



King County

Water and Land Resources Division

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

King Street Center

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TO: Interested parties

RE: South Fork Snoqualmie River gravel removal study report

This study of the South Fork Snoqualmie River characterizes the existing sediment accumulation and flooding conditions and evaluates the effectiveness of gravel removal for flood reduction in the South Fork Snoqualmie River from the North Bend Boulevard (Bendigo) Bridge upstream approximately 1.6 river miles to near the I-90 Bridges. King County monitors sediment levels in this part of the South Fork Snoqualmie River to determine whether sediment accumulations are causing an adverse effect on flood hazards. If monitoring indicates an adverse effect on flood hazards, then potential sediment management actions can be considered, including gravel removal.

This study found that gravel removal could reduce flood hazards at certain locations with some degree of effectiveness over a limited amount of time, while incurring considerable impacts and costs. A permanent or long-term solution to river flooding along this study reach will require measures beyond the gravel removal scenarios analyzed in this study. Other alternatives that could reduce flood risk, such as levee setbacks, increases in levee crest elevation, home acquisitions or elevations, or bridge modifications, were not considered here. Full consideration of a comprehensive strategy to reduce flood risks along this river channel is beyond the scope of this study but the results of this study will be used to inform the strategy and to develop viable project alternatives.

A comprehensive consideration of potential flood risk reduction projects is being coordinated for the South Fork Snoqualmie and Middle Fork Snoqualmie Rivers through efforts of King County on behalf of the King County Flood Control District (KCFCD), and should include consideration of gravel removal. If a decision were made to further pursue a gravel removal project, it would be evaluated and rated for relative priority amongst all other flood risk reduction projects proposed by the KCFCD through a process that includes input by staff and elected officials from all King County jurisdictions. Whether or not a gravel removal project is pursued, channel monitoring of the South Fork Snoqualmie River will continue in this reach so as to inform the ongoing river and floodplain management program.

For questions about the technical aspects of this study, please contact Terry Butler at terry.butler@kingcounty.gov or 206-296-1965. For questions about coordinated flood risk reduction on the South Fork Snoqualmie and Middle Fork Snoqualmie Rivers, please contact Clint Loper at clint.loper@kingcounty.gov or 206-296-8378.