

South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan and I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project

Meeting Summaries, Community Feedback and Clarifications

Overview

Five community meetings have been held in North Bend between October 2014 and July 2015 to get feedback on the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor plan and the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction project. This document is intended to summarize feedback from the community, answer questions, clarify content, and provide links and contact information to keep the community engaged in the planning and decision making process for the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor plan and the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction project.

The meetings covered two related topics: the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan and the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project. The South Fork Corridor Plan is a comprehensive planning effort to identify and prioritize flood risk reduction projects along the lower six river miles of the South Fork Snoqualmie River. River flooding in this area results in frequent inundation of neighborhoods, commercial development, several miles of roadways and critical facilities. The lower two miles of the river are also at risk from channel migration and erosion. The South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Plan will propose projects to be implemented to reduce flood risks.

The I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project is a separate project to address flooding risk to Interstate-90. This risk was identified during the flooding analysis for the South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Plan. Due to impacts to people, homes, and the local and regional economy and transportation network that would result from closure of Interstate-90, the King County Flood Control District initiated a capital project to reduce this risk. The I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project is a stand-alone project that will move forward concurrently with the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan. The corridor plan and the I-90 project will be complementary to each other. The I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project is scheduled to be implemented beginning in 2017.

Meeting Summaries

Meeting 1: October 15, 2014 South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Plan Meeting

Thirty (30) members of the community met with representatives from the project team at the Mt Si Senior Center to discuss flooding risks identified by the project team, discuss corridor-wide flood management approaches to reducing risk, and provide input.

What we heard from the Community:

- Existing risks were accurately described.
- Support for provisional goals adopted for the South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Plan.
- Consideration of three corridor-wide floodplain management approaches made sense.

Meeting 2: June 23, 2015 Circle River Ranch Neighborhood Meeting

Meeting 3: July 7, 2015 Maloney Grove Neighborhood Meeting

Meeting 4: July 9, 2015 SE 131st Street Neighborhood Meeting

Approximately 85 members of the community met with representatives from the project team at three neighborhood meetings in the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor. Invitations to the meetings were mailed directly to members of the Circle River Ranch, Maloney Grove and SE 131st Street neighborhoods. At the well-attended meetings the project team presented information regarding corridor-wide floodplain management approaches under consideration for the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan and included brief discussion of the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project.

Meeting 5: July 23, 2015 South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Plan Open House

Approximately 40 individuals attended Meeting 5, an open house hosted by the project team at the North Bend Senior Center. The project team shared displays of Corridor Planning analysis and engaged in conversations with the community to learn more about concerns and answer questions.

What we heard from the Community at meetings 2, 3, 4 and 5:

- Important historical knowledge of the river system and flooding.
- A desire to use gravel management (dredging) as a tool to achieve flood risk reduction goals.
- Concern that the preferred project alternative for the Corridor Plan had been decided.
- Concern that property was being purchased along the corridor and request that any further purchasing of property cease until a plan is complete and alternatives have been selected.
- Confusion between the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan and the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project.
- Strong interest in being involved in future planning and decision making for the South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Plan.

- Concern that the project team's attempts at communication had not reached the entire community and a desire for more effective communication by the project team.
- Interest for the project team to clearly communicate the timeline for implementation of the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan and the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project.
- Residents' knowledge of historic flooding and river management practices. Specifically, experience was shared that river dredging between the 1960s and early 1990s was effective at reducing floods. Neighborhood flooding has been witnessed by most of the attendees at the meetings with especially significant floods in 1990, 2006, 2008, and 2009. Flooding over Bendigo Boulevard South is concerning to the community and development in the floodplain is contributing to increased flooding. Development within the City of North Bend was specifically mentioned as a concern.
- Support for the use of gravel removal, while there were some questions regarding its effectiveness as a long term solution. As part of the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan, the project team is considering the benefits and effectiveness of gravel management within each reach of the corridor. The project team is also considering gravel management as one of several alternative actions for the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project.
- Many felt that project decisions had been made without listening to their input.

In response, King County has placed all acquisitions in the South Fork corridor on hold, and the corridor planning schedule is being expanded to allow for additional community input. No final decisions have been made for the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan or the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project alignments or actions.

Answers to many questions that arose at these meetings are provided in two Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents – one each for the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan and the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project – available on King County's websites for the two projects. See links below.

Additional comments and questions are always welcome. Feel free to contact the project representative, Clint Loper, at clint.loper@kingcounty.gov or 206-477-4757, for further information or to provide additional input.

Next Steps

The project team is developing additional corridor information for review by the King County Flood Control District and the community during the first quarter of 2016. After incorporating community input, the Flood Control District will consider a proposed draft South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan. Additional opportunities for community involvement in the planning and decision making process for the South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan and the I-90 project are planned during 2015 and 2016.

Another public meeting is being planned for the first quarter of 2016 (date to be determined). Please check the website for an announcement and watch for postcard and/or email notification.

Communication

The project team is working to improve communication regarding these projects including:

- more frequent updates to project web pages
- project updates and meeting announcements via email
- increased use of social media for project information.

Notices for community meetings will be posted to the project webpages, sent out via the email list, and mailed using postcards. The project team will also be using additional means of communication including Facebook, neighborhood message boards, and Twitter to send out information.

If you have additional suggestions for ways to better communicate with your community or would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact the project team representative at the link below. Some outreach may be directed to neighborhoods in order to convey specific information and if you identify with a specific neighborhood we would appreciate knowing your preference.

If you have further questions please contact Clint Loper, PE, Supervising Engineer, at clint.loper@kingcounty.gov or 206-477-4757.

Project Website – South Fork Snoqualmie River Corridor Plan

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/wlr/sections-programs/river-floodplain-section/capital-projects/south-fork-snoqualmie-corridor-plan.aspx>

Project Website – I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/wlr/sections-programs/river-floodplain-section/capital-projects/si-view-levee-setback-I-90.aspx>