

Puyallup River Executive Task Force Summary Notes

**Meeting #7 – June 19, 2009
Sumner City Hall**

Task Force Members

Organization	Representatives in Attendance	Unable to Attend
Pierce County Executive Office	Debby Hyde, Special Projects Coordinator	Pat McCarthy, Pierce County Executive Kevin Phelps, Deputy Executive
Pierce County Council	Joyce McDonald, Councilmember	
Pierce County Chamber of Commerce	David Graybill, CEO	
Puyallup Tribe of Indians	Henry John, Tribal Representative Bill Sullivan, Director of Natural Resources Lisa Brautigam, Attorney	
City of Tacoma	Mike Lonergan, Councilmember	
City of Fife	Barry Johnson, Mayor Steve Worthington, City Manager	Butch Brooks, Mayor Pro Tem Carl Durham, Department of Community Development
City of Puyallup	John Knutsen, Councilmember	
City of Orting	Ken Wolfe, Building Official	
City of Buckley	Pat Johnson, Mayor	
City of Sumner	Bill Pugh, Director of Public Works	
Port of Tacoma	Robert Brenner, Port Staff	Ted Bottiger, Port Commissioner
Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)	JoAnn Schueler, Project Development Engineer	John Wynands, Assistant Regional Administrator
Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)		Dan Sokol, Floodplain Manager
Washington State Department of Natural Resources (WSDNR)		Derrick Toba, South Puget Sound Shoreline District
US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)	Virginia Ryan, Attorney Amy Gibbons, Project Manager Kristen Kerns, Project Manager	

Other Attendees:

Mary Lou Codge, City of Sumner
Dan Honda, City of Puyallup
Melissa Paulsen, Pierce County Surface Water Management

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Matt Perry, Office of Congressman Adam Smith
Shawn Egan, Port of Tacoma Government Affairs
LaTasha Wortham, Office of Congressman Norm Dicks
Harold Smelt, Pierce County, Surface Water Program Manager
Lorin Reinelt, Pierce County, Surface Water Management
Luke Meyers, Pierce County Department of Emergency Management, Project Coordinator
George Walk, Pierce County Government Relations and Special Projects
Rory LaDucer, Director of Public Safety, Puyallup Tribe
Russ Ladley, Biologist, Puyallup Tribe
Matt Richardson, City of Sumner, Councilmember
Mark Higginson, City of Puyallup, Engineer
Gil Hulsmann, Abbey Road Group, representing Linden Golf Course
Cara Visintainer, Abbey Road Group
Pat, Citizen of Sumner
Sally Bailey, Citizen of Sumner
Ann Coon, Friends of Clarks Creek
Dave Seabrook, Puyallup River Watershed Council
Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues facilitator
Rachel Patterson, EnviroIssues note taker

Meeting Purpose and Overview

Pierce County convened the seventh meeting of the Puyallup River Executive Task Force (ETF) in Sumner, Washington on June 19, 2009. The meeting focused on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) 905(b) report and a discussion of federal funding possibilities. Approximately 42 people attended the meeting, held at City Hall in Sumner.

Meeting Summary

Welcome

The meeting started at 9:32 a.m. with Penny Mabie, meeting facilitator, welcoming the group and leading a round of introductions.

Review meeting agenda

The group approved the draft notes from the March 13 ETF meeting. Penny Mabie reviewed the agenda items, including the following:

- Message from the Pierce County Executive's Office
- Review of ETF representation, reporting responsibilities and communication of ETF accomplishments
- Update on the Corps process, including an overview of the Section 905(b) analysis, a discussion of study findings and a discussion of whether to partner with the Corps at this time
- Further discussion of the Pierce County Rivers Flood Hazard Management Plan

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Pierce County Executive's message

Harold Smelt thanked the group for their participation and for progress made to date. He mentioned that the group was asked by former Executive Ladenburg to focus on a specific project, and that the group has broadened its focus to the larger Puyallup River watershed. Since the group has expressed this interest in broadening its scope, Pat McCarthy, Executive of Pierce County, would like to invite the group to formalize this process. Pierce County is currently putting together a broad stakeholder group for the Pierce County Rivers Flood Hazard Management Plan (RFHMP). Harold expressed hope in having a conversation with the ETF about the relationship of the ETF to this parallel process. He advised ETF members that although representatives of their organizations may be asked to participate in the RFHMP process, it might not be the ETF members specifically. The Pierce County RFHMP will brief the ETF regularly.

