

## Puyallup River Executive Task Force Summary Notes

**Meeting #13 – January 22, 2010**  
**Port of Tacoma Business Center, Fabulich Building**

### Task Force Members

Organization	Representatives in Attendance	Unable to Attend
Pierce County Executive Office	Pat McCarthy, Pierce County Executive Randy Harrison, Pierce County Executive's Office	
Pierce County Council	Tom Swanson, Councilmember Assistant	Joyce McDonald, Councilmember
Pierce County Chamber of Commerce		David Graybill, CEO
Puyallup Tribe of Indians	Sylvia Miller, Councilmember Bill Sullivan, Director of Natural Resources Lisa Brautigam, Attorney Rory LaDucer, Director of Public Safety	
City of Tacoma	Ryan Mello, Councilmember Joe Lonergan, Councilmember	
City of Fife	Barry Johnson, Mayor Steve Worthington, City Manager	
City of Puyallup	Kathy Turner, Mayor Gary McLean, City Manager	
City of Orting	Ken Wolfe, Building Official	
City of Buckley		Pat Johnson, Mayor
City of Sumner	Dave Enslow, Mayor Bill Pugh, Director of Public Works	
Port of Tacoma	Clare Petrich, Port Commissioner	
Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)	JoAnn Schueler, Project Development Engineer	
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA NMFS)	Dan Guy, Branch Chief	
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)	Amy Gibbons, Project Manager	

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## **Other Attendees:**

Chris Anderson, City of Auburn Environmental Protection Manager  
Jim Morrow, City of Puyallup Department of Public Works Director  
Mark Palmer, City of Puyallup Engineer  
Harold Smelt, Pierce County Water Programs Manager  
Lorin Reinelt, Pierce County Surface Water Management  
Chris Schutz, Pierce County Government Relations  
Jody Woodcock, Pierce County Emergency Management  
Sheri Davis, Puyallup Tribe Administrative Manager  
Robert Brenner, Port of Tacoma  
Tony Melone, TetraTech  
Steve Helvey, GeoEngineers  
Mary Lou Codge, community member  
Penny Mabie, facilitator  
Rachel Patterson, note taker

## **Meeting Purpose and Overview**

Pierce County convened the thirteenth meeting of the Puyallup River Executive Task Force (ETF) in Tacoma, Washington on Jan. 22, 2010. The meeting included updates on current local flood control activities, updates on the Pierce County Rivers Flood Hazard Management Plan (FHMP) advisory committee, a discussion of scope and funding for long-term flood protection, and updates on proposed changes to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations. Approximately 36 people attended the meeting, held at the Fabulich Building in the Port of Tacoma Business Center.

## **Meeting Summary**

### **Welcome**

The meeting started at 9:05 a.m. with Penny Mabie, meeting facilitator, welcoming the group.

### **Brief introductions**

Penny Mabie asked Executive Task Force members to introduce themselves. She reminded participants that there would be a period for public comment at the conclusion of the meeting.

### **Review meeting agenda and ground rules**

Penny Mabie reviewed agenda items, which included updates on current local flood control activities, updates on the Pierce County Rivers Flood Hazard Management Plan (FHMP) advisory committee, a discussion of scope and funding for long-term flood protection, and updates on proposed changes to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations.

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Penny Mabie reviewed the ETF ground rules established at the first meeting, which are as follows:

- Start / end on time
- Silence cell phones
- Come prepared
- Listen respectfully
- Speak from interests, not positions
- Participate in the process

### **Review Dec. 7, 2009 meeting notes**

Penny Mabie asked whether there were any changes to the draft notes from the previous meeting. The notes were approved.

### **Updates on current flood control activities**

Penny Mabie referred participants to the local actions table and asked for updates on current local actions. The following updates were provided:

#### City of Fife

- The city completed a berm to protect the wastewater pump station from flooding.
- The city recently received their first sandbagging machine.

#### City of Orting

- City staff met with a local family regarding two parcels to be acquired for the Calistoga Setback Levee Project and signed escrow for one of the parcels.
- River modeling near the Calistoga Setback Levee should be completed by late February.
- Ken Wolfe represented the city in a news piece on Channel 22, lending support to the ETF and the Puyallup Tribe.

