

*Joint Transportation Committee  
September 17, 2008  
Remarks by: COMM Ron Averill (Lewis County)*

**Work Session – Agenda Item 1:  
Update on Funding Related to the December 2007 Floods ~  
Capital funding for flood hazard mitigation projects**

**BACKGROUND**

House Bill 3374 authorized \$50 M in state bonds for flood hazard mitigation projects in the Chehalis River Basin

House Bill 3375:

- appropriated \$50 M to OFM, to work with others on Chehalis River flood projects, including \$2.5 M to a local “authority” to work on projects throughout the basin
- directs OFM to be the nonfederal sponsor of federal flood projects, in partnership with basin governments
- requires formal agreement between state and basin governments on any project, including operations/maintenance and land use issues, before construction can begin

**STATUS**

Funding has been provided for two ongoing efforts:

- A basin-wide effort to identify flood mitigation projects, led by the new Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
- An agreement with the US Army Corps of Engineers to develop a flood project for Centralia and Chehalis

**CHEHALIS RIVER BASIN FLOOD AUTHORITY**

1. The Flood Authority was created by interlocal agreement:
  - Approved and signed by 11 member jurisdictions (including Oakville). (Quinault Tribe has recently asked to join)
  - Approved Rules of Procedure
  - Elected COMM Ron Averill (Lewis County) as Chair and Mark White (Chehalis Tribes) as Vice-Chair
  - The Flood Authority objectives include:
    - ✓ initiate a basin wide study of flood response needs and options
    - ✓ create a three-county flood control district
    - ✓ inform federal and state governments of local options and needs

2. Funding: The Flood Authority and OFM have signed a separate interlocal agreement
  - Agreement provides \$2.5 M, through June 2011 (subject to reappropriation)
  - Flood Authority established Lewis County as the lead agency – the County has established a budget item and a fund to hold and disperse funds
  
3. Our Federal Delegation is working to secure federal match funding:
  - Senate has \$1.2 million for the Corps Project and \$1 million for the Basin Wide Study
  - House provides \$500K for the Corps Project and \$250K for the Basin Wide Study
  - Next step is a Joint Committee for Reconciliation
  - Federal Funds for basin-wide study, at least initially, will go to the Corps – to expand their existing General Investigation Study in Grays Harbor to a basin wide project
  - The Authority met with the Bureau of Reclamation and the Corps of Engineers to determine if the Bureau could assist
  
4. The Flood Authority has hired a facilitator/consultant
  - Posted Request for Qualifications
  - Selected ESA Adolphson (after interviews of finalists)
  - Approved Statement of Work and Initial Contract
  - Initial work tasks include:
    - ✓ interviews with Basin governments to identify flood mitigation needs
    - ✓ collection, review and summary of project technical information
    - ✓ identification of flood mitigation project proposals
  
5. The Tri-County Boards of County Commissioners are working together to establish a Flood Control District for Lewis, Thurston and Grays Harbor Counties
  - Conducted joint legal review of district formation; identified RCW 86.09 and 85.36 as the basis for a tri-county district
  - Currently studying several issues (some may require a legislative fix):
    - ✓ What constitutes a majority approval?
    - ✓ How many district commissioners?
    - ✓ Electorate: property owner or “One-Man-One-Vote?”
    - ✓ Boundaries
    - ✓ Tax Levies
    - ✓ Work Plan

## **A FLOOD PROJECT FOR CENTRALIA AND CHEHALIS**

6. The State signed a project agreement with the US Army Corps of Engineers
  - Under the agreement, the work is divided into two parts:
    - ✓ reevaluation of the authorized project in light of the 2007 flood event
    - ✓ design work for an agreed-upon project
  - The federal government covers 75% of the costs of this phase of the project
  - To date, OFM has paid \$2.2+ M to the Corps
  
7. The levee project developed after the 1996 flood will be updated:
  - Effect of 2007 flood on the project
  - Project hydraulic model
  - Project environmental mitigation
  - Real-estate plan (with current land values)
  - Project benefits and costs will be recalculated
  
8. Project features will be reviewed to determine if changes are warranted:
  - Inventory of homes, businesses, and farms that could be impacted by floods
  - Updated land use information, both existing uses and future plans
  - Flood storage options for the upper Skookumchuck River
  - Areas that were not provided full 100-year flood protection in the original plan (vicinities of China Creek, Coal Creek and Newaukum River, South Chehalis)
  - Access to the hospital during floods and other key transportation issues
  - Coordination with the Authority's basin-wide work
  - Solutions that are not eligible for federal funding will be referred to the State and Flood Authority for further consideration
  
9. Before proceeding with design work, the project team will
  - consult with basin governments and stakeholders
  - conduct public outreach
  - respond to any potential issues
  - seek concurrence from the Flood Authority
  - work to resolve any objections before doing the design work
  
10. Intergovernmental Cooperation
  - The State (Governor's Office; Departments of Ecology, CTED, Transportation, and OFM) is participating in the Flood Authority's basin-wide work – attending Authority meetings, and offering information, advice and technical assistance as requested
  - The Authority will participate in the Corps of Engineers' review and reassessment of their flood project for Centralia and Chehalis

**HB 3374 (2008) excerpt**

NEW SECTION. Sec. 101. For the purpose of providing state funds for federally matched flood hazard mitigation and other projects throughout the Chehalis river basin, the state finance committee is authorized to issue general obligation bonds of the state of Washington in the sum of fifty million dollars, or as much thereof as may be required, to finance the projects and all costs incidental thereto. Bonds authorized in this section may be sold at such price as the state finance committee shall determine. No bonds authorized in this section may be offered for sale without prior legislative appropriation of the net proceeds of the sale of the bonds.

**HB 3375 (2008) excerpt**

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The sum of fifty million dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium ending June 30, 2009, from the state building construction account to the office of financial management, working with and through other state agencies, the Chehalis basin flood control authority, and other local governments as appropriate, to participate in flood hazard mitigation projects for the Chehalis river basin.

(1) Up to two million five hundred thousand dollars of the appropriation is for the Chehalis basin flood control authority or other authorized local government groups to develop or participate in the development of flood hazard mitigation measures throughout the basin.

(2) The office of financial management shall participate as the nonfederal sponsor of United States army corps of engineers flood hazard mitigation projects for the Chehalis river basin area, including the project authorized by the water resources development act of 2007 and projects to be developed under the basin-wide study authorized by United States house resolution 2581, if such projects are mutually agreed to between the federal government, the office of financial management, and the Chehalis basin flood control authority or other authorized local government group. The office of financial management shall prepare the necessary agreements to ensure an active partnership with federal and state agencies, local governments, the Chehalis river flood control authority, and others as needed.

(3) The office of financial management shall not allot funds for construction of flood hazard mitigation projects for the Chehalis river basin until a project agreement between nonfederal project partners has been signed and copies have been provided to the governor, the majority and minority leaders of the senate, and the speaker and minority leader of the house of representatives. The project agreement must delineate responsibility for the ongoing operations and maintenance of the project. The agreement must also include a plan to meet applicable floodplain management requirements and to address any applicable federal requirements for managing the effect of future land use developments on the extent and severity of flooding.