Lisa Brautigam asked if the ETF would continue to focus only on the lower Puyallup River. Harold reported that Executive McCarthy has proposed striking the "lower" from the title of the ETF, and renaming the group "Puyallup River Executive Task Force." Mike Lonergan pointed out that the ETF has been focused above the lower Puyallup River since the first meeting, and questioned what value there might be in the "lower" designation. Kristen Kerns commented that the Corps had recommended a basin-wide approach in the 905(b) report but that the local sponsor would need to make this decision for the ETF. Mike asked about cost-related implications of expanding the scope of the group. Penny suggested discussing this measure at the conclusion of the meeting.

Joyce McDonald requested a written invitation to participate on the RFHMP from Pierce County to present to the county council. Harold confirmed that this could be provided.

Task Force updates

Harold Smelt remarked that the original scope of what the Corps studied in the 905(b) report was the lower eight miles of the Lower Puyallup. He commented that there were formal requests from King County and the City of Pacific to expand the scope to include the White River. He mentioned that the ETF could proceed on a parallel path with the King County White River study. Kristen commented that King County had expressed interest in a general investigation (GI) study on the White River. She said that this would be a separate study, but there would be some overlap in the studies for the two basins. Amy Gibbons stated that there would be a need to weigh the costs of each approach to ensure efficient use of funds.

Bill Pugh mentioned that Sumner was affected by both the Puyallup River and the White River and that there is a need to look at both watersheds simultaneously, which raises some concerns about funding. Henry John mentioned that the scope of the study would be a concern of the Tribe. The Tribe has met with the Corps and has discussed the Corps sponsoring some work, which would require some cost sharing. Penny asked Henry for clarification that the Tribe's issue with striking "Lower" from the ETF title was that it wasn't just a name change, but also acknowledgement of scope change for the ETF, looking at the whole river system for solutions.

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Henry agreed and Bill Sullivan reiterated the Tribe's support for finding concrete upriver solutions before spending money on lower river solutions.

Steve Bailey commented that the White River is part of the Puyallup River basin, so there is logic in considering the two watersheds together. Harold clarified that the group would need to focus on both basins comprehensively, along with the Carbon River and South Prairie Creek. He said that in discussing scope of the White River with King County, a broader scope would be preferred.

Penny asked the group to reflect on the composition of the ETF, consider its scope and determine whether the right people are at the table. Harold pointed out that the group has grown substantially since its initiation last summer. He stated that Pierce County is aware that there are other initiatives discussing flood control, which begs the question of whether there are groups missing from the table at the ETF. Henry John commented that the ETF had made an effort to include Orting, Puyallup and Sumner since the task force began.

Penny asked which others should be at the table. Groups and jurisdictions suggested included King County, and City of Pacific. The Tribe also mentioned involvement of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and it was confirmed that Derrick Toba of DNR is involved with the ETF.

Mike Lonergan commented that, although it had been stated by the media that elected officials were not participating, elected officials were at the table from the inception of the ETF, including himself, John Knutsen, City of Puyallup, and Barry Johnson, Mayor of Fife. He suggested that key jurisdictions do have a voice at the table.

Harold commented that invitations went to the chief elected officer of each agency, and that some jurisdictions had elected to delegate representation to staff. He commented that representatives were responsible for having conversations with the rest of their organizations about Task Force progress and for appropriately representing their organizations.

Bill Pugh commented that now more than ever it was critical that all jurisdictions be represented. Harold Smelt noted that there may be changes in representation as the focus of the ETF shifts. John Knutsen stated that he was asked to join the Pierce County River Revitalization Task Force, and that he would join any task force working on this issue and that he had no argument against the existing ETF. He emphasized the need for sediment removal and the potential for high water storage areas in the City of Puyallup.

