

FINAL Meeting Minutes
Stillaguamish River Comprehensive Flood Study
Planning Advisory Committee Meeting
October 23, 2001, 2:00pm – 4:00 p.m.

Attendees

Bill Blake, City of Arlington
Chuck Hazleton, Stillaguamish Flood Control District
Dave Eldridge, Stillaguamish Flood Control District
Max Albert, Stillaguamish Flood Control District
Kurt Nelson, Tulalip Tribes
Mike Chamblin, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mike McCallister, Snohomish County
Duane Weston, Pilchuck Tree Farm
Orin Barlund, Clean Water District Advisory Board
Mike McCallister, Snohomish County Dept. of Emergency Management
Pat Kenyon, Snohomish County, Parks Department
Si Butler, Snohomish County, Planning and Development Services
Vaughn Collins, Snohomish County, Surface Water Management
Toni Turner, Snohomish County, Surface Water Management

Flood Hazard and Flood Hazard Mitigation Issue Paper

After introductions, Toni requested comments on the issue paper.

1. Orin Barlund requested a copy of the paper (mailed 10/30/01).
2. Add five additional parks properties to the Snohomish County Parks map (i.e., Steelhead Haven Property, Jordan Bridge Park, Rivescene Park, River Terrace Access, and Silvana River Park).
3. Add discussion on East Deer Creek Road off of Deer Creek.
4. Add 8'x12' culvert under I-5 south of Island Crossing. Capacity, velocities and debris blockage may be issues.
5. Add an arrow on Figure 13 (page 37) indicating location of tide gate at Church Creek.
6. Page 4. Max questioned the 1.5% remaining salt marsh habitat noted in the issue paper. He indicated that in the book "Upstream Salmon and Society in the Pacific Northwest" the Board on Environmental Studies and Toxicology referenced research conducted by Simensted, et al. showed estuarine habitat increased 20% in the Stillaguamish River basin between the 1870s and the 1970s. Mike Chamblin and others stated that salt marsh was a specific type of estuarine habitat and that the reduction noted was probably accurate. The reference for this statement, which will be added to the issue paper, is the Technical Assessment and Recommendations for Chinook Salmon Recovery in the Stillaguamish Watershed, completed by the Stillaguamish Technical Advisory Group (Page 34).
7. Kurt Nelson raised the question whether additional flood storage was available on the mainstem. Generally during small events (3- to 5-year events) most of the floodplain is inundated already.
8. Orin Barlund asked if Portage Creek Wildlife Reserve could be used for flood storage for Portage Creek flows during flood events on the Stillaguamish. Flows on Portage Creek are

generally insignificant relative to the volume of floodwater from the Stillaguamish River. Backwater enters from the lower end of Portage Creek through Cook Slough during Stillaguamish flooding and fills the Portage Creek floodplain as a result. No additional storage is available.

9. Chuck Hazleton asked for clarification on the river miles of riprap completed by the Corps of Engineers. On page 5 the document indicates 33 miles of riprap and on page ii, it indicates 25 miles of riprap. (Note: The 25 miles of riprap are on the mainstem, while 33 miles are basin-wide based on Corps estimates. This will be clarified in the document.)
10. Bill Blake also provided the following written comments in the issue paper:
 - a. Page iii. Fish habitat analysis should be conducted during the analysis of the removal of the splash dam upstream of Black Creek Bridge.
 - b. Bill added locations of private flood control structures, the Corps weir, and riprap on the Stillaguamish.
 - c. Page 11. On Table 2 under habitat blocked or affected by Oso Levee (RB), Bill indicated that an upstream side channel exists that may be affected by this levee. The flood control structure is actually downstream of this channel and therefore does not prevent flow from entering that channel. Should the flood control structures be analyzed as the result of a recommended action, upstream and downstream impacts will be addressed.
 - d. Page 16. The Placid Creek Flow structure is indicated as a privately constructed and maintained structure. Bill stated that during emergency repair work, this structure was referred to as a Corps structure. He raised the question whether the fish are able to pass through the structure to access the creek (unknown).
 - e. Page 18 and 19. Smokes Brothers Levee. Bill indicated that Rubicon Foundation is only a part owner of the two lobes and that there are additional owners, including Klein. He also indicated that the site is not the future site of a college preparatory school, which conflicts with information that was obtained directly from the Rubicon Foundation. He also asked that the word “illegally” be added to the levee reconstruction in 1995. Bill also documented the cover type above and below the ordinary high water mark. (Note: According to Rubicon, there are two owners of the lobes. Mr. Klein owns approximately 15 acres of land and Rubicon owns approximately 370 acres of upland and floodplain property. I confirmed with the owners that site is planned for 11th and 12th grade high school students.)
 - f. Page 20. Robe Hill Dike. Bill asked if fish access the natural oxbow (unknown).
 - g. Page 25. Dike Road Dike and berm. Bill indicated that lots of erosion was occurring at the upstream end of the dike and that the natural floodway should be considered available habitat.
 - h. Page 37. Figure 13. Add an additional culvert on the right bank downstream end of Hatt Slough. Chuck concurred with this comment during the meeting.
 - i. Page 41. Cicero Park. Bill stated that it was not necessary to provide flood protection to the property (Note: the protection request was limited to the structures located on the property).
 - j. Page 43. Cloverdale Park. Bill indicated that the Washington State Department of Ecology identified this site as a wetland restoration site. He indicated that the main cut off mechanism for flood flow is from the cross levee at Trafton Farm.

Add “salmon-bearing” and identify the tributary number to the small, unnamed tributary. He also questioned the existence of a culvert through the Whitehorse Trail.

