

Greetings Lake Sammamish Shoreline Residents and Friends,

We're contacting you to ask that you sign a petition that several of your neighbors have constructed. It's primary purpose is to show King County and the Corps of Engineers, as well as the cities around the lake, the degree of concern we have with the flooding these past few days.

First, you may be contacted several times because we've merged several lists. Sorry for the duplicates.

Here's a little background. It is meant to supplement the information you will find in the petition.

The Sammamish River is supposed to be a flood control channel. It was improved in the 1960's by the US Army Corps of Engineers. They require local governments to maintain the channel from obstructions. King County agreed to that role. However, with the passage of environmental acts at both the federal and state levels, keeping the floodway clear for flow became less and less important and by the late 90's the County was only trimming the key flood channel at Marymoor Park once every 4 years.

The Corps became aware of this and, in the early 2000's, notified the County that accumulated vegetation and sediment would cause flooding on the lake. The County promised a project to mitigate those impacts. Nothing happened until 2010 (if you overlook periodic high water levels that sometimes prevented access to our docks until May/June.)

In 2010 a group of lakeside residents dug into the issue. We found a study had been done in 2004 at Bellevue's request that determined the lake ordinary high water level had been raised by over a foot. Seems small, but that sends water 10-12 feet further up onto some properties. We also learned that in 2008 the Corps declared that obstructions they found in the entire 14 miles of the floodway warranted them inactivating it. In essence, they acknowledged it cannot carry the magnitude of flow originally provided.

Our persistence led to King County renewing annual maintenance of the section of the river in Marymoor Park called the Transition Zone. While this helped, they only removed half the 3-foot-deep sediment clogging the channel. And the vegetation - ostensibly is left to shade the river for fish - is more than twice the width recommended by the Corps.

In 2012 the County began planning for the Willowmoor Project. What was to be a flood control improvement of the Transition Zone morphed into a floodplain restoration project. The goal of flood control has taken a back seat. Now the major project feature would be a cooling system to chill the river to improve the number of salmon returning to spawn. In addition, those of us on the project advisory committee have learned there are groups insisting that the lake's shorelines have now become wetlands which are key to habitat needs of fish. Thus, these groups say lake water levels should not be reduced for flood protection as this might damage these wetlands.

Other issues we point out in the petition language include:

(A) The need to manage Bear Creek flow into the river near Redmond Town Center. Drainage from development in the creek's basin now far exceeds what the Corps designed for.

(B) Our suggestion of modifying the small dam (weir) in the Transition Zone by installing a controllable gate needs to move forward. This would enable lowering lake levels ahead of storms.

(C) Flood District funds should only be spent on flood related improvements. Spending \$10 million to cool river waters one or two degrees for returning fish would be an inappropriate use of District funds.

To close, we will probably be told that the flooding that occurred was caused by rains creating greater runoff than the flood controls were designed to handle. These agencies need to realize the lake was already high due to the negligence reflected above.

Please note, we are not asking for funds at this time.