

Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan

Advisory Committee Meeting

June 9, 2008

4:00 – 6:00 PM



Meeting Agenda

Pre- 4:00 pm Sign in

4:00 Introductions, Purpose, Welcome

4:15 Presentation on Participant Interviews

5:15 Role of Advisory Committee

5:30 Chair/Vice Chair Elections

5:55 Next Steps

6:00 Adjourn

Meeting Purpose

- Begin update of Skagit River CFHMP in coordination with Corps of Engineers Skagit River General Investigation
- Hear results of participant interviews and consider input and impact on the course forward for the CFHMP process
- Organize and elect a Chair and Vice Chair
- Determine next steps and schedule

Participant Interviews

- Early interviews of participants to understand perspectives, commonalities, differences, and expectations
- Interviewed approximately 50 individuals, representing approximately 50 different stakeholder interests
- Educate/inform participants, including consultants
- Help consultant team develop approach for CFHMP

Interview Questions

- Background and interest in Skagit River flooding
- Goals and objectives; definition of success
- Specific flood problems
- Potential flood solutions
- Knowledge/perspective about previous flood mgmt efforts
- Relationship of current efforts – CFHMP, GI, Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan

Interview Questions *(cont'd)*

- Balance between environmental protection and reducing property damage
- Perspective about integrating salmon recovery elements with flood control projects
- Comments on appropriate criteria for selecting solutions
- Thoughts about costs and funding
- Planning process – comments and ideas
- Public involvement and level of public knowledge

Reminder: these are comments from interviews and not right or wrong!

Project Understanding

- Opportunity to bring people together, from different backgrounds and with different agendas, in order to accomplish a real set of goals
- Unanimous desire to protect people, transportation systems and infrastructure (especially critical infrastructure)
- Huge amount of awareness that past efforts have not resulted in much happening. So, this effort has to produce results and lead to rapid implementation.
- This is about risk reduction, not 100% protection (reducing liabilities is main focus)
- Skeptical, but hopeful

Project Understanding *(cont'd)*

- Be careful of solving one problem only to pass the problem to someone else.
- Still some misunderstandings about CFHMP – what it is, why now
- Lack of understanding of County's role in flood hazard management
- To the extent that the CFHMP considers all aspects of the issue (life safety, property damage, environmental, open space opportunities, economical) the more successful it will be at creating financial support from the public.
- CFHMP- right minded, systematic way to solve complex problems systematically

FCZD Organizational Structure

- General sense of uncertainty about organizational structure and how it will actually function
- Need free information/idea exchange
- Need interaction among Technical Committees
- Maximize involvement at all levels
- Advisory Committee members need to balance representing their Technical Committee and their constituent group with their role in working with other Advisory Committee members to develop solutions that are acceptable to all

Goals

- Implementable and fundable plan with a high level of practicality and timely actions and projects that solve real flood problems
- Visionary and advanced flood control plan that balances life safety, economic, environmental, fish, and wildlife issues
- Focus on risk reduction more than flood protection

Reminder: these are comments from interviews and not right or wrong!

Objectives - Themes

- Urban cores are protected
- Farmland doesn't take undue burden
- Whole watershed focus
- Land use needs
- Sustainability of efforts
- Aid in salmon recovery