Penny Mabie asked John Knutsen whether he saw any means of coordinating the ETF with the Pierce County River Revitalization Task Force. John mentioned that the other task force was looking at specific measures the local jurisdictions involved might be able to implement to address the flooding issue. John mentioned that the ETF had discussed inviting fish experts to come in and present impacts of sediment removal on wildlife, and suggested that this idea be pursued. He also suggested a briefing on the legality of sediment removal and other maintenance measures.

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Henry John mentioned the “stakeholder” term used earlier and asked whether this term would allude to financial contributions. He asked what responsibilities the terminology being used would connote.

Henry John commented that the Department of Natural Resources owns much of the upper riverbed. Harold stated that the ownership above the confluence of the Carbon River is generally private ownership.

Penny asked whether there would be a tool that would help the group better communicate the outcomes of ETF meetings, such as a high-level press release format e-alert. The ETF agreed that this would be a useful tool, and Penny noted that an e-alert for the current meeting would be sent out on Monday, June 22.

Update on Corps Process

Kristen Kerns reviewed the content of the Corps’ 905(b) report. She stated that a whole range of alternatives would ultimately be analyzed by the Corps, even though the 905(b) report looks only at the lower eight miles and assesses one specific alternative. She said that the specific alternative examined in the 905(b) includes a flood wall adjacent to SR 167 and setback levees on the opposite bank. This alternative would not necessarily end up being the federally-preferred alternative, but it was a simple solution to examine to determine the benefit to cost ratio. If the ETF were to decide to adopt a basin-wide approach, this would not impact the 905(b) report but would be assessed in the feasibility phase.

Kristen said that the total cost required for the feasibility study would be approximately \$4.1 million over a three-year period. That cost is for the lower eight miles of the Puyallup only. When asked about costs for a basin-wide feasibility study, she said that for basin-wide studies in comparable watersheds, costs were around \$6 million and the timeframe increased to three to five years, depending on funding available. Kristen pointed out that the hydrology and hydraulics study may cost less since related studies are being conducted. She commented that the 50-50 cost share would apply for the feasibility phase, but that local contributions could be provided as in-kind efforts such as consulting or producing material products to support the feasibility study. The 50-50 split amount would only need to be met at the end of the study, as long as an annual balance is maintained between the federal / non-federal split. She said that the Corps would like to see the non-federal sponsor meet the first year match for the 2010 budget, which would be approximately \$250,000.

Harold asked whether the in-kind match could affect the timeline, provided that consultants were able to complete work ahead of schedule. Kristen affirmed that in-kind matching could speed up the process. Amy mentioned that certain analyses on the “critical path” of the project would likely take the same amount of time, regardless of whether conducted by the Corps or by local efforts. Bill Sullivan asked about a previous General Investigation report, and how much of it would be relevant to the Corps’ study. Kristen mentioned that the 2003 GI study did not include feasibility, since no cost-sharing agreement had been signed. She said that potential restoration sites were identified in 2003, but that the information produced was more high-level than the information that would be produced in the feasibility study. Bill mentioned that the Tribe has

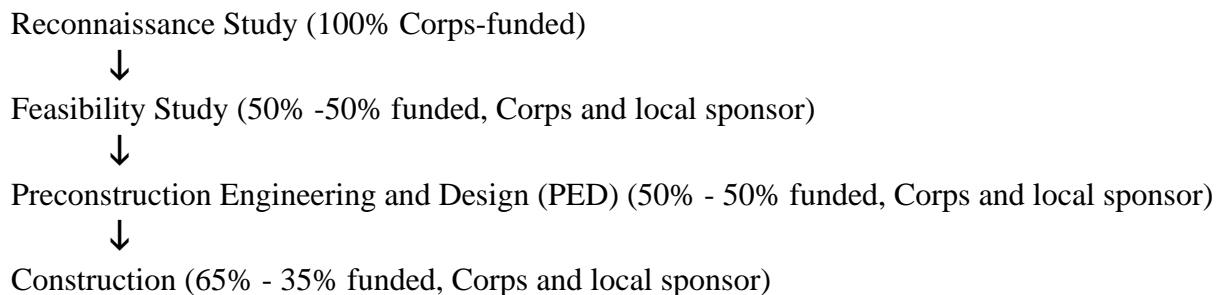
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exclusive jurisdiction for permitting the lower portion of the river, which may speed up the feasibility study. He also mentioned that the Tribe has already done studies collecting data which may be relevant to the feasibility report.

