

## Executive Summary

### 1.0 Introduction

The Skagit River Basin is located in northwest Washington State and has a total drainage area of 3,115 square miles. (USACE, 2009) It is the largest basin tributary to Puget Sound, and the largest basin in Washington outside the Columbia River. (NRSC, 2006) The Skagit River Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan evaluates flood hazards in the Skagit River basin and identifies flood hazard management opportunities.

### 2.0 The Skagit River Basin Floods and Flood Hazards

The County has a long history of flooding that has affected its economy, resources, and way of living. Flood protection and drainage of excess water have been concerns of the people of Skagit County since the earliest agricultural settlements were established. After a flood event, the relative severity of flood control maintenance can change, and new problem areas may occur. Substantial flood protection work and drainage facilities have been constructed and operated by local interests, both public and private, to help alleviate these problems. A comprehensive flood hazard management plan is required by RCW 86.26 for jurisdictions desiring State assistance for flood control management. (Skagit County, 1989)

Because the basin is so prone to flooding, numerous studies have been conducted since the 1800s. In 1993, the United States Army Corps of Engineers conducted a reconnaissance study, which established the need for a closer look at flood damage reduction in the Skagit River basin. The feasibility study began later in 1997. The study shows a range of possible measures that may or may not be effective in reducing flood risks in Skagit County. A list of these projects can be found in Chapter 8.

### 3.0 Goals

The purpose and goal of this plan is to develop a comprehensive approach to Skagit River flood hazard reduction and management that: decreases the flood hazard risk to people, property, infrastructure, fish and wildlife resources; is economically vital; advances river restoration and other community interests; and, reduces long-term costs associated with flood management and infrastructure maintenance.

### 4.0 Priorities

The FCZD committees used the Three Es for criteria. Projects must be engineering, environmental, and economic and land use criteria as described in Chapter 9. As mentioned later in the plan, it is understood more detailed technical and ranking criteria will need to be developed after projects with promise have advanced in analysis and design. Therefore, these criteria will continue to be reviewed and updated as more information becomes available. (FCZD, 2009)

## **5.0 Recommendations**

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## **6.0 Funding**

Historically, the County's road fund or grant sources have paid for flood risk efforts. Additional funding sources would need to be obtained to implement this plan. Available funding include federal, state, and local programs in addition to a variety of grant opportunities.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

This plan is intended to be a living document. Implementation of all actions will involve the full participation of those who helped develop the plan and others. By working together, Skagit River flood hazards and public costs can be reduced while maintaining this river's remarkable natural resource values. (Snohomish County, 2003)

## Skagit River Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan - DRAFT

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### References:

Skagit County, State of Washington (1989). Skagit County Comprehensive Flood Control Management Plan. Skagit County, WA. Consulting Engineers: Brown and Caldwell.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRSC). 2006. *Lower Skagit Watershed*. Skagit County, WA.