

**From:** [Johnson, Daniel E NWS](#)  
**To:** ["Dan Berentson"](#); [Kara E. Symonds](#); [Chang, Margaret NWS](#); [Brown, Keely N NWS](#); [Hadley, Hannah F NWS](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Skagit River GI: Comments on Preliminary Alternatives  
**Date:** Monday, May 21, 2012 9:37:41 AM

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All,

Another I've not yet reviewed - forwarded to the team for review and inclusion in public comment list.

/r  
Dan

Daniel E. Johnson  
Project Manager  
Civil Programs and Projects Branch  
Seattle District, US Army Corps of Engineers

-----Original Message-----

From: Dennis Clark  
Sent: Sunday, May 20, 2012 10:50 AM  
To: Johnson, Daniel E NWS  
Subject: Skagit River GI: Comments on Preliminary Alternatives

Dear Skagit River GI Project Team:

Features of the preliminary alternatives I prefer and why:

- \* Preliminary Alternative 2 Non-structural and dam storage: I like that there is minimal impact to the urban areas and the prime agricultural land downstream of the cities. It seems that this approach would also allow for more salmon habitat restoration upstream of Burlington.
- \* Preliminary Alternative 3 Joe Leary Slough bypass: I like that the floodwaters are diverted away from Burlington and Mt. Vernon.
- \* Preliminary Alternative 4 Swinomish bypass: No features that I like.
- \* Preliminary Alternative 5 Urban protection: I like that this alternative prioritizes protection of the urban areas, which is necessary to encourage concentration of growth in the already-developed areas (and thereby reduce development pressure on agricultural and natural lands).
- \* Preliminary Alternative 6 System-wide levee setbacks: I like that this alternative seems to offer the most benefits for salmon habitat recovery by allowing greater riparian vegetation and using the river itself for dynamic storage. This alternative does the best job of recognizing that flooding is in large part a function of cutting the river off from its floodplain and that expanding the functional floodplain by pulling back the levees will reduce the risks of flooding.

Features of the preliminary alternatives I LEAST prefer and why:

- \* Preliminary Alternative 2 Non-structural and dam storage: No features of concern.
- \* Preliminary Alternative 3 Joe Leary Slough bypass: It seems there is potential for substantial environmental harm to the resources of Samish Bay, even if only on an episodic basis during the

biggest floods. I am concerned that the floodway would detract from agricultural production and effectively reduce agricultural acreage in the county.

\* Preliminary Alternative 4 Swinomish bypass: I am concerned that the floodway would detract from agricultural production and effectively reduce agricultural acreage in the county. I am concerned that the use of the floodway would silt up and choke with debris the Swinomish Channel. I have a hard time understanding how this would reduce flooding anywhere other than downstream of Mt. Vernon. I do not see the value of this alternative.

\* Preliminary Alternative 5 Urban protection: No features of concern.

\* Preliminary Alternative 6 System-wide levee setbacks: Cost will be substantial since setbacks in the urban areas will require expensive land purchases and infrastructure relocation.

Other issues or concerns:

\* Future analysis should examine how each of the alternatives will help us achieve the goals of Envision Skagit 2060, assuming that the elected leadership across the county chooses to support it.

\* Future analysis should evaluate how each alternative will advance salmon habitat recovery in the Skagit River watershed.

\* I understand that these preliminary alternatives were indeed preliminary but it was hard for me to assess the net benefits of each without any quantification of land impacted (e.g., how much ag land would be impacted by the floodway alternatives versus the levee setbacks) and costs. I expect that the next steps in the GI will estimate such impacts/costs, which in turn will help us better decide which alternative is preferred.

I do not live in the Skagit River basin but work, eat food from, drink water from, shop, and recreate in it.

I would like to be added to the GI mailing list. I prefer e-mail: dennisbclark@hotmail.com. Mailing address P.O. Box 1381, Anacortes, WA 98221.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dennis Clark

