

FORMING A FLOOD CONTROL ZONE DISTRICT

Columbia County Open House

May 23, 2019





Why are we here?

- July 2017 - Columbia County, City of Dayton, and City of Starbuck began looking at the need to provide better flood management and funding for levee maintenance through a Flood Control Zone District (FCZD).
- BOCC passed an intent to form a County-wide FCZD in January 2019
- Staff directed to facilitate multiple public outreach meetings to inform the public and place the funding of the district on the November 2019 General Election Ballot.
- Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) – RCW 86.15
 - To provide local funds for planning and implementation of flood-reduction projects and programs.





FCZD's in Washington State

- Chelan County
- Kittitas County
- Yakima County
- Cowlitz County
- Mason County
- Pacific County
- Pierce County
- Skagit County
- Spokane County
- Whatcom County
- King County





FCZD FAQ's?

Why form FCZD's?

- Flooding is the most common and costly disaster
- No dedicated funding source to repair flood damage
- Protect other county budgets – road fund, general fund
- Maintain aged flood protection infrastructure
- Establish local control and local funds





FCZD FAQ's?

How does flooding affect me, I live on high ground?

- All citizens share the cost burdens associated with flood response and recovery, even those that live on high ground.
- In some cases, many planned projects are postponed or cancelled to pay the county costs associated with flooding.
- Flood damage can effect emergency response and economic vitality throughout the county.





FCZD FAQ's?

Why now? Why not wait?

- Flood frequency and intensity is increasing
- Flood damage us increasing the economic impacts across the local regions
- In Central and Eastern Washington, the fire-to-flood scenario requires attention
- Flood control infrastructure needs important maintenance





FCZD FAQ's?

If there is a fee, why isn't it charged only to the people who live in floodplains?

- Immediate risk and adjacent risk – flooding impacts all layers of county funds
- When public infrastructure is damaged, the cost of repair is borne by all residents
- The cost of emergency response is also spread county wide





FCZD FAQ's?

Can the County's Road Fund be used to fund this budget?

- By state law, the Road Fund can only be used within the County Right of Way (ROW)
- Flood problems are not limited to the ROW
- No flexibility to work outside of the ROW
- County Road Funds are generally reserved for programs and projects years in advance





FCZD FAQ's?

Are there other sources of funding for flood risk reduction work?

- Limited but they require matching funds that the FCZD can provide
- Yakima County leverages their FCZD funds at 30:1





FCZD FAQ's?

What projects or programs will the FCZD fund?

- Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plans
- Long range planning for flood protection
- Structural flood improvements
- Regular maintenance





FCZD FAQ's?

What are typical FCZD projects?

- Upgrading and maintaining levees
- Hydraulic studies and planning
- Flood warning systems
- Emergency response and recovery activities
- Multi-jurisdictional coordination efforts





FCZD FAQ's?

Who is in charge of the FCZD?

- State law identifies the county commissioners as the Board of Supervisors
- State law identifies the County Engineer as the administrator of the district





Columbia County Experience

- Historically damaging floods – 1996 - \$30,231,700
- 22 bridges damaged or lost, water mains, levee damages
- Values at Risk – Schools, Hospitals, infrastructure
- No dedicated source of funds to respond, recover, and mitigate the risk





Columbia County FCZD – Next Steps

- Request from BOCC to fund FCZD activities is \$100,000
- Place the request for an assessment of on the November 2019 General Election Ballot
- Public outreach meetings:
 - Monday, April 15 – 6pm – Fairgrounds Youth Building
 - Wednesday, April 17 – 6pm – Starbuck Town Hall
 - Thursday, May 23 – 6pm - Delany Building, Dayton
 - Monday, June 17 – TBD – BOCC Public Hearing





Early Opportunities

- Protect public health, safety, and welfare
- Develop a proactive levee operation and maintenance program to maintain eligibility for levee rehabilitation and flood fighting capabilities within PL84-99
- Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Planning
- Focused public outreach and education about flood risk





Pros & Cons

Pros

- Provide maintenance funds for levees to Corp standards
- Funding available for flood protection
- Uniform County-wide response to flood control
- Ability to secure outside funds for proactive flood prevention
- Protect City and County funds
- Provides community input on what is proposed within the county
- Ability to protect private property

Cons

- Additional taxing district