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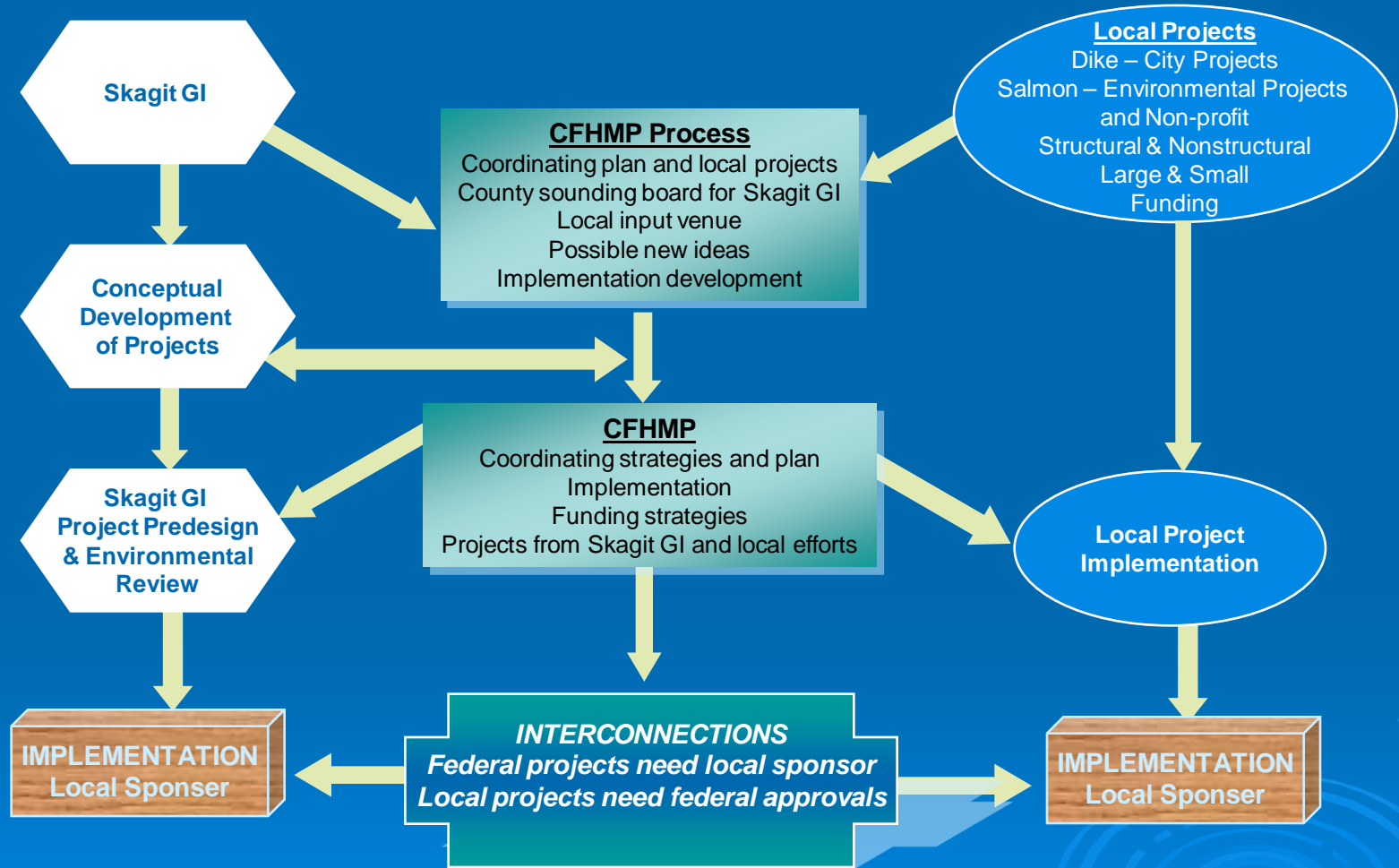
Objectives – Themes *(cont'd)*

- Locally directed
- Make the river more of an amenity
- Large and small projects
- Structural and non-structural projects
- GI Project purpose statement

Interconnections between Flood Hazard Management Efforts

- GI should not be only vehicle pursued for flood risk reduction – too dependent on federal funding
- Projects need to meet Corps standards so eligible for federal funding
- Confusion about link between two efforts, especially timeline
- Coordinate timing of efforts

Interconnection Model for CFHMP



Flood Hazard Mgmt Projects – Key Concepts

- Protection of critical infrastructure
- Storage versus conveyance –combination will be best
- Mix of structural and nonstructural projects is important

Flood Hazard Mgmt Projects

➤ Conveyance projects:

- Avon bypass
- Riverbend bypass
- Cross island connector
- Burlington levee certification
- Mt. Vernon downtown project
- Three bridge corridor
- BNSF bridge replacement
- Levee setbacks
- Goat Island rock dike – possibly remove
- Do not dredge river

Flood Hazard Mgmt Projects

(cont'd)

➤ Storage projects

- Nookachamps
- Baker Lake
- Middle reach of Skagit - Letting nature take its course

Flood Hazard Mgmt Projects

(cont'd)

➤ Nonstructural Solutions

- Limit development in flood-prone areas
- Relocation
- Floodproofing
- Insurance
- Encourage Low Impact Development (LID) and clustering
- Urban villages in upland areas

SKAGIT RIVER SUB-WATERSHEDS

FEMA 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN
CITY LIMITS



DRAFT

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

Baker Lake

Additional Storage

Levee certification
improvements

Avon
bypass

Sedro Woolley

- Relocation
- Limit structures
- Let nature take its course
- Important salmon spawning reach

