

**Meeting Summary
Skagit Flood Control Zone District
Environmental Technical Committee Meeting
March 23, 2009
9 am - 12 pm**

Location

Agricultural Meeting Room at the Skagit Conservation District Office, 2021 East College Way, Mount Vernon, WA.

Meeting Purpose

1) To conduct normal business and 2) To consider work assigned by the Flood Control Zone Advisory Committee (AC).

Attendance

Members: Stan Walsh (Chair), Bob Boudinot, Bob Carey, Mary Raines, Jon-Paul Shannahan, and Bob Warinner. Staff support: Tom Karsh

Action Items: The Environmental Technical Committee (ETC) completed the tasks assigned by the AC. Assignment tasks and responses have been incorporated into following meeting summary notes under Technical Committee Assignment/Response section and will be forwarded to AC.

Welcome and Introductions: Stan opened the meeting by welcoming the ETC members (no public attendees were present). For the record Stan noted that the ETC did not have a quorum. A brief discussion ensued about the desire for more consistent committee attendance and participation. It was suggested (no official action taken) that the ETC membership rolls may need to be revised. It was decided to continue work to complete task assignment

Public Comment: None

Previous Meeting Summary: Approval of February 23, 2009 meeting summary was continued to next meeting.

Report out from 3/18/09 AC meeting: Bob Boudinot and Bob Carey provided an overview of the AC meeting. Bob Carey noting that in addition to the tasks assigned from the AC the ETC should consider clarifying under what, if any, circumstances ETC could approve "bypass" flood risk reduction measures. See "bypass" discussion result in the following Miscellaneous section.

Technical Committee Assignment/Response:

1) *Assignment:* For new measure #38 – interior drainage, provide additional project concept information including map(s), project components, project benefits and concerns, and potential costs. Response: Since there are no specific projects being proposed at this time the ETC will only offer a general response comment. Any changes to existing drainage infrastructure should minimize the stranding of fish; include consideration for safe collection and passage of fish to waterways/bay; and for restoration of fish habitat.

- 2) *Assignment: For habitat restoration projects in upper basin, new project suggested by the ETC, provide additional project concept information including map(s), project components, project benefits and concerns, and potential costs. Response:* There are no new specific habitat restoration projects being proposed at this time. Rather the ETC recommendation was to consider future restoration of the upper river tributaries (primarily the north side; e.g., Hansen Creek) if needed for mitigation or as stand alone restoration projects. Restoring these tributary natural processes should have multiple benefits including increased flood storage and reduced sedimentation. It is acknowledged that flood risk reduction from any individual upper tributary restoration project is probably minimal.
- 3) *Assignment: For City of Burlington Levee Certification project, provide additional project concept information including map(s), project components, project benefits and concerns, and potential costs. Response:* The project is ill defined, but appears to include levee setbacks and extensions. All setbacks should meet ETC project selection/screening criteria including the removal of hardened bank, old levees and restoration components. There should be no new hardened levees along the river.
- 4) *Assignment: Identify any additional local projects to include in measures screening. Response:* No new projects are being proposed at this time.

Miscellaneous

- 1) Bypass project requirements: The ETC believes that a bypass may be a suitable flood risk reduction project if it: a) Has a wet channel with a minimum flow of water and adjacent riparian habitat, b) Is wide enough and has a channel forming flow regime so as to allow development of natural stream sinuosity (meandering) and habitat complexity at channel forming or designed flows, c) Includes a significant restoration component that may include off-channel habitat that could benefit multiple salmonid species such as chinook, chum and coho salmon. The required width of the "natural" riverine/riparian corridor would be based on what flows would be passed through the channel. The ETC believes there is opportunity for areas outside of that corridor, but within the bypass, to be used for farming or other uses – i.e. a wide bypass with habitat in the middle), and d) there is no significant damage to the estuarine receiving waters and its key species and habitats either through project construction or utilization, particularly areas currently designated for long-term resource protection.
- 2) The ETC respectively recommends that a review of the research of hydrologic effects of forest practices on flooding be addressed in the Skagit GI environmental baseline reports and the updated CFHMP. Published research suggests the impact of current forestry practices is scale-dependent and not detectable downstream during major flood events.
- 3) A collaborative, multi-agency effort is underway to link climate and hydrology models to produce an inundation map using the best predictions of climate change. Ideally this information should be incorporated into the Skagit GI and updated CFHMP when available.

Next steps and meeting schedule

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 27, 2009. Assignment tasks to be determined by the AC.

04/11/09 draft

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 am by Chairman Walsh.