Making Room For Floods and Fish....And People
King County Washington

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Floodplain Management in King County, WA

- Reduce risks from flood and channel migration
- Reduce long term maintenance costs
- Support multiple objectives
Reducing Risks in the River Floodplain
2007 – 2013

- Over 75 projects to reduce flood risks
- Over 50 homes elevated
- Over 25 farm pads built for flood refuge
- Over 160 properties and 375 acres acquired to move people out of harms way and create opportunity for restoration
- Over 5,400 Flood Alert subscribers
- Flood Warning Center opened over 30 times
- Over 950 hours of emergency response operations
Rainbow Bend, Cedar River

Before (2006)

After (2013)

• 900 linear feet of levee removed
• 40 acres of floodplain reconnected
• 72 flooded homes removed
Belmondo Revetment Enhancement, Cedar River

- 370 linear feet reconstructed
- Improved habitat
- Recreational safety addressed
Reddington Levee Setback
Green River, City of Auburn

- 4800 linear feet
- 600 structures protected
- 25 acres restored
Lower Tolt River Levee Setback
City of Carnation

- 50 acres of floodplain reconnected
- Recreational safety addressed
What Should We Learn…

“A man should never be ashamed to own that he has been wrong, which is but saying, in other words, he is wiser today than he was yesterday”.

Alexander Pope
English poet, 1688-1744
Cedar Rapids Levee Setback
Cedar River

What We Know Now:

• Allow the river to move
• No “right” channel alignment
• Extended monitoring and maintenance
• Know triggers for intervention
• And…
…and Deal With People Too
Lower Snoqualmie Valley Farm-Flood-Fish Committee

What We Know Now:

- Community engagement takes time
- Agricultural viability is more than farm pads
- Not an “acre for acre” negotiation
Evaluating Options:
What does it mean for people, fish, and farms?
What We Know Now:

- Project-by-project approach does not work
- Engage multiple partners to develop a shared vision for the river
Learning One:

Mistakes are inevitable when:
You are human.

You are trying to tackle complex and challenging work.

Leaders learn from these mistakes
Learning Two:
Rivers are dynamic and ever-changing.

We have a responsibility to communicate uncertainty and risk, and be prepared for change.
Learning Three:

Make room for people in the process.

We cannot presume to speak for others. Leaders take time to listen.