Shellfish
beds

Three
bridges

Burlington

Bottleneck

Nookachamps Storage

Riverbend
bypass

Mt. Vernon

Mt. Vernon downtown
flood protection

La Conner

Setback levees

NON-STRUCTURAL SOLUTIONS

- Limit floodplain development
- Smart Growth
 - Low Impact Development (LID)
 - Clustering
 - Urban villages
- Preserve farmland
- Flood Overflow elements

Cross-Island
connector

Saltwater marsh
habitat needed

Balancing Objectives

- Skagit River is the most important Puget Sound watershed for recovery of chinook salmon
- Shared burden – flooding is a broad concern, so all need to be part of the solution
- Farmland is a regional asset – quality of life, economic, importance as part of the flood issue solution
- Consider projects that would also benefit Padilla Bay
- Consider impacts of climate change on flood events frequency and severity

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Balancing Objectives

- Contrasting views on balancing flood risk management and environmental objectives:
 - Integrate flood management and environment considerations/objectives
 - Focus only on flood management, which may include incidental environmental benefits.
Mitigate for environmental impacts

Potential Comparison of Integrated vs. Flood Focused Approaches

	Integrated	Flood-focused
Project outcome	Potential for meeting more interests	Primarily addresses one need
Funding options	More sources	Fewer sources
Support	Broad	Focused
Level of Complexity	More complex	Less complex
Cost	?	?
Impacts from Project	?	?
Timeliness	? Longer?	? Shorter?

Thoughts about Criteria for Selecting Projects

- Life safety!
- Higher level of protection for critical infrastructure
- Benefits of ecosystem restoration
- Satisfy multiple objectives
- Consider scale of projects – large projects may not be feasible so consider series of smaller doable projects
- Consider resource losses and how they impact the valley



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Thoughts about Criteria for Selecting Projects *(cont'd)*

- Consider impacts of floods on local and regional economy
- Frequency of floods and number of people affected
- Level of benefits to the region in general
- Chance of success
- Fundable
- Compatible with land use planning laws

Cost and Funding

- **Skagit County can't wait for Santa Claus to show up with the gifts!**
- Need funding from all sources – flood, salmon, transportation, parks, trails
- Take advantage of national interest in transportation corridor and critical facilities to access funding
- Consider legislative approaches to create new funding opportunities

Cost and Funding *(cont'd)*

- Consider establishing a County insurance program - Tax here to produce insurance for lost property (Over and above FEMA insurance)
- Consider system where those most impacted by flood pay more than those less impacted
- Recognition that local funding will be critical – differing views on best way to generate local funds

Public Awareness

- Residents outside flood-prone areas are less aware
- Don't give the public a false sense of security
- Public wants simple, direct information, but the problems are complex and interconnected
- Need for much more outreach – ties to public support for funding
- If public doesn't understand, it will default to NO
- Create a graphic of what a 100 year flood looks like

CFHMP Planning Process

- An approach that uses mutual learning, building relationships, focus on interests and identify potential partnerships
- “We need to solve your problem, and in doing so, also solve my problem”
- Consider an alternative futures process
- Have interest groups put themselves in the shoes of each other
- Confidence and trust in long term role of County

CFHMP Planning Process *(cont'd)*

- Don't reinvent past efforts and results
- Define timeframe for this effort and implementation
- Use clear terminology and language and define terms
- One suggested process includes:
 - Look at all the options, brainstorm
 - Narrow options down to a list that will solve problems and that has double benefits
 - Conduct Cost/Benefit Analysis

Discussion Issues

- Integrated vs. “mitigated” approach
- Workflow between Advisory Committee and Technical Committees
- Communication protocols for all
- Corps GI study – linkage
- Goals and objectives, mission?

