

E-Alert from the Puyallup River Executive Task Force

The Puyallup River Executive Task Force (ETF) met at the Port of Tacoma on Jan. 22, 2010. Topics discussed 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 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations.

Participants provided updates on current flood management activities, which are being tracked continuously through a list of near-term local actions.

Lorin Reinelt, Pierce County Surface Water Management, briefed ETF participants on progress of the FHMP advisory committee, which is providing advice on development of the Flood Hazard Management Plan. He informed the Task Force about the roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee, and how activities between the two advisory bodies will be coordinated. Lorin will provide a regular update to ETF participants on FHMP advisory committee activities at future ETF meetings.

Amy Gibbons, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), updated participants on the scope and funding status for the General Investigation (GI) study of the Puyallup River. In March 2010, the Corps will issue a report with updated figures on cost and timeline for the feasibility phase of the GI study.

Task force participants continued discussions on cost-sharing for the upcoming Feasibility Study. They reviewed an updated version of the cost-sharing model that determines how much each municipality will pay, as well as a draft inter-local agreement, the legal document that municipalities and the County will use to manage payment of the local match. Participants will review these documents with their respective governing bodies with the aim of having inter-local agreements signed within the next few months.

John Graves, representing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 10 and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), updated participants on proposed changes to floodplain regulations and the permitting process. 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.

The ETF discussed next steps for further coordination with the FHMP, state and federal political delegations and the Corps. Participants stressed the importance of highlighting ETF work through increased public outreach, including media coverage.

Major topics for upcoming ETF meetings include the following:

- Update on Corps GI study scope and list of deliverables.
- Update on FHMP advisory committee discussion of non-structural solutions.
- Update on draft FEMA NFIP implementation strategy.

The next meeting date and location, and a detailed summary of this meeting will be posted on the ETF Web site at <http://www.piercecountywa.org/etf> as it becomes available.