

Corps posts report on follow-up actions taken in response to lessons learned

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Corps posts report on follow-up actions taken in response to lessons learned from 2006 spring flood event at Libby Dam

SEATTLE -- The Seattle District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made a report available today on follow-up actions taken in response to lessons learned from 2006 spring flood event at Libby Dam.

The document, "Update on Implementation of Lessons Learned from the 2006 Spring Flood Event," is posted on the Seattle District Web site at www.nws.usace.army.mil under the topic "Libby Operations." It summarizes the analysis completed and actions taken concerning Libby Dam operations in light of recommendations following a 2006 Kootenai River flood and a review of the Corps' actions during that event.

Record temperatures, rapid snow melt and significant rain storms contributed to flooding in Kootenai Valley in May and June. During the high flows from Libby Dam, the spring flood event saw the Kootenai River reach 1766.56 feet above mean sea level, more than 2.5 feet over floodstage at Bonners Ferry.

The Corps prepared an After Action Report (AAR) in response to the 2006 Kootenai/Kootenay River flood event. The AAR, completed in November 2006, was coordinated with locals and the region and included recommendations in the form of "Lessons Learned" intended to provide decision makers with information for future operational decisions.

The "Lessons Learned" identified areas requiring additional follow-up analysis, and/or recommended actions concerning emergency response, public affairs communication, and project operations (such as, improving how the Corps performs risk analysis, reviewing the tools that the Corps uses to perform risk assessments, and communicating risk to stakeholders and the public, etc).

The Corps also committed to assessing information resulting from the 2006 flood event on system and local flood damage reduction, the effects of the high flows and spill on resident fish below Libby Dam, and the resulting condition of the local levee system. To date, many of the actions recommended in the AAR have been fully implemented.

The Corps has not yet made a decision on whether to implement VARQ FC at Libby beyond 2008. In 2006, the Corps finalized an EIS on flood control and fish operations at Libby. Subsequent to the flood event, the Corps deferred completion of a Record of Decision (ROD) on long-term implementation of VARQ at Libby Dam pending completion of actions identified in the recommendations to the AAR.

The Corps plans to issue a ROD for long-term flood control operations at Libby Dam in May 2008.

The release of this report to the public is part of the Corps' commitment to better inform the public and stakeholders on Libby Dam operations.

More information is available on the Corps' Web site at www.nws.usace.army.mil.