Steve Worthington asked whether speeding up permitting along the lower part of the river would move the feasibility study along. Kristen commented that permitting does not come into play until after the feasibility study is completed, but that environmental data from the Tribe could help speed up the permitting process. Amy Gibbons mentioned that the information coming out of the feasibility study would need to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). She stated that the design phase would be more time consuming than the permitting process. Steve pointed out the need for urgent action and the high probability of major flooding over the next few years, before the project is completed. Kristen affirmed that this would be the downside of conducting a GI study.

Steve Bailey asked whether the GI study would limit local jurisdictions from progressing forward with other projects. Amy Gibbons verified that the GI would not stop local jurisdictions from moving forward.

Debby Hyde shared what she had learned from working with other GI studies. She drew an illustration of the funding process for GI studies:



Debby commented that timing really does matter in regards to how much funding gets in the budget. For example, the federal funding for the Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership was not at the level of the local match for a long time. Debby pointed out that the local sponsor was still asked to provide match each year. Kristen commented that what ultimately matters to the Corps is that the local sponsor contributes their match by the end of the feasibility phase. Amy Gibbons said that although the money being discussed right now may seem like a lot, the costs of construction would be even higher. She pointed out that these projects tend to be phased over time, which can increase affordability.

Ken Wolfe said that the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS), Corps and Pierce County did a cross-sectional analysis in the comprehensive flood mitigation plan, looking at specific sites where potential work could take place. He noted the importance of communicating the message that Pierce County is working with other agencies to cut through red tape, get into rivers and do work with jurisdictions to put in setback levees. He cited the City of Sumner, the City of Orting and the City of Osceola as examples. He mentioned the importance of inviting King County to the

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table to talk about their flood control district. He compared the existing watershed flooding situation to the aged Kingdome, an unsafe situation which should be funded by the community at large.

Harold mentioned that funding would be a major topic on the next agenda, and that King County had expressed an interest in presenting on their flood control district. Harold highlighted the pilot study that Pierce County is doing with USGS to perform some additional sediment transport studies along the river and to find out whether gravel is moving. Pat McCarthy has approved a single pilot gravel bar removal project to start a conversation with the Tribe as co-managers of the river and discuss what would be needed to permit the activity.

Mike Lonergan said that the stated focus in the Corps' report on the wall and levee alternative should not be overemphasized, as those will be taken up by the news media. He noted that on page 20 of the 905(b) report there is a sentence about the wall and levee which reads, "There is potential that existing levees will need to be entirely replaced in order to meet Federal requirements." Kristen pointed out the Corps studied the simplest alternative in the reconnaissance phase. Many alternatives will come into play as the feasibility analysis is done, allowing for research that could not be explored in the reconnaissance study. Amy commented that cost-benefit ratio was the most important element in selecting the alternative used in the reconnaissance phase.

Kristen Kerns noted that the Corps will explore a national economic development (NED) plan, which is the federally preferred option with the best benefit to cost ration, as well as a locally preferred plan, and compare costs between the two. If the locally preferred plan is projected to be more expensive, the difference in costs would need to be covered by the local sponsor. If the locally preferred plan is projected to cost less than the NED plan, then the Corps will pay the difference.

John Knutsen expressed doubt in the ability to build a new riverbed without maintenance being a factor. He mentioned that the river now has a wall of silt about six feet high and eight feet wide on each side of the river. He asked why so much money is required for a permit to do maintenance.

