

**SKAGIT RIVER IMPACT PARTNERSHIP
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes from October 25, 2006**

Present: Bud Norris, Charles Bennett, Jana Hanson, Neil Hamburg, Kevin Rogerson, Scott Thomas, John Schultz, Sharon Dillon, Chal Martin, Albert Liou, Harry Hosey, Ken Dahlstadt, Rick Blair, Jon Aarstad, Ric Boge.

Call to order:

Mayor Bud Norris called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

1.0 Chal Martin discussed The Hamilton Data Point and the importance of getting this correct information. **Martin** had spoken with a representative from USGS and asked if they could recommend a paleontologist. The response from USGS was a negative. This matter is time sensitive. **Martin** stated that we do not know where the County is with respect to the NHC study and the scope of work. **Martin** suggested that efforts begin to tear into wall of the Smith house and look for water marks.

Ric Boge stated that the scope of work for NHC has been authorized by the BOC to move on and look at the Smith house. The scope of work is more involved and will include input from FEMA and USGS. USGS has communicated that their focus, with respect to historical data, is on the 1856 and 1815 floods and they are reluctant to reconsider the Stewart data. **Chuck Bennett** asked Larry Kunzler if flood gages existed back in the days of Stewart, and was told they did not. As a result of this fact, science will suffer. **Boge** indicated that USGS is telling NHC that they are comfortable with the Stewart data and they have stated this in the recent response to Larry's White Paper. **Martin** asked what the motivation is behind USGS digging up information on the 1815 flood. There was general discussion regarding this point and that the effort should be on the quality of the data, not the quantity. **Harry Hosey** stated that the COE has already evaluated the 1815 and 1857 floods and rejected them. **Albert Liou** indicated that the peak flow data alone, without the 1-day flow data to go with it, skews the results even more because the Corps uses a very, very conservative peak-to-1-day flow ratio in its analysis, which causes the volume estimates of these historic flood events, already conservatively estimated in the extreme, become even more conservative. This is an important additional negative impact with using the historic flood peak flow estimates that has not been addressed by the Corps and is not understood by most.

Martin indicated that it would be helpful in getting cooperation from the legislature if we had the Hamilton data when the legislature convened. **Martin** suggested that Burlington take the lead on hiring a consultant to address the Hamilton data. **Jon Aarstad** discussed hiring a hydrologist that is a neutral party. **Aarstad** asked if Dike District 12 has any historic files on the height of the levees in 1920 and if we can show the progression of the levee construction and a correlation between the height of the dikes and damage from floods. **Liou** indicated that if we had gages back in 1921 we would still need more information and discussed the flow through Nookachamps and the attenuation.

Boge asked to be notified if a group is formed to investigate the Smith house so that the County could participate. **Norris** asked that Harry be notified before the consultant is selected by Burlington.

1.1 Hosey discussed the NHC scope of work, and the ramifications if the Stewart flows are shown to be wrong then NHC will do a study to determine which are right and which are wrong. What should be done is to have NHC stop its efforts if Stewart is found to be wrong. That is the only work that they should be conducting. **Boge** stated that the County will take note of this point. **Martin** expressed concern with what is left unstated is that NHC is politically motivated because it is concerned about losing future work to the Corps, USGS and FEMA, three federal agencies NHC has ongoing work with. **Martin** expressed concern that this financial relationship will color NHC's recommendations, because NHC will be reluctant to do anything to jeopardize its relationship with the COE, FEMA, and USGS. NHC should only be tasked with focusing on the four Stewart flows. **Boge** stated that the County's position is to have the best hydrology which is what they have tasked NHC to perform and that is will be defensible. **Liou** questioned the county's position and asked under whose program does the work need to be defensible, COE and FEMA? It is FEMA's policy to have the best information and it is the COE's policy to use the information from the USGS. There was general discussion about why the County is proceeding with the NHC scope of work. **Jana Hanson** asked Commissioner Dahlstedt why the County is proceeding with the revised scope of work that is contrary to the position and recommendation from the SRIP and reminded Commissioner Dahlstedt that the County had solicited comments from the SRIP and committed to following SRIP recommendations. There was no response to the question or comment. (Editor's note: this SRIP meeting was held prior to the general election.)

Liou stated that the County does not understand the difference between the COE programs. Ideally there should be two different consultants, one for the COE and one for the FEMA. Because of the situation with the General Investigation study in which the County has not accepted COE hydrology, having the Corps continue as FEMA's contractor is really a conflict of interest. **Hosey** stated that County should defer to the cities who have the most to lose under FEMA's remapping effort. **John Schultz** stated that the County BOC needs to understand that their actions could result in serious consequences to the cities.

2.0 Kevin Rogerson discussed the response letters to Carl Cook. The goal is to have a response drafted by the end of the week. **Rogerson** discussed the FEMA appeal process. **Martin** asked if the County had met with FEMA to review maps. Ric Boge indicated that both Bill Dow and Dave Brookings had seen the maps. There was general discussion regarding the letters and all agreed to move forward on the letters as soon as possible.

3.0 Martin discussed the letter that he drafted to Co. McCormick. **Martin** recommended putting off a meeting with Col. McCormick until after the Hamilton data is available. **Hosey** stated that before the meeting with the Col. we need to with getting the information for Hamilton and make a request FEMA justify the use of the 1897 data point, the continued use of which borders on egregious. The other points are bad enough, but the 1897 point seems clearly and completely unsupported by any known reasonable metadata.

4.0 Norris stated that everyone other than the County agreed to participate in the response to FEMA. **Schultz** stated that DD #1 will commit and DD#12 will as well to the costs of

preparing the response. **Hanson** asked everyone to take the amended interlocals back to their councils and commissioners to sign. The only changes are to the membership.

5.0 Hosey discussed the report to the legislature and recommended having WSDOT participate in our meetings.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 am.