

Army Corps of Engineers: Faster, deeper, stronger river flows endanger lives

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SEATTLE—High snowmelt and runoff make Northwestern rivers deadly, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers again warned.

"Even though Howard Hanson Dam was holding back some of the high Green River flows over the weekend, we cannot significantly reduce the naturally high levels and the 'deeper, faster, stronger' flows this spring," says Marian Valentine, senior water manager for the Corps' Seattle District.

"People underestimate the power of water," she says. While flows can be restricted for a short time in the event of a emergency, "water levels are a lot higher than usual," and for anything short of an emergency, flows cannot be reduced without endangering fish, as well.

But, she emphasized, "People need to be extremely cautious around the swift currents at any time."