



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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September 17, 2020

Fish, Farm, Flood Implementation Oversight Committee
c/o Beth leDoux
201 South Jackson Street, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Ms. Spiry, Ms. Donaldson and Mr. Monaghan:

Thank you for your July 28, 2020, letter detailing your support and vision for one of the most complicated issues affecting salmon recovery and active farming in King County – variable width riparian buffers. As you well know, riparian buffers are key elements for habitat restoration to protect endangered salmon and at the same time can have impacts on our farms, most directly by removing land from active agricultural production.

I established the Fish, Farm, Flood Initiative to assemble community leaders that represent the full spectrum of interests in the Snoqualmie Valley to explore the issues that were creating obstacles and conflict around salmon recovery, flood protection, and productive agriculture in the Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District (SVAPD). The objective of the initiative and subsequent Implementation Oversight Committee (IOC) is to work together, across interests, to identify projects and solutions that bring benefits to all the F's. I thank each of you for providing invaluable service and leadership toward that end.

I particularly appreciate the rigorous effort of the members of the Buffer Task Force. The work of the Buffer Task Force was grounded in science and incorporated input from a diverse and comprehensive stakeholder group, which allowed for learning and discussion, and is an excellent model of how collaborative decision-making is critical to sustained success. It is inspiring to see this work come forward from a Task Force that included farmers, restoration experts, salmon recovery experts, agricultural organizations, and, in particular, area Tribes.

Although the initial scope of work assigned to the Task Force was completed, I have directed Water and Land Resources Division management to ask the Buffer Task Force to reconvene this Fall to focus on implementation issues, such as the applicability of buffer minimums in addition to maximums, establishing riparian planting goals, metrics of success, and incentives

to encourage voluntary riparian plantings. I am also asking the division to explore what it means to apply these recommendations in their work.

King County remains committed to the Fish, Farm, Flood initiative, and it is exciting to see the Implementation Oversight Committee and associated Task Forces recommend pathways forward. I am hopeful that with collaborative, transparent efforts such as this we will find broad support for this work, not just in King County, but across the larger Puget Sound Region.

Thank you again for your continued efforts and tireless dedication to finding multi-benefit solutions that support healthy fish, sustainable agriculture, and flood safety. I look forward to seeing more results of your hard work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dow Constantine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

cc: Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Josh Baldi, Division Director, Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD), DNRP
Joan Lee, Manager, Rural and Regional Services Section (RRSS), WLRD, DNRP
Beth leDoux, FFF Project Manager, RRSS, WLRD, DNRP