Bill Sullivan asked whether mitigation was analyzed in the reconnaissance report. Kristen Kerns replied that mitigation had not been examined in the reconnaissance study, but would be looked at during the feasibility phase. Bill pointed out that mitigation would add a significant additional expense.

Harold revisited Debby's illustration of the Corps process. He pointed out that the illustrated steps must be passed through, either by means of a local path or via the Corps' GI process. He commented that Pierce County has already started working on the local path, thereby expediting the Corps' work on the 905(b) report. He asked whether it would be possible to do the feasibility study and alternatives analysis to Corps standards using local funds, possibly for a lower price tag, and allowing for a partnership with the Corps later in the process. Steve Bailey asked what local funds would be used for a study done on the local level. Harold noted that the ETF would

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need to have a conversation about local cost sharing, and pointed out that 50 percent of the Corps match would be \$2 million in local funds, which would cover only the lower eight miles. Harold mentioned that for the Soldier's Home Setback Levee, the county partnered with the Corps from the beginning of the process but when construction happened there were no federal funds available.

Kristen Kerns announced that Amy Gibbons would be taking over Patty Robinson's position as project manager and that she would continue on with the project as a plan formulator. Kristen mentioned that the Corps would need to add to the list of alternatives considered to ensure that a full range of alternatives was analyzed. She pointed out that the time savings may not be great due to the level of detail required to meet Corps standards. She mentioned that the Corps also works with contractors to meet a timeline. However, she pointed out that if Pierce County helped with the contracting process, it would move the process along. Amy mentioned that the most time consuming process is not the "hard" skills required in the technical process, but the "soft" skills process of achieving consensus around alternatives and within communities. She emphasized federal government quality standards and the need to meet these standards no matter who is running the process. Kristen mentioned the formal technical reviews that Corps products must undergo, which would also be applied to products produced by Pierce County.

Mike Lonergan suggested that it might be easier to request local funds if partnering with the Corps, since those funds would be matched by the federal government. He suggested that cost and time savings would need to be great to justify not accepting the Corps match. He commented that the ETF had already received strong support from the congressional delegation. He pointed out the potential for paralysis if the county were unable to move forward on flood protection and regional economic development.

Amy Gibbons stated that the biggest contribution that local sponsors are generally able to provide is consensus building, which can speed up the timeline. She suggested that the ETF look at how to contribute to this background work.

Steve Bailey reiterated the point that the Corps' GI process should not tie the county's hands on moving ahead to address some ad-hoc issues. He mentioned that elected officials in November would be dealing with these local issues and may be uncomfortable with the Corps' budget and timeframe. He suggested developing a budget and underlying budget philosophies to explain how the GI would be paid for alongside other local budget priorities.

Harold Smelt suggested that there would be a good deal of cost and time savings from doing the alternatives analysis at the local level. He suggested that it could be done for less than \$1 million and asked what might account for such a high cost differential. Kristen Kerns pointed out the need to perform detailed modeling studies, which can cost thousands of dollars, in order to meet Corps technical standards. She also mentioned that the technical reviews can cost thousands of dollars. Harold asked how much the PED step would cost, and Amy suggested that this step generally costs about 20 percent of the construction costs. Assuming \$150 million in construction costs, this would mean approximately \$10 million local dollars spent on the feasibility study and design phases, including permitting. JoAnn Schuler asked whether the costs

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would include fees for consultants, and Kristen confirmed that they would. Amy commented that this entire sum might not be due prior to completing the design phase.

Lisa Brautigam commented that the reconnaissance study only looked at one alternative that did not align with the locally preferred option at all, which was a “package” of solutions. She asked about design costs and reiterated that those at the table need to understand that the alternative discussed by the ETF will not necessarily be the end result. Kristen Kerns mentioned that cost of design includes developing design of all alternatives up to about 35 percent but the full design of only one of the alternatives, referred to as “the project”. This design alternative could include discrete projects which could be constructed simultaneously at an expense of about 20 percent of each project’s cost. Kristen commented that there would not be a lot of cost variation for the design phase, even if more than one discreet project was being considered.

