

HIGH VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB
CMZ – September CONTACT REPORT

10. CMZ – CONTACT REPORT

Date & Time: September 9, 2009 10:00 AM

Name: Kristie Miller Title: District Ranger Cowlitz Valley Ranger District

Organization: Gifford Pinchot National Forest

Phone Number: (360)497-1105 Fax: (360)497-1102

Email: klmiller@fs.fed.us Reference: NRCS study recommendations

Notes by: Gary McCarty

Jim Brazil and I met with Kristie to discuss implementation of the NRCS study recommendations. Kristie said that the study provided the scientific information she needed to back mitigation efforts in the upper Cowlitz. Again, because the recommended mitigation on forest service land mainly protects private property, Kristie can not fund the necessary next steps out of her budget. That means that some other source of funding must be developed and she believes that a flood district is the most viable approach.

The NRCS study recommends a revetment extending from the existing revetment above HV-11 across Cannon Road to the bluff. This new revetment would prevent the river from going behind the HV-11 revetment and through HV-8/11. Kristie outlined the steps necessary to begin the implementation. The first step is to lay out the design and location of the revetment; Jim said that he could do that using existing drawings of the HV-11 revetment and flagging the location across Cannon Road. Then an environmental assessment (EA) would be needed. The EA would cost about \$100,000; Kristie believes the Forest Service could do the EA the most cost effectively.

There will be many organizations involved in order to get approval of the revetment. The list includes:

- Forest Service US Fish & Wildlife NOA Fish
- Corps of Engineers NRCS CountyDOE
- State Fish & Wildlife

A group called the Cowlitz River Erosion Solutions Group representing many of the above organizations was organized after the 2006 flood event. Some of the tasks listed were:

- FCAAP grant application
- Finalize County Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan
- Amend CAO to protect channel migration zone
- Create new FIRM map for upper Cowlitz
- Examine Tim Abbey erosion control crib wall design for use elsewhere
- Construct protective devices that use information from reach analysis

Unfortunately, the group last met in October 2007.

Kristie recommends communicating with the organizations mentioned to let them know a Flood Control District is being formed.

Kristie also agreed that, if the engineering of mitigation projects is available, there is a probability that those projects might be implemented in an emergency.

11. CMZ – CONTACT REPORT

Date & Time: Thursday September 10, 2009 11:00 AM

Name: John Huestis Title: Director/County Engineer

Organization: Lewis County Department of Public Works

Phone Number: (360)740-2697 Fax: (360)740-1479

Email: john.huestis@lewiscountywa.gov Reference: Mt. View

Attendees: John Huestis, Rod Lakey, Jim Brazil, Gary McCarty

Notes by: Gary McCarty

I had set up the meeting with John to discuss the situation at Mt. View originally. Since that time the NRCS report had been presented and that opened up more discussion areas. I opened the meeting by stating the purpose of the meeting was to determine what the County can do to help protect the infrastructure and properties in the upper Cowlitz River basin. I also stated that while Mt. View is at risk, the Franklyn Bridge (Skate Creek Bridge) is more critical. Also critical, is protecting HV 8/11 from the potential migration of the Cowlitz down Cannon Road behind the revetment above HV 11. We discussed that problem with Kristie Miller on September ninth. When the idea of a Flood Control District was mentioned, John endorsed the concept.

Jim Brazil discussed the situation at the Franklyn Bridge recalling the 1977 flood event where large trees were hitting the bridge deck and then rolling under to go on downstream. Jim then related the NRCS recommendations to catch the wood debris above the bridge. He recommended that the cribbing above the bridge on the North side of the river be repaired. Jim also asked what emergency response plan was in place to protect the bridge in an emergency.

Rod stated that there were contractors on call to remove wood debris. There is a 5 year permit to remove wood at the bridge. The county removed some wood last year however it proved to be expensive. The restrictions on the removal are very onerous (mobile wood only, nothing that is partially buried, all limbs, etc.). The issue of the cribbing damage has been noted by the County.

John emphasized the fact that there is very little money available. The floods of the last few years have been a huge problem. Requests for funding, for things like the repair of the cribbing at the Franklyn Bridge, need to be approved by the county commissioners. Approved projects then become part of the 5 year Transportation Implementation Plan. We need to make sure that projects we want funded are presented during the approval process.

I asked if the County could do some engineering for such things as repair to revetments. Several people have stated that if engineering is available, projects can often be done on an emergency basis. That can happen during or soon after a flood event. John replied that doing engineering for projects that are not approved is politically very dangerous. Some would view that as wasting tax payer money. John stated that while they make good sense, proactive efforts are not often rewarded.

John then stated that the County has a Damage Response Plan that is available on the County web site. When asked what the local people could do to prevent or minimize damage e.g. at Mt. View, John suggested that people could be instructed to call the County and let them know ASAP when infrastructure is threatened. The County has resources in the East County area that can respond.

12. CMZ – CONTACT REPORT

Date & Time: Tuesday, September 15, 2009 9:30 AM

Name: Lee Grose

Title: Lewis County Commissioner

Organization: Lewis County

Phone Number: (360)740 1286

Fax _____

Email: lee.grose@lewiscountywa.gov

Reference: NRCS Study

Notes by: Gary McCarty

The NRCS study recommends the formation of a flood control district in the upper Cowlitz. I told Lee that Jim Brazil, John Anderson, Susan Duncan and Gary McCarty discussed a flood district among other possibilities for protecting the infrastructure and properties along the river. Jim, John, Susan and Gary agree that the focus of any protection strategy should be the mitigation recommendations of the NRCS study. The reason the NRCS study needs to be the focus is that it protects the areas along the river, while the focus of the CMZ is to regulate development and assume that the river will destroy the existing infrastructure and properties. The CMZ alternative is unacceptable for many obvious reasons, one of which is that people's property value in the CMZ red zone decreases dramatically.

I explained that the other two alternatives to a flood control district were to 1) continue to pressure the County to implement the recommendations of the NRCS and 2) prepare for the next emergency and react quickly to implement the NRCS study. In any

case, the CMZ will be challenged, first on a case by case basis, second by challenging the assumptions. I mentioned the issue of declaring the 2006 event as the flood of record, when many believe that the 1977 event was significantly higher. He stated that FEMA made that call and that Fred Chapman had more information on that subject.

I asked Lee if he would support a flood control district; he said yes and referred me to Bob Johnson head of Lewis County Community Development (360-740-2606) and Fred Chapman (360)740-1132 for help in implementation. Lee stated that in the past he did not believe that flood district was necessary but he has changed his mind. He now believes that the district is necessary to obtain funding and for long term protection of the upper Cowlitz River area. Lee mentioned that funds were available from the Department of Ecology and that we have to be careful not to alienate them as their goal is to restrict development in drainage areas. That is a key driver for the CMZ regulations for the County.

I asked Lee about taxation ceilings. He said the current limit is ~\$5.90/1000 and he thinks the current taxation is about \$.50 under that limit. That means there should be room for a flood district levy.

I then asked Lee how the technical advisory committee he had me sign up for related to the TAC that John Anderson was forming. Lee said that they should be one and the same?