#### Pierce County Department of Emergency Management

- The county coordinated a meeting with the National Weather Service and the Washington State Department of Emergency Management to discuss how Pierce County can provide improved flood forecasting with more frequent and accurate updates.

#### Pierce County Surface Water Management

- County representatives attended a meeting with Fife and the City of Tacoma to review WSDOT plans for HOV lanes on I-5 and ways to avoid any potential for increased flooding in Fife.
- FEMA has prioritized the remapping of the White River basin flood plain. There will be a kickoff meeting scheduled in mid-February to initiate discussions of the remapping process.

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### City of Puyallup

- The city is implementing new stormwater regulations, including low impact development (LID) code changes.
- The city is working with USGS to install additional elevation gauges on bridges spanning the Puyallup River, to supplement existing gauges and provide the public with more information about flood related issues. This effort is funded through city dollars.

### Puyallup Tribe of Indians

- The Tribe continues work on previously named tasks and continues to coordinate efforts with the Pierce County Department of Emergency Management.

### City of Sumner

- Although the city received a Pierce County community block grant initially intended for levee improvements in the Rainier Manor area, matching dollars for this project were unavailable.

### City of Tacoma

- No updates

### Department of Ecology

- No updates; budget funds will likely be limited.

### Corps

- The Corps initiated a contract with USGS for a channel capacity study, which has been ongoing for several months. Data being collected will be presented to the task force when available, and used for the general investigation (GI) study of the Puyallup River.

Penny Mabie reminded task force members that the group has been providing updates at each meeting and to continue to come prepared at future meetings. She asked task force members to send any further updates or details to Rachel Patterson.

### **Other Announcements**

Lisa Brautigam noted that the group would be hearing a presentation from FEMA on changes to flood insurance regulations, and changes needed to comply with a NOAA NMFS biological opinion (BO) issued in 2008. She noted the changes proposed are significant and a stakeholder group has been working with FEMA. She asked whether members of the task force have been actively working with the stakeholder process.

Fife, the Department of Ecology, Pierce County, the City of Auburn, and NOAA NMFS indicated they had representatives participating with the stakeholder group. Harold Smelt noted that FEMA had chosen 22 communities for the stakeholder group, but was not sure how they were selected.

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Lisa Brautigam asked whether any participants were not part of the national flood insurance program (NFIP). No participants indicated they were not part of NFIP.

Chris Anderson commented that the City of Auburn established a development moratorium in late 2008 to concur with the new NFIP regulations.

Lisa Brautigam suggested the group would hear that FEMA is moving on a fast track to get concurrence and commented that the Puyallup Tribe has been left out of the stakeholder process.

Harold Smelt noted that NOAA NMFS participated in the stakeholder meetings. He said the focus of the meetings was on developing regulations that could be successfully implemented at the local level.

Steve Worthington announced that Fife is putting together an emergency preparedness meeting in conjunction with the Pierce County Department of Emergency Management at the Emerald Queen Casino. The meeting is an all-day event scheduled for Feb. 3.

- **Action item:** Steve Worthington will distribute details on the Emerald Queen Casino emergency preparedness event.

### **Update on Pierce County Rivers Flood Hazard Management Plan (FHMP) advisory committee**

Lorin Reinelt, Pierce County Surface Water Management, provided an update on recent activities of the FHMP advisory committee, which is providing advice on development of the Flood Hazard Management Plan. The advisory committee process began in December 2009. It is a county-wide effort that includes the Puyallup, White, and Nisqually rivers.

Lorin Reinelt distributed information on the FHMP advisory committee to the ETF, including the committee's purpose and roles, a list of committee members, a schedule of meetings, and a list of problem identification examples the advisory committee may cover. The committee's purpose is to advise Pierce County Surface Water Management in development of the FHMP and provide technical and other input on many of the plan's elements, including goals and objectives, problems definitions, evaluation of alternatives, plan recommendations and implementation. There are 27 members on the advisory committee, including several current members of the Puyallup River ETF. The advisory committee has representation from resource agencies, jurisdictions, tribes, the environmental community, the business community, and local citizens.