John Knutsen asked about the cost of compensatory high water storage space. Amy Gibbons mentioned that these costs would be looked at in the alternatives analysis, and costs would include easements. Penny clarified that doing this analysis would not preclude smaller local projects from being included as local match. Harold Smelt stated that agencies are committed to doing what they can toward floodplain management and acquisition regardless of whether they qualify as local match. There would be an attempt to factor these costs into the local match, but if these options were taken in advance of a signed agreement, they would not be considered as local match for the Corps project.

Harold Smelt asked the Corps what the odds of federal funding availability for the construction phase would be. Amy Gibbons mentioned that funding could come through executive or legislative budgets. She reminded the group that there would be competition for infrastructure funding. If a triaged package of projects is presented, it will be more likely to receive funding, much like the shovel-ready projects receiving money now. Amy pointed out that if evaluation reports sit on the shelf for more than three years, they must be reanalyzed to comply with NEPA requirements.

Harold Smelt said that he would follow up with congressional representatives, and asked whether there would be a way to receive funding through alternative routes. Amy Gibbons stated that federal appropriations could come through either the Corps or local government. Steve Worthington asked for some clarification around the timelines for a County-led process and a Corps-led process, and asked why the Corps would estimate similar time requirements for the two processes. Kristen reiterated the strict requirements of the Corps standards, and the Corps use of contractors to allow quicker results. Amy mentioned that local projects can be completed faster for less money because the range of alternatives analyzed can be narrower; however, the full spectrum of alternatives must be considered for federally-funded projects. Also, for a project with a wide geographic scope, consensus building can be time-consuming and expensive. No matter what, every product that feeds into a federal process has to go through NEPA and a stringent quality control process. Additionally, there is the federally required economic analysis which looks at benefit to cost ratios to justify a project.

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Harold asked whether the economic requirement would apply if funds were received through an earmark or other process. Amy stated that federal requirements for the funding agency would apply; the Corps has these economic requirements, but other agencies also have stringent requirements of a different nature.

Barry Johnson commented that this seems like a situation where money must be spent in order to be received. He referenced the high local costs for the on-ramp in Fife, and stated that he didn't see a local solution being much less expensive than the Corps option. He stressed the urgent need to move forward and the need for federal help.

Amy Gibbons pointed out that when funds become available depends on when the federal budget is approved. For example, FY 2009 funds were not received until March 2009. She mentioned that the Corps could start doing some GIS base modeling work to collect data that could feed into the feasibility report. Kristen Kerns mentioned that some USGS baseline data will be available soon and could be incorporated into projections of future conditions. There is \$250,000 designated for this project in President Obama's budget for 2010.. Kristen said that the county could perform work toward the in-kind commitment as soon as an agreement is signed with the Corps. These services could include environmental baseline and modeling work. The Corps process is more expensive than what the county might be able to do but the end product must be up to Corps standards in order to recertify the levees and update the FEMA maps.

Mike Lonergan commented that federal funds are tight and earmarks are no longer common. Ken Wolfe reiterated Barry Johnson's thoughts on the need to partner with the Corps, and voiced support for the \$6 million study of the entire watershed. Amy Gibbons clarified that only projects constructed after selection of a recommended alternative or locally preferred plan will count as local match. Bill Sullivan asked if the selection of alternatives would happen by consensus within the ETF and not through a separate process. Kristen Kerns confirmed that the local sponsor is considered part of the project development team and is a critical piece of the Corps process. Bill Pugh expressed understanding for a preference of a locally-managed process from a standpoint of navigating Corps bureaucracy. He suggested that, in terms of the NEPA process and consensus building, a lot could be done locally to shorten the timeline. Amy reiterated that the hard work would be the non-technical part of the process. Bill Pugh expressed concern about the fact that projects implemented before completion of the alternatives analysis would not receive credit.

