

Army Corps of Engineers flood teams spread out across western Washington; Corps regulating Wynoochee

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SEATTLE – The Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sent flood teams out today to the Chehalis, Skagit, Nooksack and Olympic basins. The heaviest rainfall has been on the Olympic Peninsula and in the Chehalis River Basin, but teams are monitoring river basins throughout Western Washington. The Corps activated its Emergency Operations Center and the Reservoir Control Center (RCC) this weekend in advance of the storm.

A flood team was sent to Shoalwater Bay on Saturday in response to a request for assistance from the Shoalwater Tribe provided sandbags and strengthened a damaged flood berm there yesterday.

The Corps took over the regulation of Wynoochee Dam on the Olympic Peninsula Sunday evening. The dam is owned by the city of Aberdeen and operated by Tacoma City Light. The Wynoochee River Basin has received significant rainfall in the past 24 hours and is forecasted to receive more. As much as an inch an hour has fallen in the Wynoochee area and more is expected today. The good news is that Wynoochee Dam was below the normal flood pool by 15 feet (762 feet above mean sea level) when the Corps took it over.

Currently the inflows of 14,500 cfs are nearing the record of 15,000 cfs and residents need to be aware that Wynoochee Dam only controls 20 percent of the drainage basin. Even moderate water releases from Wynoochee Dam can impact downstream and residents need to be prepared for flooding and damages from high water.

It takes about 10 hours for the water released from Wynoochee Dam to reach the river gage at Black Creek at Montesano, Wash. Nearly all of the impacts to the Montesano area are from uncontrolled flows below the dam. A Corps information paper on Wynoochee Dam can be accessed on the Corps web site at [www.nws.usace.army.mil](http://www.nws.usace.army.mil) under Corps Topics

Public Law 84-99 enables the Corps to assist state and local authorities in flood fight activities and cost share in the repair of flood protection structures. The purpose is to prevent loss of life and minimize property damage associated with severe weather.

The National Weather Service issues severe weather, flood watches and warnings and should be consulted for that information.

For more information on the Corps, and up-to-date river forecasts, go to

(206) 764-6702. Information on Emergency Management is also available at (206) 764-3406.