



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SEATTLE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 3755
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98124-3755

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Emergency Management Branch

MAR 15 2001

Mr. Dave Clark
Director, Surface Water Management
201 South Jackson Street, Suite 600
Seattle, Washington 98104-3855

Subject: Local Maintenance for the Sammamish River Authorized Project

Dear Mr. Clark:

We conducted a review of the Sammamish River Flood Control Project on January 22, 2001 to determine the serviceability of the project. It was found that the transition area at the upper end of the project currently is out of compliance with the established Corps of Engineers standards. The work done by King County crews last fall was helpful, but not adequate to meet the engineering requirements of flood flow passage. Our informal agreement on May 9, 2000 was that the transition area would be maintained according to the National Marine Fisheries Service recommendations of 1998. We agreed that the following would take place in October 2000:

1998 Sammamish River Transition Zone Vegetation Management Plan

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>No-Cut Zone</i> | <i>Leave a 20-foot wide "No Cut" zone along both sides of the low flow channel.</i> |
| <i>Cutting Zone</i> | <i>Cut one-third of all woody stems equal to or greater than one-half inch in diameter to 6 inches above the ground between the landward edge of the "No Cut" zone and the top of the bank.</i> |
| <i>Non-Native Plant Removal</i> | <i>Remove all non-native woody species within the cutting zone e.g., blackberries, Scot's Broom, etc. Avoid disturbing Purple loosestrife unless seed-bearing flowering tops have been removed. If loosestrife is removed, it should be immediately bagged and disposed of in a sanitary landfill.</i> |

"Steve Landino - NMFS 1998"

There was evidence of some cutting of willows as indicated by cut stock left on the side slope. However, the current state of the transition zone consists of willows with an average height of 15 feet and stem diameters averaging 3 inches. The density of the stems across the floor of the transition zone is high enough to significantly impact the flow characteristics of the structure.

Maintenance of vegetation along the Sammamish Flood Control Project has been an issue for some time. We have been flexible and progressive in allowing more vegetation to grow along the river to benefit fish and wildlife. The Corps has constructed two environmental enhancement projects along the river that allow for wildlife benefits while still maintaining the functionality of the original project. Additional vegetation can be allowed without jeopardizing the functionality of the project if the additional plantings are placed in accordance with an engineered plan and properly maintained. Without an effective maintenance program, the vegetation will become too thick to pass the design flows and thereby fail to meet the Congressionally Authorized intent of the project.

We agreed in 1993 to allow a buffer along the low flow channel in the transition area for the benefit of wildlife. It was determined that this would slightly reduce conveyance, but effective flood control would be maintained. King County maintained the transition area according to this agreement for approximately 3 years, but has not done so since.

Also, we request that any future work done to the Project, either by King County or the local entities, be coordinated with our District.

A risk assessment (attached) has shown that the continued lack of maintenance has increased the risk of flooding in the Project area. With this finding the Sammamish Flood Control Project has been identified as a Category 3 Project. (Reference ER 1130-2-530, Appendix D). To review the Corps policy governing Federal Flood Control Projects refer to "<http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/usace-docs/eng-regs/er1130-2-530/toc.htm>".

You are requested to respond with your intent for Project maintenance by April 16, 2001. If no further maintenance is planned, we would request a meeting be arranged between the King County Executive's Office and our District Engineer to discuss a mutually agreeable solution. If you have any questions please call Charles Ifft at (206) 764-3406.

Sincerely,



Arill Berg, P.E.
Chief, Emergency Management Branch