The advisory committee has adopted goals for the FHMP and is now working on objectives and guiding principles. All these are also available on the advisory committee's Web site, [www.piercecountywa.org/floodplan](http://www.piercecountywa.org/floodplan). The January advisory committee meeting addressed scope of work being used to implement the FHMP, including the Corps-funded USGS study on river capacity due out in April 2010.

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Pierce County has met with the advisory committee to identify different organizations' issues and needs, and has looked into site specific examples. There have been meetings with Sumner and Orting, and meetings with Puyallup and Fife are planned. Eventually, a list of regional problems will be prioritized. Solutions will be developed to high-priority problems. Pierce County will hold public meetings beginning in March 2010; anyone will be able to attend and identify problems as they exist.

Lorin Reinelt will provide a regular update to ETF participants on FHMP advisory committee activities at future ETF meetings.

### **Questions and Comments**

The following questions and comments were heard from ETF members:

- Pat McCarthy commented that it would be ideal to have ongoing updates from groups doing related work at each ETF meeting. These groups would include the FHMP advisory committee and the group discussing a potential county flood control zone district (FCZD) effort, which includes County Council members Bunney and McDonald. Harold Smelt affirmed these updates will be built into the agenda for future meetings. Lorin noted the FHMP is coordinating closely with Debby Hyde, who is working on the FCZD. The April 15 advisory committee meeting will look at issues related to potential formation of a FCZD.
- Harold Smelt noted the task force had expressed interest in non-structural ways to regulate floodplains. He commented the John Graves presentation could provide a first step. He also noted that the FHMP group is working on an inventory of regulations in Pierce County, which could be presented to the ETF once finalized.
- Dave Enslow commented that he did not see anything on the FHMP advisory committee meeting agendas about land use. He asked whether land use would be covered and mentioned the potential problem of investing money in the FHMP effort only to have future development along the river. Lorin noted the alternative flood management strategies topic on Feb. 11 would cover land use, and the September meeting would cover regulations, programs, and capital projects. Land use will be addressed across a spectrum of related topics.
- Gary McLean commented that alternative flood management strategies is somewhat related to land use but also is mentioned on other meeting agendas (for example the May 13 meeting). He noted it would be helpful to use the same nomenclature across the schedule so that city staff can be prepared. The City of Puyallup views land use as the most important topic being discussed by the FHMP advisory committee.

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- Chris Anderson asked whether the discussion of alternative management strategies would examine incentives or financing mechanisms. Lorin said that this conversation would address flood hazard mapping, channel migration zone mapping, gravel removal / debris removal, structural issues, public education and emergency response. The advisory committee will examine this suite of tools to ensure that people have a common understanding of types of actions available. Later in the year, there will be discussion on funding and implementation.
- Ken Wolfe noted that Orting also has a comprehensive flood hazard mitigation plan and that projects in Orting parallel this plan. If a plan is adopted by the county council, communities could have a heads up about when projects will be done, and could budget to assist and provide information, such as surveying studies. The more communities work together, the more will get done.
- Randy Harrison noted the FHMP has identified objectives. One thing that seems to be conspicuously absent is how timber practices affect flooding, as they have major impacts on sediment load. He asked Lorin Reinelt for any thoughts on how timber would fit into the FHMP. Lorin noted the group has been discussing whether the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) should be at the table. The degree to which timber will be discussed is not certain but the group will examine realistic alternatives that can be pursued. Bill Sullivan has raised this issue before as well.

### **Update on Corps scope and funding for the GI Study**

Amy Gibbons provided an update to the ETF on the progress of the Corps' GI study. In late December, the Corps received and re-appropriated money from the feasibility phase to the reconnaissance phase, to shore up work and officially enter the feasibility phase. The project team met the first week of January to discuss revisions to reflect the extended project scope. The original plan was focused on the lower eight miles of the Puyallup River. The team was tasked to extrapolate the scope and look at methodology changes to expand the scope to other rivers, including the Carbon and the White. The duration and cost of tasks for the study will increase. The Corps plans to complete this exercise in March and will present firmer estimates to the ETF.

Amy Gibbons also reminded task force members that in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (WRDA), Congress directed the Corps to develop new guidelines for review of documents. This has resulted in additional oversight for the review of projects, which means the process may take a little longer.

