

RESOLUTION NO. _____

**In the Matter of the
Skagit River Flood Protection / Salmon Restoration Project**

WHEREAS, in response to the significant flood events of 1990 and 1995, Skagit County initiated a \$3.97 million study with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to evaluate the alternatives to provide flood protection to the lower Skagit River Delta, and

WHEREAS, the agreement to conduct this study provides for an equal cost share between Skagit County and the Seattle District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Department of Ecology, through its Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP), has provided funding to help defray the cost of the Skagit County study contribution, and

WHEREAS, total expenditures to date are approximately \$1.02 million for Skagit County, \$850,000 for the Department of Ecology through FCAAP, and \$1.22 million for the Seattle District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and

WHEREAS, this study effort so far has resulted in a sophisticated riverine hydraulic and floodplain model which now forms the basis of analysis of the level of protection provided by the existing levee system and magnitude of damages that would occur in the event of a 100-year flood, and

WHEREAS, the result of this model confirmed the existing levee system is inadequate to handle a large flood event, leaving the urban and rural areas of the Skagit River Delta exposed to the greatest flood disaster potential on the entire west coast of the United States, and

WHEREAS, a stakeholder group of Federal and State Resource agencies, Local Diking Districts, City Representatives and Property Owners formed as the Skagit River Working Group and recommended flood control alternatives to the Board of Skagit County Commissioners, and

WHEREAS, the Skagit River Working Group utilized information from the study effort to evaluate the various alternatives and reached consensus that two alternatives known as the Diversion Channel and Setback Levees should be studied for possible construction, being in the best interests of the people of Skagit County, and

WHEREAS, of the potential flood protection options, the Board of County Commissioners supports the flood Diversion Channel project, due to less cost, expected positive environmental benefits, and additional multi-purpose benefits

to all County Citizens and the Agricultural Community, while recognizing the necessity for a full and thorough environmental evaluation of all options, and

WHEREAS, the option of a "dry" flood channel which may be used for agricultural production shall be studied in the Environmental Impact Statement, as well as the option of a "wet" flood diversion channel, in order to provide information for determining the best overall approach for the Citizens of Skagit County should the Flood Diversion Channel be selected as the preferred alternative, and

WHEREAS, because of additional expenses related to environmental studies needed due to changes in environmental law and endangered and threatened species status since the original agreement was signed in July of 1997, the total cost of the Feasibility Study is now anticipated to be \$7.22 million, with the additional cost of habitat restoration studies estimated to be \$1.165 million, for a total study cost of \$8.385 million, and

WHEREAS, this proposed new budget will increase the Skagit County contribution to approximately \$3.2 million, expended over an 8-year period, and

WHEREAS, although previous attempts to authorize construction of a flood control project have not been successful, the threat has increased significantly over the last 25 years due to additional development within the flood plain, increasing risk to life and property, and

WHEREAS, additionally, over this time frame due to the value of development within the flood plain, the benefit to cost ratio of a proposed flood diversion channel project is now more than 4 to 1, much higher than the previously calculated benefit/cost ratio of just over 1 to 1, and

WHEREAS, development will continue in the flood plain to accommodate the needs of Skagit County Citizens for housing and business development consistent with the State Growth Management Act, and

WHEREAS, a major flood would cause tremendous and catastrophic damage to the business and economic infrastructure of Skagit County, endangering the health and welfare of Skagit County Citizens, and further resulting in regional interruption of potable water supplies, fuel supplies, and critical transportation corridors, and

WHEREAS, there currently exists no emergency plan which will adequately protect the lives and property of Skagit County Citizens, nor is there reasonable expectation that any emergency flood plan can ever be adequate given the constraints of the existing levee system, and without the 100-year protection afforded by a flood control project, and

WHEREAS, to date, this project is supported by the Cities of Sedro-Woolley and Burlington, the Town of La Conner, and the refineries at March's

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Point; the process to complete the Feasibility Study is supported by the Governor of the State of Washington and Washington's Congressional delegation; and, additional support is anticipated from other governmental jurisdictions, businesses, and citizens both within and outside of Skagit County, and

WHEREAS, investment in the Feasibility Study is necessary and appropriate in order to reach a decision point which will enable Skagit County voters to approve construction of a flood control project, which will then be the basis of a Congressional decision for a Federal appropriation for construction;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Skagit County Commissioners supports the Skagit River Flood Protection / Salmon Restoration Project and intends to move the project forward by:

1. Completing the Feasibility Study and recommending a construction alternative.
2. Putting the issue to a vote of the Citizens of Skagit County.
3. Requesting a federal appropriation from Congress to fund 65% of the project cost.
4. Given voter approval and the Federal appropriation through the Water Resources Development Act, ensuring project completion at the earliest opportunity in order to protect the lives, health, and economic well-being of the Citizens of Skagit County.

PASSED THIS 25th day of March, 2002.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Don Munks

Don Munks, Chairman

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

Ted W. Anderson

Ted W. Anderson, Commissioner



Attest:

JoAnne Giesbrecht
JoAnne Giesbrecht, Clerk of the Board