



King County

Water and Land Resources Division

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

King Street Center

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Seattle, WA 98104-3855

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TTY Relay: 711

September 19, 2011

Jay Bennett, Director, Community Development and Public Works

City of Pacific

100 Third Avenue SE

Pacific, WA 98047

Bill Pugh, Director of Public Works

City of Sumner

1104 Maple Street

Sumner, WA 98390

RE: Countyline Floodplain Acquisition and Levee Setback Project (Countyline Project) and Right Bank Levee Setback Project (Right Bank Project): SEPA Lead Agency Determination

Dear Mr. Bennett and Mr. Pugh:

The purpose of this letter is to notify the Cities of Pacific and Sumner of King County's determination that it will be assuming lead agency status for the two projects referenced above in connection with the SEPA process.

Over the last several years, King County has initiated its project work by conducting site investigations and design analyses specific to assessing White River flood conditions. For these flood risk reduction projects, design work has included collection of pre-project baseline monitoring data, assessment of fish and wildlife habitats, hydrologic analyses of flood quantities, hydraulic modeling of flood water levels and geotechnical soil samplings. These data and analyses are being used to inform the design of each of the projects along this reach of the White River.

Beginning in 2008, we initiated land acquisition tasks to obtain necessary land rights for these projects. In the acquisition phase, appraisals were prepared and purchase offers made with willing sellers. A significant number of acquisitions have been completed in support of the Right Bank Levee Setback Project and we continue to actively negotiate with other property owners along the Countyline (Left Bank) Project. As part of our design efforts, we have made it

Jay Bennett and Bill Pugh

September 19, 2011

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a point to keep the jurisdictions of the City of Pacific, the City of Sumner, and Pierce County informed of the status of the projects, as each of these jurisdictions will receive flood protection and environmental benefits from the implementation of these projects.

In light of the fact that King County has developed this extensive familiarity with these proposed projects and has developed a comprehensive technical design understanding of the underpinnings of the projects and their environmental impacts on the existing ecosystem functions, it makes sense from an efficiency standpoint for King County to assume lead agency status for these two important flood protection projects that have significant ecosystem restoration benefits. We are notifying you of this determination and look forward to working cooperatively with you as the project work progresses toward the final planning, permitting and implementation phases. We are happy to announce that Pierce County has been very encouraging on this matter and has encouraged King County to take on this lead role responsibility.

Should you have any questions, please contact Steve Bleifuhs, Manager of the River and Floodplain Management Section in the Water and Land Resources Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-296-8011 or by email at steve.bleifuhs@kingcounty.gov.

Sincerely,



Mark Isaacson
Division Director

cc: Annie Szvetcz, SEPA Policy Lead, Washington State Department of Ecology
Harold Smelt, Manager, Pierce County Surface water Management Division
Steve Bleifuhs, Manager, River and Floodplain Management Section (RFMS), Water and Land Resources Section (WLRD), Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Jeanne Stypula, PE, Supervising Engineer, RFMS, WLRD, DNRP
Katy Vanderpool, White River Basin Supervisor, RFMS, WLRD, DNRP



Pierce County

Public Works and Utilities

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Brian J. Ziegler, P.E.
Director
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September 13, 2011
WP58193

Steve Bleifuhs, Manager
River and Floodplain Management Section
Water and Land Resources Division
201 South Jackson Street, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Mr. Bleifuhs,

On behalf of Pierce County, we wish to thank you for having your staff recently provide us with a status report and briefing on two projects that will have important impacts on our mutual flood protection efforts along the lower White River - the Countyline Floodplain Acquisition and Levee Setback Project (Countyline Project) and the Right Bank Levee Setback Project (Right bank Project). As we have come to understand, portions of these projects lie within the jurisdiction of the City of Pacific and the City of Sumner, as well as within unincorporated Pierce County, with Pierce County also owning some real property within the project areas. We have been monitoring and tracking these projects, and on the Countyline Project have acted as a project partner for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant to King County for this project.

King County and Pierce County have over the years worked very effectively in a cooperative manner on flood protection undertakings along the lower White River. Our most recent efforts involved assisting with the installation of temporary flood protection measures within the City of Pacific for the protection and safety of the White River Estates neighborhood. Over the long term, we have worked cooperatively under the 1914 Inter-County River Improvement Agreement for joint flood control efforts by both counties.

Although these projects are partially located within Pierce County, we are supportive of King County taking on the role of sole environmental lead for the required SEPA review. As King County is the principal initiator for both of these projects, this is consistent with WAC 197-11-926 and we are confident that any concerns Pierce County may have during the environmental review process will be properly responded to by King County.



We fully support King County's efforts to implement these flood risk reduction projects, and believe that King County has the expertise and capability to successfully design and construct these complex projects. We look forward to continuing our close collaboration with you as you move forward in implementing these important flood protection measures.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Harold Smelt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Harold Smelt, Manager
Pierce County Surface Water Management Division

HS:tle

cc: Hans Hunger, Manager, Pierce County Surface Water Capital Projects
Jay Bennett, Director, City of Pacific Community Development and Public Works
Bill Pugh, City of Sumner, Director of Public Works
Jeanne Stypula, Supervising Engineer, King County River and Floodplain Management
Section