In response to a task force member inquiry, Amy Gibbons explained that "GI" refers to a general investigation study, which will explore causes and impacts of flooding, and develop a long-term plan for implementation of measures to reduce risk of flooding. Gary McLean noted that the Corps would need to conduct a GI study in order for the county to receive federal funding.

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Amy Gibbons explained the four main Corps project phases as follows:

- Reconnaissance Study (100% Corps-funded)  
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- Feasibility Study (50% -50% funded, Corps and local sponsor)  
↓
- Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED) (50% - 50% funded, Corps and local sponsor)  
↓
- Construction (65% - 35% funded, Corps and local sponsor)

The Corps is currently preparing to enter the feasibility phase for the Puyallup River project.

### **Questions and Comments**

The following questions and comments were heard from ETF members:

- Penny Mabie noted that this information had been discussed at past meetings and available in the minutes on the project Web page. She encouraged new task force members to contact Harold Smelt or herself for a briefing and more information on the issues.
- Dave Enslow noted the ETF had agreed to expand the study area beyond the lower eight miles of the Puyallup River. He asked whether this would need to go through an approval process with Congress. Amy Gibbons affirmed that the project would not need further approval. Since there is federal interest in the lower eight miles, the study still has authorization as it includes this area. The Corps is amending the road map to include the additional study area.
- Harold Smelt commented that his understanding was that the county would be negotiating a contract for local funding match for the Feasibility Study, but would not see the contract until March. Amy Gibbons noted that the Corps' technical experts are writing a road map and putting durations and cost estimates together. Once a rough draft is in hand, the Corps will look at what disciplines the county may want to lead to provide in-kind credit. A draft of the road map should be ready in February. Tasks from the previous plan have not changed – just costs and durations.
- Harold Smelt commented that the county has had discussions with local partners who are concerned about receiving progress statements and assurance of oversight from the Corps. He emphasized the need to focus on intermediate deliverables to make sure all partners from the ETF are involved. Amy Gibbons affirmed the Corps will use the ETF

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as a sounding board in the process, and will provide materials for review before they are finalized. The Corps plans to distribute its methodologies to stakeholders for review, in particular resource agencies and the Puyallup Tribe, to ensure consistency. Small intermittent memos and reports will be provided to the group.

- Randy Harrison asked about the general duration for a GI study. Amy Gibbons commented that given the new WRDA oversight and review requirements, the schedule will be longer than originally discussed. It will be difficult to guarantee a final project with an EIS before 2015. WRDA was approved as a result of some issues related to Hurricane Katrina.
- Gary McLean noted that at a previous ETF meeting, Rep. Adam Smith had asked ETF members and some representatives of the Corps if there was something that Congress could do to move things forward. He asked whether a statutory change would actually be required. Amy Gibbons noted that these are federal regulations. There will be a comment period coming up. Gary McLean suggested ETF members contact their congress members' offices to comment on the process.
- Amy Gibbons noted the Corps cannot provide financial match for construction of local work until the feasibility study is complete. The Corps partnership will reduce the overall cost of the match in the end, but cannot help construct something early. Lisa Brautigam asked whether retroactive credit could be received for local actions. Amy Gibbons confirmed that early construction would need to be funded 100 percent on a local level and these projects would be removed from the Corps' recommended plan.
- Dave Enslow emphasized that from a local perspective, it is not acceptable for jurisdictions to tell communities that no solution will be ready until 2015. Amy acknowledged this concern. The Corps must complete the feasibility study and go through a preconstruction engineering and design (PED) phase. This will be a long range plan that will take time and will be phased so that the quickest projects will be constructed first. There is no faster way to implement a \$200 million plan.
- Dave Enslow asked whether it would be helpful to look at changing statutes in order to deal with WRDA. Amy Gibbons commented the new WRDA rules do not make a large difference in the timeline. The alternatives analysis usually results in some local disagreement about alternatives, adding time to the process. WRDA may add another year but the project is too large to complete the feasibility study before 2013 or 2014.