Discussion Issues *(cont'd)*

- Logistics – meeting time and frequency
- Long-term planning and funding
- FCZD- Other duties of the Advisory Committee
- Other

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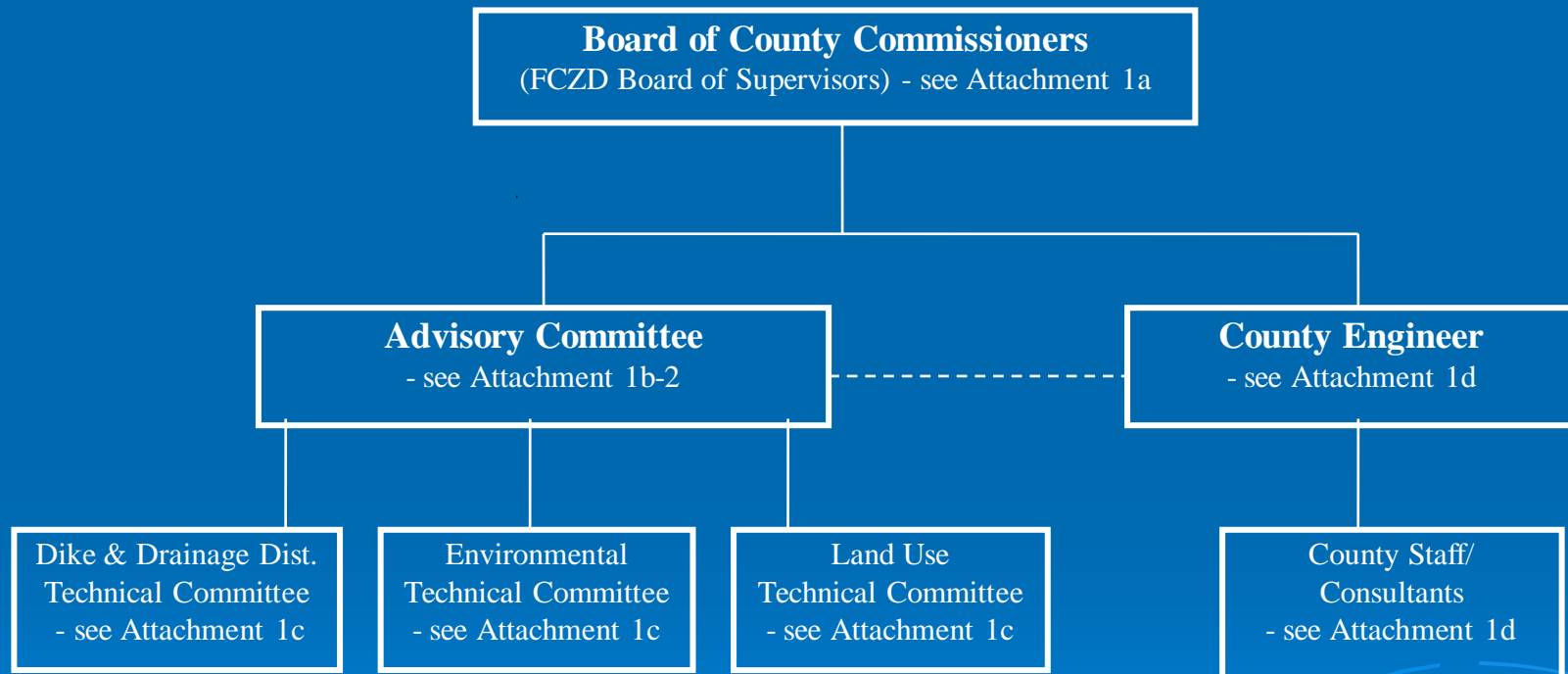
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bridges

Burlington

Mt. Vernon

Background – Resolution #R20070539

Skagit County Flood Control Zone District Governance & Administrative Structure



Background & Guiding Principles

February 2008

“The most beneficial community role the County can perform in County-wide flood damage prevention is to coordinate with our dike districts, cities and towns, local tribes, plus our state and federal government to find long-term solutions with multiple benefits.”



Guiding Principles

1. The community remains vulnerable to significant harm from flooding.
2. It makes sense for jurisdictions with responsibility for flood control to pursue a coordinated approach for solutions rather than acting individually.
3. Habitat protection and enhancement in the Skagit River system is critical to success of salmon recovery efforts in the Puget Sound region.
4. Local jurisdictions such as the Dike Districts, Cities and Skagit County have varied responsibilities for flood planning, protection and response. With the support of the Advisory Committee Skagit County is willing to lead this significant and comprehensive approach to flood hazard management planning to identify solutions that meet the needs of all jurisdictions.
5. This effort is intended to not duplicate, but to help accomplish work on flood control and ecosystem restoration planning being undertaken through the Skagit River General Investigation with the US Army Corps of Engineers.
6. Skagit County expects that community-wide support on these solutions will enable local jurisdictions access to significant state and federal monies to implement them.



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