

Corps of Engineers flood teams work through the night to help local communities fight floods

9 p.m. Nov. 6, 2006

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SEATTLE -- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers emergency management teams are out tonight at river basins around western Washington monitoring levee conditions, dispersing more than 60,000 sandbags so far and preparing to bring in heavy equipment should it be needed.

The Nooksack River Basin is experiencing a flood of record. Corps flood engineers and county officials are touring the basin surveying current and potential flood damage. There is a levee breach at Glacier Springs with an evacuation in progress. Other flood fighting activities are expected at Nugent's Corner and Ferndale.

The Skagit River basin flood team is currently performing flood fight activities along the Sedro-Woolley sewage treatment plant and the constructing a four-foot sandbag wall in the town of Mount Vernon. Areas of concern are the three bridges corridor between Mount Vernon-Burlington-and Interstate 5. Fir Island, Lyman and Cockreham levee all have the potential to overtop and/or fail.

The Stillaguamish/Snohomish basin is experiencing heavy flooding. There are sandbag operations occurring in the Robe Valley, Stanwood and the City of Oso. The Corps is also assisting North Bend with sandbagging and additional support.

The Sammamish/Cedar river is being monitored with no damage or flooding occurring at this time. The Briscoe levee on the Green River in Tukwila is a concern as it was damaged during last January's floods. This levee protects a large industrial/commercial area and damages would be incredibly large. At this time, the damaged area is withstanding the river flows.

Puyallup river basin is experiencing flooding in the upper basin in Orting. Orting High School is experiencing flooding. The middle basin is undergoing evacuations in some of the low lying residential areas. The lower basin will be okay if flows remain under 50,000 cubic feet per second. Mud Mountain Dam on the White River (which feeds into the Puyallup) had inflows of 20,000 cubic feet per second at about 8 p.m., and the Corps was holding outflows to less than 1,000 cfs. Outflows will stay at less than 1,000 cfs for at least the next few hours.

The Chehalis/Hoquiam flood team members toured the basin earlier today with no immediate threat or potential problems identified. Flood team member continue to monitor situation and have moved up the Olympic Peninsula to provide assistance there.

The Corps flood team has delivered 6,500 sandbags to the city of LaPush Sherritt's department on the Olympic Peninsula, and the flood team continues to coordinate with the Quileute and Hoh Reservations.

In other actions, the Corps has provided 5,000 sandbags to the city of Stehekin in eastern Washington. The City of Clark Fork, Idaho, has called in concerned about debris building up in Lightning Creek, and a Corps flood team member has gone out to assist.

The Seattle District Reservoir Control Center began 24-hour operation Nov. 5 and will continue to operate around the clock for the foreseeable future.

Wynoochee Dam is receiving about 9,000 cfs of inflow, with inflows expected to recede later this evening. The Corps is holding outflows from Wynoochee Dam to the minimum of 220 cfs. When inflows peaked, Wynoochee Dam held back about 13,000 cfs, reducing the river stage downstream by 3 to 5 feet.

Howard Hanson Dam on the Green River is receiving about 15,000 cfs inflows and passing 4,000 cfs out of the dam. The forecast is for inflows as high as 20,000 cfs.

In the Skagit River basin, the Corps is regulating Upper Baker and Ross dams. At Ross, inflows are 40,000 cfs, and the Corps is not allowing any outflow. Upper Baker inflows are 30,000 cfs, and outflow is being held to 5,000 cfs.

For up-to-date river forecasts, go to

<http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/nws/hh/index-j.html>  
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The National Weather Service issues flood watches and warnings and should be consulted for that information.