

## SRIP STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

December 15, 2005

Present: Bud Norris, Jana Hanson, Harry Hosey, Lorna Ellestad, Charles Bennett, Esco Bell, Neil Hamburg, Jon Aarstad, Daryl Hamburg, Larry Kunzler, Dan Berentson, Scott Thomas, Ken Dahlstedt, Rick Blair, Chal Martin, Lorna Ellestad, Dave Olson

### Call to order

**Mayor Bud Norris** called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Following introductions, **Norris** requested the committee to consider the frequency in they would like to meet. All agreed that a quarterly meeting is appropriate and then as needed. There was also a discussion regarding the make up of the committee an invitation to the Cities of SW, Anacortes and the Town of LC as well as DD # 9 and 20. **Norris** asked that the committee invite Larry Kunzler to join the Steering Committee due to his involvement, knowledge and dedication to the County's flood issues.

**Chal Martin** made a motion to add Larry Kunzler to the committee, **Dave Olson** seconded the motion. Motion carried

**Hanson** agreed to contact Anacortes and Sedro Woolley and DD #9 and 20

### Agenda Item 2.0

**Hosey** briefed the Committee on the H&H work and recommendation from the Executive Committee. The Executive Comm. recommended that the Steering Committee adopt the calculation of the basin hydrology that incorporated using 80 years of recorded flows and the USGS high water marks for the unrecorded floods with the Corps HEC – RAS model to calculated flows rather than the Stewart slope/area calculations. **Martin** discussed the correlation between the SW and Concrete peak flood flows and recommended developing a list of the historic peak flood flows in Concrete with a comparison to flows at SW. **Hosey** stated that the PIE review of the two 1990, 1995 and 2003 peak flows were within about 3% whereas the Stewart data is 25% to 45% higher. He also pointed out that the COE synthetic flows for frequencies ranging from the 25-yr event to the 500-yr event were also in the 3% range.

**Martin** discussed the reason the COE uses the USGS numbers which is because it is within their process to do so and the COE has no way to deviate from this practice. The USGS will not move from their position regarding their data. **Kunzler** stated that he had made a request to Col. Lewis for a reference to the regulations supporting this statement but had not received a reply.

**Norris** asked what is included in the COE GI program. **Martin** explained the process and the difference in the cuffs data. The hydrology is the basis for their study which differs significantly from the data collected and analyzed by PIE. **Hosey** explained that the difference between the COE GI study and the FEMA FIS. The purpose of the COE process is to qualify for federal funds to assist with the construction of flood structures, the FEMA process is for the purpose of setting insurance rates and regulating land use. There was general discussion regarding the methodology used to create the 1975 FEMA maps. In the 1970's, FEMA modeled the 100 year flood and assumed that all of the dikes failed. The final mapping was significantly impacted by political influences.

**Ellestad** further explained the FEMA mapping process and that several scenarios will be taken into consideration, such as the dikes failing, the water staying within the channel as well as other measures that will affect the flood. **Ellestad** also spoke about the importance of having the Partnership review FEMA's draft maps when they become available. The county contract does not cover this effort. It was discussed that perhaps the Partnership should contract with a technical expert (PIE) to perform this work. **Aarstad** asked if USGS could potentially become a cog in the process if they disagree with our H&H. **Hosey** discussed the County's efforts to get USGS to reconsider the 1961 documentation selecting flows for the unrecorded floods, but the USGS indicated that in order to do so changing the information would need to generate a difference in the results greater than 20%. **Kunzler** asked for a legal opinion of whether Corp is required to use USGS data. **Norris** will address this question with Colonel Lewis on 12/20. **Norris** recommended that the Partnership share our message with service clubs and groups to inform them of the FEMA issue and the costly implications to property owners. **Martin** stated that it is important to look at the Partnership's goal which is to protect populated areas from flooding. It is not the intent to protect floodplains from flooding in order to develop.

**Kunzler** discussed the history with the creation of the existing FEMA maps and how we should look for notes taken at that time by former City of Mount Vernon PW Director, Wiseman and Bob Boudinot.

#### Agenda Item 2.4

**Norris** discussed the proposed resolution whereby the Partnership adopts the Hydrology associated with the calculation of the 100 year flood at the USGS Gage near Concrete and Recommendation to FEMA to incorporate his hydrology in development of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps under FEMA's Flood Insurance Program.

**Rick Blair** asked if there is a reason to include the 1897 flood data.

**Hosey** as the engineering consultant for the County discussed their opinion that Stewart's high-water mark measurement for the 1897 flood is likely wrong and that PIE would prefer to not include the 1987 flood in the calculations PIE choose to

leave all four USGS high-water mark measurements in the calculations, however, because of their desire to minimize the amount of potential controversy in defending their study to the federal agencies.

**Kunzler** indicated that the problem exists if the issue goes to a court of law, what are the repercussions of an engineering consultant making an apparent political choice vs. a stating a strict engineering opinion? **Hosey** stated PIE would change its recommendation to the County a recommend that the 1897 flood data not be used in the 100-yr flood flow calculations. **Kunzler** indicated that Chuck Steel with the DOE and formally with FEMA, agrees with the position and information that Larry has provided on historic flood events.

### **Motion**

**Aarstad** moved to amend the resolution to recognize the 239,100 cfs figure without the 1897 data based on historic information and engineering analysis, however the recommended number that Partnership wishes to go forward is the HEC-RAS 246,300 cfs.

**Bennett** seconded the motion,  
Motion carried with one abstention (County).

More discussion ensued regarding the Partnership's role with hiring the consultant to carry on the work of the Partnership. Funding can be achieved through funds allocated to the county from the cities for flood control studies and these funds will also act as a match for any grant opportunities that may exist. The members of the Partnership generally agreed to assume this responsibility, and the dike districts present agreed to go to their respective attorneys to draft language to amend the interlocal in order to contribute financially to the consultant costs.

**Kunzler** shared his discussion with the representative for the Tribal Fisheries group, SSC, regarding the Partnership's supposed efforts to do an end run around the COE and a the Tribe's concerns over any effort that does not adopt the COE hydrology. However, this individual did speak in support of ring dikes to protect urban areas.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00. A meeting will be set with the Steering Committee within 3 months.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15.