood Mitigation.docx](#)

Please accept and read my invited comments on the project. They are on the attached Word Document.

Thank you,
John Eades

[REDACTED]
Sedro Woolley WA 98284

[REDACTED]

Ms. Hannah Hadley
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
PO Box 3755, Seattle, WA 98124

July 18, 2014

Ms. Hadley:

My name is John Eades. My wife Barbara and I are Skagit County residents, living in southeast Sedro Woolley on our owned property at 907 Alexander St., Sedro Woolley WA. Sedro Woolley officials have recently advised residents of on-going studies and pending action by the Corps of Engineers with the eventual goal of modifying Skagit River flow patterns to mitigate flood risks (to certain select downriver property).

I could enumerate the general concerns of those residents upriver of proposed projects, but they have already been succinctly outlined in the Sedro Woolley resolution (No. 902-14) of July 10, 2014, and certainly in your possession. Instead, I request you and your technical and political personnel honestly consider that presentation empathetically, as if you and your family were in our position.

Twenty five years ago, you would have purchased property close to (but not too close, both horizontally and vertically) the Skagit River, anticipating retirement. The project was not taken lightly. The property was flat, well vegetated and in an area suited to your interests. Ten years ago, you designed a substantial home specifically for that property and over the next four years you personally constructed that home, nailing each stud and joist, erecting each wall, applying each shingle, making each electrical connection, etc., etc.

You investigated the flood risk. You obtained flooding records back to the 1930's. You acquired aerial photographs of serious area flooding from the 1940's through the present. You made flood risk decisions based on historical facts. You accepted that known risk.

Other people downriver did the same. They built homes, developed businesses, planted crops and made lives based on similar risk decisions. This is where the stories may diverge... The downriver entities made their decisions on riskier grounds, choosing that risk to take advantage of higher profit potentials or better views. They knew that risk. Then, unsatisfied with the risk, they employed the political process to improve their risk position. Their property values and population density, now of higher relative value than yours, must deserve greater protection – notwithstanding they made their previous purchase or development plans based on the same risk assessment you did. The Corps of Engineers must of course oblige. That is their ostensible job.

You wonder, where is the fairness in that?

By extension, your story is similar to hundreds of others in this area, different in detail but identical in form.

I agree improvement in flood control can be made, but only to the extent that future of the lesser is not sacrificed for the future of the greater. Apparently, under current budgetary restrictions, the needs of the lesser (read upriver, Sedro Woolley) are not conveniently addressable. They are then shut out of the conversation. I don't pretend to understand the fine points of gross hydraulics, but I recognize power politics.

I can't suggest solutions to the technical problems but they must include input from all involved in our democratic society, and certainly from those potentially most adversely affected.

Please (re) invite participation from the representatives of all those affected – Sedro Woolley, Lyman, incorporated Skagit County. If you do not, you cannot feel right about the process in light of the evaluation I have described. And if it does not feel right, it almost always is not right.

John Eades



Sedro Woolley, WA 98284