Harold asked ETF participants to return to their organizations and discuss whether or not the group would be in favor of partnering with the Corps. Harold circulated a draft "letter of intent" to ETF participants for review. It was agreed that at the next meeting, a community decision would be made on the following:

- Whether to move forward with the Corps at this time.
- Whether to request a basin-wide study or look solely at the lower eight miles.

John Knutsen asked for clarification about whether the Corps' feasibility study would need to be redone if its three-year shelf life expired. Amy clarified that the studies would not need to be redone, but they would need to be updated.

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Mike Lonergan asked whether the three to five year timeframe for the basin-wide feasibility study would create economic constraints for Tacoma, Fife and other local communities. Harold clarified that the Corps agreed to show a restricted floodway on FEMA maps if the community performed due diligence and moved forward with a solution. Amy confirmed that participation in the GI process would be considered due diligence.

Lisa Brautigam asked whether this local sponsorship would give Pierce County sole leadership of the project. Harold pointed out that the county would serve as a local sponsor for the project, but that this would not preclude each jurisdiction and organization involved with the ETF to vote on the preferred alternative. Amy reiterated this point.

Pat Johnson asked about how funding for the local match would be obtained, and whether it would be proportional. She pointed out that the City of Buckley and other jurisdictions already pay county, city and port taxes.

JoAnn noted the requirement in the draft letter of intent that says partnering must occur within eighteen months and asked if that could be a challenge. Kristen said that the eighteen months is flexible and may need to be revised. The Corps cannot approve partnering without a letter of intent from Pierce County.

Agenda topics for next meeting

Task Force members agreed on the following topics for the next meeting:

- King County presentation on establishment of a flood control district
- Further discussion about whether to partner with the Corps and when
- Discussion about how to structure local cost sharing

Next meeting

It was agreed that the group will schedule another meeting once the Corps' estimates for feasibility study costs are available.

Public comment

Members of the public were encouraged to share their comments with the Task Force and were asked to keep their comments brief. Public comments are summarize below.

Mary Lou Hodge, Sumner resident—I'm not only a resident of Sumner, I'm also connected with the Puyallup River project. Our goal is for short-term and long-term flood protection for the residents in the Sumner area. Short-term, we have been spending all our time on a wall to protect residents. Our next step will be working on getting sediment removed from the Puyallup River. We are anxious to get something done because of the flooding issues that we have.

Matt Richardson, Sumner City Council—I wasn't planning on speaking today but appreciate the opportunity. I think that Bill Pugh's representation here is very appropriate. He is the chair of our public works committee, we have worked closely together for the City of Sumner, and I am

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confident in his representation. If the council or the mayor thinks that one of us [elected] should be at this table that might be productive, too.

I am the chair for the City of Sumner public works committee and a former congressional staffer and analyst for the state legislature. I am also the co-chair of the Pierce County Rivers Revitalization Task Force. We are looking at things from the local level. This group works at a high level, so progress is understandably slow.

The issue for us was, how can the cities and the county bridge gaps and misunderstandings, and what can we do in the short term? We are looking at some options, but we know that some of the options can interfere with what you are doing, by superseding authority of jurisdictions above us and around us. We seek a policy discussion around things only cities can do. The cities don't really have a clear idea of what is coming out of the ETF, and the public has been wondering whether we were going to ask their questions in a public format.

We don't have any mission beyond three summits planned for this summer. Whatever we produce for our group will be transmitted to this body, so that you can benefit from the findings. We don't have any intention to complicate or duplicate what is being done here, and we fully validate everything that this group is doing, but we do have some questions from the cities' perspective. Some of the things we are possibly going to talk about in the policy forums are alternative funding mechanisms, including flood area LIDs [local improvement districts], city ordinances and resolutions. City of Sumner is the lead on this issue. We hope to coordinate with lead agency ordinances, and look at land acquisitions for setback levees and spillways. We are very holistic in what we are looking at, but we are looking at what we can and can't do.

In Sumner, the confluence of the White River and Puyallup River is right at our sewage treatment plant. The sediment buildup is so much that you can walk across and not get your socks wet. For septic engineering insurance, funding damage for sewage treatment plants backing up into the river is catastrophic.

