

**ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS VISIT
UPPER COWLITZ RIVER – September 18, 2009**

ATENDEES: Chris Ferguson, RLA Project Manager
Corps of Engineers
Doug Putman, Manager
Corps of Engineers
Jim Brazil, Geotechnical Packwood
Gary McCarty, President High Valley Country Club
Howard Tuttle, Timberline home owner
Jeff Lovely, Timberline home owner

PURPOSE:

Chris and Doug came up to do a preliminary reconnaissance of the area and see if there might be a way for the Corps to help with our flooding and river migration problems.

ACTIVITIES:

The group met at the High Valley CC clubhouse and reviewed the maps of the Channel Migration Zone and the NRCS hazard mitigation recommendations. Chris and Doug gave a brief overview of how a Corps project works. A key criterion is that the project must protect public property primarily not private property. Gary asked for the specific law that states that requirement. Also, any project must be requested by a governmental body such as the county or a flood district. Then a study must be done to determine the feasibility of the project. The Corps can fully fund the study up to \$100,000; after that, the study costs must be shared 50/50. Once the project is approved, costs are shared 65/35 with the majority cost by the Corps. Contributions to the study by the sponsor are counted in the 35%. Most projects are limited to \$10 million.

Howard and Jeff went back to Timberline while Chris, Doug, Jim and Gary toured the North side of the river above and around High Valley. The first stop was Mt. View. This is the area where 300 ft of revetment were taken out in 2006. That is when the Muddy Fork of the Cowlitz changed channels and the trees came down the river tearing out the revetment, eroding about 50-75 feet of bank and destroying two houses. The river in that area is as close as 30 feet from the County road right of way and 50 feet from the center of the road. Mt. View could disappear in just a few hours in that area.

The next stop was a spur of Cannon Road in the National Forest that provides a good view of the new channel of the Muddy Fork formed in 2006 and further eroded since then. On the way, the location of the revetment recommended by the NRCS study was pointed out.

We then proceeded up the National Forest road that leads to a clear cut which provides an overview of the new Muddy Fork channel and the confluence of the Clear Fork.

Next the group drove to the end of HV 11. The end of the major revetment protecting HV 8/11 was identified. The roughly 200 feet of that revetment that was destroyed and the approximate tie-in location for the new NRCS recommended revetment were indicated.

The group drove by the revetment just above HV 6 on the way up to Timberline. Jeff Lovely gave an overview of the 2006 event with photos to illustrate the magnitude of the damage. He also pointed out where the house was that floated down the river as well as the remaining foundation of the garage on the same property. The revetment protecting lower Timberline was examined including the large culverts that allow some water to go down along Timberline Drive and River Run Drive. Also in Timberline, the group stopped by Howard Tuttle's property along Timberline Drive West. Howard and his neighbor have built about 900 feet of revetment to try and protect their property.

Finally, the group stopped to view the Franklyn Bridge (Skate Creek Bridge). Jim discussed the NRCS recommendation to install barriers to trap the wood debris before it could pile up against the bridge potentially destroying the bridge. Also, pointed out was the log revetment, helping protect the bridge, that has been in place pre-1950 but is in bad shape now.

Chris and Doug said that their next step was to review their findings with Laura Hicks. There are several programs that might apply to the upper Cowlitz situation; they will review those alternatives to see if there is a fit.

Notes by Gary McCarty