

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2013

Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick
Commanding General and Chief of Engineers
United States Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20314

Dear Lieutenant General Bostick:

The need for flood control improvements along the Puyallup River remains an issue of regional significance throughout Western Washington. Homes, businesses, regional transportation systems and the Port of Tacoma could be in danger during a serious flooding event. The economic and national security impacts from a prolonged closure of Interstate 5 and/or State Route 167 alone would be staggering not only for Washington State, but for all businesses and communities along the West Coast that depend on Interstate 5 and State Route 167 for their transportation needs. Adequate measures must be taken to ensure the safety and protection of people and property up and down this important flood plain.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been an important partner in these protection measures. Given the detrimental impacts of flooding along the Puyallup River, we are writing in strong support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' continued formal participation in and financial assistance for the Puyallup River Flood Control General Investigation Study.

In 2006 and again in 2009, the Puyallup River experienced extreme flooding. In both cases tens of thousands of lives in the flood plain were jeopardized and there were millions of dollars in property damage. Furthermore, in 2006 the major trade corridor up and down the west coast, Interstate 5, was at risk of shut down, potentially causing traffic disruptions, severe economic damage, and degrading operations at the Port of Tacoma. As a result, Pierce County, the Washington State Department of Transportation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, impacted municipalities and others began working with the Army Corps to provide flood control measures to the Puyallup River Basin. In support of a long term solution, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has initiated the Puyallup River General Investigation Study. To date, the Corps has been an active partner in the funding of this project.

As part of the efforts to provide flood control protection to the Puyallup River Basin, the region recently adopted the Pierce County Flood Hazard Management Plan. This is a comprehensive guide to reducing flood hazards and associated losses within the County. In addition to identifying flood control projects, the plan recommends regulatory, land use and technical program changes to minimize future flood losses. A key recommendation is increased coordination with the many municipal jurisdictions along the rivers to ensure common regulatory standards and common flood control expectations.

Funding for flood control projects, both those identified by the GI Study and those included in the Flood Hazard Management Plan, would strain existing local funding sources. To provide a regional funding source to match any federal government involvement and in support of the Management Plan, the Pierce County Flood Control Zone District was formed in 2012, and funded in 2013 to ensure the availability of local match for projects identified in the GI Study. Current assessment rates resulted in revenue of \$6.9 million for flood control purposes in 2013. These revenues are expected to continue annually. It is important to note that the regional funding source is being managed by Pierce County and 11 other agencies, including the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Washington State Department of Transportation, the Port of Tacoma and all cities and towns located along the river. The Flood Control Zone District will be a strong voice and funding partner with the Corps as it expends current funds for river flood mitigation and as well as plan for future capital needs.

We are fully aware of the difficulties of our current fiscal environment; however, we are asking the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to continue to support funding for this critical project. The draft alternatives are due to be released in the very near future, and the Study is getting closer to completion. Without further commitment and involvement from the Corps, adequate flood control on the Puyallup River will not take place and our communities will suffer. Furthermore, to cease Corps' investment would mean that the previously allocated funds would be for naught. Specifically, we are asking that you continue to support enough discretionary General Investigation funding for FY2013 and future years to continue the study in a meaningful way. We are also asking that you include federal flood control funding on the Puyallup River in future budget requests.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' continued support for this project is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us.

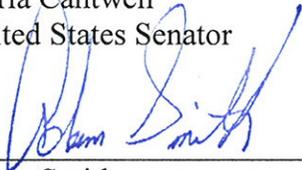
Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



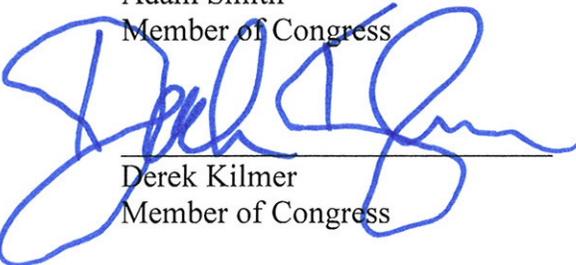
Denny Heck
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



David Reichert
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

cc: Colonel Bruce A. Estok, Commander of the Seattle District, U.S. Corps of Engineers
CJ Klocow, Project Manager, US Army Corps of Engineers