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- Harold Smelt commented that the timeline being discussed was consistent with previous ETF discussions. The Corps had estimated six years for a feasibility study of the full scope of the project covering the entire Puyallup Basin. ETF members agreed it would be helpful for local projects to receive early credit, if this is politically feasible. JoAnn Schueler agreed that the inter-local funding agreement stated a commitment of \$3 million over six years.
- Harold Smelt asked whether the Corps would be represented at upcoming ETF meetings. Amy Gibbons affirmed the Corps will be attending meetings regularly.
- Amy emphasized the way to get the feasibility study done in a timely manner is through full cooperation of the ETF. She noted another GI study she has been working on has extended for over 12 years and has not yet identified a range of alternatives, in large part due to stakeholder and partner miscommunications.
- Kathy Turner noted that the statutory regulations were of interest, as many jurisdictions have already adopted agendas about what issues to approach representatives about this year. She echoed Dave Enslow's remarks about need for immediate local action and Harold Smelt's comments about receiving early credit from the Corps for local actions. She added that when citizens hear the year 2015, elected officials are identified as the "bad guys." Anything the ETF can do to help alleviate regulatory issues and move the project up a year is huge for citizens.
- Ken Wolfe commented that when ETF members originally started discussing the Corps study, all communities had aging flood control infrastructure and accumulating sediment. The job of local communities is to abate issues as soon as possible to keep things functioning. Orting does not plan to stop implementing local actions.
- Amy Gibbons noted the Corps would provide analysis that could be used to obtain permits, write biological assessments (BAs), and complete other work that is difficult to accomplish at a local level.

### **Review and approve near-term funding distribution table**

Harold Smelt noted the local near-term funding cost distribution table was updated to split out local partners for whom the funding model did not apply, such as the Port of Tacoma and WSDOT. He noted that the costs listed for cities and towns would represent a "worst case scenario." He expressed hope that the railroads, Puyallup Tribe and others would provide additional contributions. He also noted that Pierce County Public Works Director Brian Ziegler was currently meeting with two railroads. Pierce County will report back to the ETF any updates to the cost distribution table.

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### **Update on status of draft inter-local agreement for funding**

Harold Smelt noted that Pierce County had distributed a draft inter-local agreement to ETF members. The draft letter is meant to provide an instrument for Pierce County to work with partners on a local funding agreement for the GI project. Pierce County would plan to invoice partners twice a year. This year, since the project is still being scoped, the entire \$500,000 may not be spent. Pierce County recognizes there will be some fluctuation in funding. The agreement is being looked at by WSDOT and the Port of Tacoma, who have agreed to serve as local partners. Harold Smelt encouraged everyone to review the agreement with their attorneys and contact him or Debby Hyde with questions.

### **Questions and Comments**

The following questions and comments were heard from ETF members:

- Gary McLean asked how any cost adjustments made by the Corps would affect the amounts in the inter-local agreement. He also asked when the group would be informed if there were additional funds received from the Puyallup Tribe or another group. He noted that the City of Puyallup would like to run a “not to exceed” amount through the city council. Harold acknowledged that the sum currently noted in the cost distribution table could be considered as a “not to exceed” amount.
- Amy Gibbons commented that the Corps’ feasibility study requires a 50/50 local match. There may be some fluctuations in Corps’ funding match available from year to year. For example, there is \$414,000 available for 2010.
- Harold Smelt noted the agreement with the Corps assumes the local contribution will be made 100 percent in cash. If local agencies are able to provide local in-kind match, that match would reduce the numbers in the cost distribution table. He noted the local match may vary year to year, which would be handled through the twice yearly invoicing to agencies under the inter-local agreement.
- Lisa Brautigam asked whether the Corps’ plans to be presented in March would provide additional details (such as whether the Tribe could receive credit for in-kind work) and if this could be negotiated on a case by case basis. Harold Smelt said that the county would prefer cash contributions, but also recognizes the Tribe has specialized staff and data available.
- Amy Gibbons reminded ETF members that local in-kind services can only be provided after the time the cost sharing agreement is signed. Although reports done prior to the signing of the agreement are helpful, they cannot be used to reduce costs.

