

E-Alert from the Puyallup River Executive Task Force August 26, 2011

The Puyallup River Executive Task Force (ETF) met at the Port of Tacoma Fabulich Center on August 26, 2011. Topics discussed included the Pierce County Flood Hazard Management Plan, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) General Investigation (GI) Study, a presentation by U.S. Congressman Adam Smith, and an update on the Russell Family Foundation.

Lorin Reinelt, Pierce County, shared information on the Pierce County Flood Hazard Management Plan. The purpose of the flood plan is to recommend regional policies, programs and projects that reduce risks to public health and safety, reduce public and private flood damage, and reduce river maintenance costs and impacts to habitat conditions. The draft flood plan has been developed using the best available technical information, and an inclusive stakeholder process. The flood plan has also considered economic, social and cultural contexts, the existing regulatory framework, and relevant legal agreements. The flood plan is intended to be a road map for the county's flood management over the next 20 years.

CJ Klocow, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, shared information on the GI report and the Existing Conditions analysis, which is on track to have preliminary sections complete by September 2011. CJ noted that a lot of progress has been made over the summer with the Corps conducting investigative work along the Puyallup River, including environmental coordination, levee and hydraulics analyses, analyzing geotechnical and sedimentation data and conducting a structures inventory to inform the existing conditions report. The Corps is compiling an existing conditions report which will show what conditions would be like without the project. In addition, a suite of potential flood management measures is being prepared for initial screening, with an end goal of combining best measures into potential alternative packages. All of this work will be presented in a feasibility scoping document that will be complete by January 2012, and that will be presented at a national-level Corps meeting taking place in spring 2012. The ETF will have a presentation on the draft document and will be able to review and provide input on it later this year.

U.S. Congressman Adam Smith spoke with the ETF about their progress, challenges the group is facing, and solicited input on areas where congressional support is needed. Jim Kramer, Russell Family Foundation, provided an update on the Foundation's search for a watershed to sponsor. The Puyallup River watershed is one of two being considered for a \$10 million grant over the course of the next ten years.

Copies of meeting materials are available on the ETF website. Future ETF topics include an update on the GI draft feasibility report, information on vegetation management on levees, and FEMA floodplain mapping. Watch the ETF website for details of the next meeting, anticipated for the fall. A detailed summary of the August 26, 2011 meeting will be posted on the ETF website at <http://www.piercecountywa.org/etf> as it becomes available.