I want to reassure you that this body will earn your trust and confidence and will not do anything duplicative or step on jurisdictional control of cities and counties. We have a group on our board dedicated to just these issues, and would like to ensure that you will be a part of the process when the summit comes.

Gil Hulsmann, Abbey Road Group Land Development Services Company—I represent about 300-400 acres of property owners in your planning area. We are trying to be proactive and we are hoping to assist you. One of the worst things that can be done is going through a five to six-year plan and then going after property that no one wants to sell. My job is to work with property owners to understand their property (what's good, what's bad, whether they could improve their property with a setback levee or some flood plain compensation) and to bring information to this and other groups in the county. We will be calling fisheries, the Tribe, Puyallup, Orting, etc., and asking what you want for these areas. We want to bring forward plans that property owners are happy with, that meet regulatory requirements of the Corps, Ecology, etc.

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Mr. Knutsen, of the Knutsen farm, has over 900 cubic feet of sediment on his properties. The Linden Golf Course is one of our big projects right now and it has a couple of holes that fill each day. We want to work with this group, take your visions, and go after state funding. We might be working with the City of Puyallup, the City of Sumner, or the City of Orting. We have habitat areas, recreational areas, etc, and we've stopped new development in those areas. The Linden Flood Control Recreational Habitat Area is the main one. It is a 100-acre golf course for which we hope to come up with floodplain compensation, build some kind of habitat area, pull out the two or three holes that flood right now and move the holes to uplands. This property is at the White and Puyallup River confluence, so it could provide an overflow structure and create habitat. The City of Puyallup also has about 35 acres.

I will be calling you and asking for input before the eighth, when [the Pierce County River Revitalization Task Force] meets. We can't afford to have this property owner lose a golf course, and the river keeps going up. Something like this provides about seven million cubic feet of storage, deposits sedimentation during the high waters, and takes care of maintenance down the road.

We want to bring plans to you as part of your process, instead of you bringing plans to the property owners and saying 'we want to take your property to do this.' If anybody has any questions I will be here afterwards.

Ann Coon, Friends of Clarks Creek—Is it possible for Pierce County to start purchasing property along the Puyallup River, to have on hand for the event that setback levees be implemented? How could that possibly work?

Harold Smelt responded that Pierce County is already pursuing floodplain acquisitions, but cannot get credit for it against the cost of the final Corps project. Ann asked whether the cost of acquiring lands, if we started now, would be much less than ten or more years down the road. Amy Gibbons pointed out that the scope had not yet been defined and recommended holding off until the process of developing alternatives had been completed. Ann asked whether there are potential setback levee sites that are more logical, where development is less. She suggested we figure out which properties would be most beneficial. Harold reiterated that purchasing lands now could provide a benefit of expediting the final solution and help diminish the total cost of the project. He suggested that Pierce County will proceed with floodplain acquisition and prioritize where it is perceived to have the most benefit. Lisa Brautigam commented that from an asset contribution standpoint, land purchased now could be used as a match for the project. Mike Lonergan pointed out that from day one ETF members agreed to continue looking at land acquisition and setback levees. Matt Richardson stated that some of those involved on the Pierce County River Revitalization Task Force thought that there were some related matters to be discussed in the interim period. Steve Bailey suggested that the ETF could discuss land use issues. If cities are looking at potential development in the floodplain, that issue should be addressed.

Luke Meyers, Pierce County Emergency Management—At the end of the last meeting, when looking at other funding solutions we discussed getting the Puyallup River designated a National

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River Heritage Site. I'm not sure if there has been any research done on this since the last meeting?

The group agreed to officially change the name of the Executive Task Force from "Lower Puyallup River Executive Task Force" to "Puyallup River Executive Task Force".

Henry John asked whether there would be any revenue to be earned from dirt from dredging efforts. Harold Smelt mentioned that if the county were to get permits for gravel removal, the competitive bidding process would address the question as to whether there is money to be made. The idea of using this revenue for other projects was mentioned.

The group agreed to schedule the next ETF meeting in one month.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22 p.m.