



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Northwest Regional Office • 3190 160th Avenue SE • Bellevue, Washington 98008-5452 • (425) 649-7000

October 27, 2004

Thomas Rowe, Division Manager  
Planning and Development Services  
3000 Rockefeller Avenue, M/S 604  
Everett, WA 98201-4046

Dear <sup>Tom</sup> Mr. Rowe:

This responds to your letter of October 20, 2004 concerning the requirement for flood hazard permits in agricultural areas.

The agricultural activities you propose for exemption from flood hazard permits are acceptable to the Department of Ecology. In the past, both FEMA and Ecology have accepted local definitions of "normal agricultural activities," "traditional agricultural practices," "agricultural activities," and others like these, definitions that are similar to that which you are proposing for Snohomish County. It is not the intent of the National Flood Insurance Program or State floodplain regulations to require permits for minor development that clearly will not impact flood heights or change the direction or velocity of flood waters. Exempting specific activities helps to avoid challenges the County may get if local officials arbitrarily decide what projects need permits.

Please send us a copy of any amendments the proposed exemption may require in Chapter 30.65. If you need any clarification from us, please feel free to call me at (425) 649-7139.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Steele  
Floodplain Management Specialist  
Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program

cc: Mark Carey, FEMA  
Dan Sokol, Ecology  
Craig Ladiser  
John Roney