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- Pat McCarthy suggested that ETF members agree on consistent requests from Congress and the president's budget. She reiterated Kathy Turner's request for specific information about what the ETF and Pierce County's federal lobbyist should be requesting. She suggested compiling an itemized list of specific measures to provide to the federal delegation. Amy Gibbons said she would provide a list to the ETF of what would be accomplished with the feasibility study.
- **Action Item:** Amy Gibbons will distribute information on deliverables of the GI study.
- Harold Smelt commented that the Pierce County Government Relations Office had already issued a formal request to Senator Cantwell asking that \$500,000 be appropriated for the federal portion of the GI study. He noted that Pierce County could provide the ETF with a draft letter of support to accompany their letter to Cantwell. The group agreed this would be a good idea. Pat McCarthy suggested that this letter be sent to the entire federal delegation, including Representative Smith.
- **Action Item:** Pierce County will draft a letter of support from the ETF to the federal delegation, which requests FY 2011 appropriations for the Corps GI study.
- Steve Worthington commented that he would be traveling to Washington D.C. in three weeks. He requested some additional details to present, as flooding is the top item on the city's agenda. He asked whether the county had ranked flooding as a county-wide issue. Pat McCarthy commented the county just completed a ranking exercise and that flooding ranked in the top tier.
- Kathy Turner echoed Steve Worthington's request for regulatory and financial talking points on the ETF. Flooding is also a high priority issue for the City of Puyallup. Amy Gibbons commented that she would send out information regarding the new WRDA regulations.
- **Action Item:** Amy Gibbons will distribute information on new WRDA regulations.
- **Action Item:** Pierce County will distribute background information to new ETF participants, including the letter to the federal delegation sent in fall 2009.
- **Action Item:** Pierce County will provide a draft letter of support that ETF members can take to their legislators starting in February.

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- Clare Petrich said the Port Commission had a spirited conversation about the timing and deliverables for the GI study and how they would be accounted for. There was a good deal of concern about oversight.
- Steve Worthington noted the group had agreed the formula on the cost distribution table would apply only for the GI. There should be an explicit statement on the table to this end.
- **Action Item:** Pierce County will include a statement in the Interlocal agreements to clarify that the funding allocation model is only for the GI study.

### **Hear about proposed changes to National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations**

John Graves, representing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), updated participants on proposed changes to floodplain regulations and the permitting process. John Graves is a senior NFIP specialist for FEMA Region 10, and the principal point of contact for implementing the biological opinion (BO) issued by NOAA NMFS in 2008.

FEMA is in the process of determining an implementation strategy for the proposed changes. In late 2010, FEMA Region 10 will distribute information and regional guidance documents to the 122 affected communities in the region and will provide regional workshops for affected communities.

John gave a presentation outlining the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the National Flood Insurance Program. The details of his presentation will be made available on the Puyallup ETF Web site, <http://www.piercecountywa.org/etf>.

### **Questions and Comments**

The following questions and comments were heard from ETF members:

- Penny Mabie noted the ETF was interested in non-structural solutions for flood protection.
- Lisa Brautigam noted there is only a four week timeline before a final implementation strategy is presented. Several tribes are extremely unhappy about their lack of involvement in the process and have taken their concerns to the administration. She asked whether John Graves could provide any feedback. John Graves noted that he asked the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) and they had indicated that FEMA should move forward with concurrence on a model ordinance. Lisa Brautigam asked whether FEMA would anticipate concurrence on the model ordinance in the next two weeks and John Graves affirmed. Lisa Brautigam commented that from the Puyallup

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Tribe's perspective, it would be difficult for the parties sitting at the table to review the model ordinance in two weeks. John Graves noted that NOAA NMFS had set an October deadline for concurrence and that 55 communities would need to be in concurrence. Therefore, limited time was available for review.

- Steve Worthington mentioned that the model ordinance would be discussed at the next Fife City Council meeting.
- Harold Smelt commented that Growth Management Act (GMA) communities and those using the Community Rating System would prefer the checklist option.
- Jim Morrow warned communities to be extremely careful in documenting development related decisions, due to the possibility of third party lawsuits. He noted FEMA has a requirement to look at permits issued in each community, and would require communities to work with developers to retrofit unpermitted developments.
- Harold mentioned that although the ETF is not specifically focused on habitat issues, the new requirements could be a useful tool to reduce flood losses in local communities by preventing development in at-risk areas.
- Dan Sokol asked what would happen in areas that have already been developed. John Graves noted there would be a habitat assessment. FEMA would likely determine there is no longer good habitat available and therefore no adverse impact. Harold Smelt commented that his impression from NOAA NMFS was that the intent of the new regulations was to prevent further degradation, not to restore areas where good habitat no longer exists.
- John Graves noted there are two concurrent conversations: (1) what must be done to comply with the BO and bring the NFIP program back into compliance with the ESA? and (2) what could be done to further reduce damage to habitat in flood plains? The latter question is a national policy question, which must be addressed at the federal level.
- Steve Worthington asked whether anyone had an estimate of the potential adoption date for the new map of the Puyallup River, and how it would match up with the old map. John Graves noted he was not sure but will follow up.
- **Action Item:** John Graves will follow up with information on a potential adoption date for the new floodplain maps.

