

Army Corps responding as west side rivers crest and brace for more

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SEATTLE--The Reservoir Control Center at the Army Corps of Engineers is activated and on 24-hour shifts managing flood control operation for western Washington rivers. Additionally, 30 Corps of Engineers flood team members are responding at the Skagit, Nooksack and Snohomish rivers today as rivers crest and a new storm approaches the area.

The Corps has distributed more than 125,000 sandbags since Friday and the flood teams are shoring up levees and walking the rivers as well as providing technical assistance to local agencies. The Corps teams are hiring equipment to haul sand, gravel and rock as necessary.

The Reservoir Control Center manages and regulates five dams during times of floods--Mud Mountain and Howard Hanson, both located near Enumclaw; Ross and Upper Baker on the Skagit River; and Wynoochee Dam on the Wynoochee River. Corps flood control operation on the Skagit reduced flows at Upper Baker Dam from 20,000 cubic feet per second to nearly zero and Ross Dam from 53,000 to nearly zero. As a result, the Corps reduced flows by 73,000 cfs, which translates to approximately 6 feet of flooding off the highest potential peak on the Skagit River at Concrete and several feet at Mount Vernon.

"We saw a new 24-hour rainfall record yesterday with 5.02 inches at Sea-Tac--that smashes the old record of 3.41 inches," said Army Corps meteorologist Larry Schick. Schick said the next storm shouldn't bring such heavy rainfall, but with the area already saturated, the Corps anticipates continued flow control and emergency response throughout the week.

Public Law 84-99 (33 USCA 701n) authorizes the Corps of Engineers to engage in flood fighting and rescue operations. Local officials may request Corps assistance through county and state officials if the emergency is beyond state and local capabilities. Flood fighting may include temporarily raising the height of levees with sandbags; strengthening flood control works with armor rock; evacuating people and livestock when necessary; providing equipment and supplies, such as pumps, sandbags, plastic sheeting, etc.; providing 24-hour technical assistance during the event; and removing logs and debris.

For more information and up-to-date forecasts go to www.nws.usace.army.mil and click on "Lake and River Level Information" under Links of Interest. or call the RCC at (206) 764-6702. Direct access to Seattle District Emergency Management is at web address:

<http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/PublicMenu/Menu.cfm?sitename=em&pagename=Floodfi> or click [HERE](#)