- k. Page 46. River Meadows Park. In the text it indicates that Native Americans used the site as a trading destination (Parks Master Plan 2000). Bill stated that other areas in the basin with Native American history should be identified as well.
- l. Page 48. Portage Wildlife Reserve. Bill indicated that backwater effects impacted only the lower portion of Portage Creek and that the upstream portion should be pursued for Portage Creek floodwater storage. See notes above.
- m. Page 54. WHT – Hazel Hole Washout. Bill indicated that this site is located 16 miles upstream of Highway 9. He also indicated that most of the trail was repaired with a significant amount of riprap and that the large woody debris addition was only a small portion of the repair.
- n. Page 55. WHT-Trail Trestle Washout. Clarify that the trestle was not washed out, but that the trail was.
- o. Page 55. WHT-Trail Feedlot Washout. Bill requested clarification on how the repair was being completed as it is in the floodplain currently. (Note: this repair work was completed five years ago so no work is currently being done.)
- p. Page 59. Black Creek. Add that fish access this stream.
- q. Page 59. Swede Heaven Bridge. Other alternatives to dredging the creek to maintain the public infrastructure need to be sought. (Note: Other alternatives to dredging, such as widening the bridges, are being pursued as possible recommended actions as dredging is most likely no longer feasible.)
- r. Page 59. Tin Bridge. Bill questioned the debris build-up at that location indicating that it had not occurred in ten years. He requested data on debris build-up. (Note: this information was obtained directly from the Washington State Department of Transportation.)
- s. Page 61. Silverton. Questioned if repair work was done with riprap or log deflectors. (Note: unknown)
- t. Page 74. South Fork, Granite Falls area. Bill suggested completing an aerial historical review, as residents new to the area may not necessarily know the flood history.

Problem Categories

Vaughn then reviewed the goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria approved by the committee in previous months. In addition, he reviewed the major problem categories and problem statements. He requested feedback from the committee on prioritizing the problem list.

1. Mike McCallister stated from the Department of Emergency Management’s (DEM) standpoint, flood warning was the most critical element identified. In addition, he and other members indicated that if development on the floodplain was restricted, flood warning would not be necessary.

Committee members raised questions about emergency access to Silvana on the mainstem and to Swede Heaven area should the bridge fail near Cicero Park. These

issues have been discussed in flood preparation meetings held by the County, the Corps, and DEM. Swede Heaven area can be accessed through the Darrington area or from Mountain Loop Highway on the South Fork. Silvana area is regularly monitored and emergency procedures are in place to protect or evacuate the residents of that area.

2. Bill Blake stated that much of the Stanwood urban growth area contains hydric soils that historically provided water storage.
3. Mike Chamblin stated that abandoning Turlo Creek and Robe Hill dikes should not be a tier one priority as there is no threat to life or property as a result of doing this action. The committee agreed. He also stated that River Meadows is inundated as a result of backwatering from the downstream end and that that should be noted in the document.
4. Forestry
 - a. Duane Weston stated that logging methods have significantly changed since the implementation of the Forest Practice Rules that incorporated the results of the Forest and Fish Report. He believes that the land will mend itself, but that it will take time.
 - b. Kurt Nelson indicated that road density negatively impacts habitat but it is unclear how density impacts flood hazards. Research indicates location and design as major factors in increasing peak flows. Kurt stated that the amount of a subbasin being harvested at one time is a factor in the volume of flow. Duane agreed that in the 1980s and 1990s private property owners harvested their land without the intent of sustaining production over time. The intent was to get the highest rate of return on the land purchase as quickly as possible. With the FPR in place, the volume of harvesting is no longer possible. In addition, Duane stated that culverts should be designed to direct flow back into forested land before directing it to streams when the opportunity of low or moderately sloped forest floors exist (Board Manual, page M-38, Items 8 and 12. This text will be added to the Issue Paper).
 - c. Committee members commented on the increased number of flood control structures location on the forks of the Stillaguamish River. Because of the higher river velocities, steep slopes, and type of material in the channel, erosion is more of an issue on the forks, which leads to more bank protection.

In general, there was no committee consensus that one problem category was more important than the others. The committee stated that it was apparent that all the problem categories were interrelated. They agreed that the prioritization step should occur at the recommended action stage. The committee agreed to move on to the next step in the process without a prioritized problem list.

Recommendation Evaluation Procedure

Vaughn then reviewed the process proposed to select preferred alternatives that addressed the problems identified. To do this, one of the hazard areas known as Chatham Acres, a small community on the North Fork Stillaguamish River, was used as an example. The systematic approach used to evaluate the varying alternatives for this hazard area was reviewed with the committee and suggested as the method to evaluate each hazard area. The committee agreed with the approach.

The committee requested information about the regulations that allowed this type of development in the floodway. Vaughn indicated that regulations restricting development in floodway were adopted in 1984. Development that took place in the floodway prior to 1984 was grandfathered so the structures were allowed to remain in place. Chatham Acres community came into existence in the early to mid-1900s. Under existing regulations, these structures would not be allowed in the floodway.

Mike McCallister indicated that the Federal Emergency Management Association no longer provides insurance for homeowners whose residences have been previously damaged by any type of disaster (fire, flood). The committee also questioned if properties were acquired, who would own, maintain, and manage the land. These types of issues have not been addressed yet and most likely will not be addressed until the implementation phase begins.

Conclusion

A copy of the hazard categories, hazard issues, and possible recommended actions was distributed to the committee. Comments are due to Toni no later than Tuesday, November 6.

Members will be asked to review the planning chapter in which the hazard areas, potential alternatives, and recommended actions will be outlined (as shown in the handout). This draft should be mailed out by the end of the year. At that time, members will be asked to assist in the prioritization of the resulting recommended actions. The committee agreed with this approach. Because the review of additional documentation will be conducted via regular mail, this meeting was the last unless the committee members request another.

The meeting concluded at 4:00 p.m.