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- Jim Morrow commented that the question about flood map adoption raises an issue that came up in King County. If a community already knows a flood map is going to change but has not been adopted, that community is required to use the new flood maps even though they have not been formally adopted. Kathy Turner asked whether this would put old developments at risk. John Graves replied that older communities would have already received a community assistance visit. FEMA would look only at developments built since the previous visit. From 2008 until after the model ordinance is adopted, regulations would not be as strict as after the model ordinance is adopted.
- Ken Wolfe asked what would happen to new projects permitted after September 2008. John Graves noted these projects would be exempt.
- Kathy Turner asked about plats issued prior to September 2008 that were not permitted until after 2008. John Graves noted that permits must still be compliant. Ken Wolfe noted that NFIP communities would have addressed these issues if they developed and approved a plat in 2008.
- Lisa Brautigam commented that it would have been helpful for communities to have this information several months prior.

### **Future meeting topics**

Penny Mabie asked how the group would like to coordinate future conversations on land use with the FHMP advisory committee. She asked ETF members to consider timing, types of information they would need, and whether it benefits the group to have access to the same information as the FHMP advisory committee.

Harold Smelt noted the following milestones should happen before the next ETF meeting:

- The Corps will distribute an updated scope and list of deliverables (March)
- FHMP advisory committee will discuss alternative flood management strategies (Feb. 11)
- FEMA will publish draft regulations (February)

Harold Smelt suggested the next meeting happen sometime in March. Future meetings will focus on progress reports on the Corps' process and reports from Lorin Reinelt on the FHMP advisory committee's progress.

Penny Mabie noted that the key issues that came up at the previous ETF meeting were land use and community education. She asked whether there were other topics to be discussed by the group before a March meeting. The following suggestions were heard:

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- Gary McLean suggested a deliberate public outreach effort. The public needs to know what the ETF has accomplished and is working on. He suggested articles in the Tacoma News-Tribune and potentially the Seattle Times, noting he would defer to Pat McCarthy's recommendations. Ken Wolfe reiterated that public support for the study would be critical.
- Dave Enslow suggested having an update on Pierce County's gravel bar removal initiative. Lorin Reinelt commented that Parametrix has been contracted, preliminary scoping meetings have started, three sites have been selected, and the county will spend most of 2010 acquiring permits. The goal is to begin gravel removal in 2011.
- The group recommended scheduling an update from Debby Hyde on the county's FCZD work plan.

### **Summary of action items**

- Steve Worthington will distribute additional information on emergency preparedness event at the Emerald Queen Casino.
- Pierce County will provide a list of new ETF members for distribution of FHMP advisory committee materials.
- Pierce County will draft a letter of support from the ETF to the federal delegation, which requests FY 2011 appropriations for the Corps GI study.
- Pierce County will distribute background information to new ETF participants, including the letter to the federal delegation sent in fall 2009.
- Amy Gibbons will distribute information on new WRDA regulations and deliverables of the GI study.
- Pierce County will distribute additional wording for the Interlocal agreement stating that funding distribution is only for the current phase of the GI study.
- John Graves will follow up with information on a potential adoption date for the new floodplain maps.
- Pierce County will send out updates to the current flood control activities table.
- Pierce County will provide additional information on the task force that ETF members can take to their legislators starting in February.

### **Next meeting**

The group will schedule another meeting pending work by the Corps, the FHMP advisory committee, and FEMA. Rachel Patterson will circulate a Doodle poll to determine the next meeting date.

### **Public comment**

Members of the public were encouraged to share their comments with the Task Force. No public comments were heard.

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**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

DRAFT