



KING COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL D I S T R I C T

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News Release

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2016 Flood Control District Budget focuses on protection, prevention and maintenance Addressing deficiencies along Green and Cedar Rivers and defending against urban flooding

A 2016 budget that continues protecting property and lives from flooding while working to prevent future floods was unanimously approved today by the King County Flood Control District Board of Supervisors.

"In the last three weeks we've had two major storm systems come through the region. It's a reminder of the value of the Flood Control District in protecting lives and property," said Flood Control District Chair Reagan Dunn. "We work hard to protect residents of King County from flooding and I look forward to working to accomplish even more in 2016 with the passage of this budget."

"The large pools of standing water in my district this past weekend are a reminder that flooding knows no jurisdictions or boundaries," said Flood District Vice Chair Larry Gossett. "This budget will protect property and lives in both rural AND urban King County."

Three areas are the primary focus of the \$55 million budget: addressing deficiencies on levee corridors along the Green and Cedar Rivers, continuing with projects designed to prevent future floods, and working to minimize the impact of urban flooding when it occurs. Two-thirds of the adopted budget will be focused on construction and improvements of the regional flood protection system.

"Mitigating flood risks and preserving critical watersheds are vital for protection of public health and safety, key transportation routes and regional economic centers in King County," said Supervisor Larry Phillips. "I am pleased to vote to approve the 2016 Flood Control District Budget today to protect and maintain the Green and Cedar Rivers."

"As our region endures heavy rainstorms, it is imperative that we be proactive to protect our communities," said King County Flood District Supervisor Pete von Reichbauer. "The county's response to the massive 2009 flooding in Pacific serves as an example of how our region can provide preventative measures against future flooding events. This budget will allow us to implement needed measures to address potential urban flooding."

This budget will provide funds for projects that include repairing 4,450 feet of levees in Kent, Tukwila and Renton along the Green River, sediment removal along the Cedar River to help protect the industries along the waterway, and repairing a portion of the Winkelman Revetment along the Tolt River in northeast King County which has eroded and is slumping.

"The Kent Valley represents one eighth of the state's economy and is home to thousands of residents," said Supervisor Dave Upthegrove. "Protecting lives and businesses is my top priority. This budget will keep existing levies in good condition and advance important levy replacement projects along the Green River that will benefit people, business, and the environment."

"Next year, the Flood District will be completing several important projects in the Snoqualmie Valley, including projects that will protect water supplies and improve access to isolated neighborhoods," said Supervisor Kathy Lambert. "These will greatly improve public safety in our area and throughout King County!"

The budget also includes funding for the Willowmoor Floodplain Restoration project to reconfigure the Sammamish River Transition Zone (TZ) and adjacent undeveloped King County property. Increased vegetation within the zone has raised concerns about high lake levels impacting properties surrounding the lake. The restoration project is focused on reducing the frequency and duration of high lake levels caused by the Sammamish River while continuing to protect habitat vital for recovery of salmon species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

"The home owners around Lake Sammamish have fought the effects of flooding for years. We need a permanent solution for a free-flowing channel in the Sammamish Slough and the additional benefits of the Willowmoor projects," said Supervisor Jane Hague. "Citizens will have the opportunity to partner with King County Flood District to bring lasting results to a chronic and expensive concern."

Urban flooding has become a growing issue and the Flood District will be working with cities to provide the funding needed to reduce the impact of flooding that occurs during heavy storms. Funds have been allocated to increase capacity and reduce frequency of clogging of storm drains and add capacity to the drainage system in Seattle's Licton Springs neighborhood and to improve drainage in South Park area of south Seattle to address sewage backups in the community during periods of extended or heavy rain. Culvert replacement in Kenmore and increasing the size of culverts in Shoreline will also help reduce the impact of flooding in these urban communities.

"As multiple November storms roll through Puget Sound, it is timely that flood control money be dedicated to prevent damaging flooding in the urban areas, particularly the South Park neighborhood," said Supervisor Joe McDermott.

"As we have seen in recent years, flooding is not just a problem for those living and working along our region's major rivers," said Supervisor Rod Dembowski. "Urban flooding poses a real and costly threat to homes and businesses, near creeks and streams that regularly overflow their banks. Today's action approves important funding to help prevent this devastating flooding in nearly every community in North King County."

Maintenance and protection of habitat is also addressed in the 2016 Budget, with watershed grants that will be used as part of the Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) funds that are designed to aid in the efforts of salmon recovery in Puget Sound.

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The King County Flood Control District is a special purpose government created to provide funding and policy oversight for flood protection projects and programs in King County. The Flood Control District's Board is composed of the members of the King County Council. The Water and Land Resources Division of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks develops and implements the approved flood protection projects and programs. Information is available at www.kingcountyfloodcontrol.org.