

From: [Tim Elsea](#)
To: ["Scott Boettcher"](#)
Subject: Latest Event
Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 6:41:46 PM

Hi Scott,

Here are my thoughts on the successes, challenges, and suggestions for this past event.

First of all, I think the effort has truly changed public perception on flooding. I have spoken to a significant number of people who knew how to access the stream gages and utilized them throughout the event. I certainly think it gave people a sense of calm and control to be able to watch the gages along with the stream forecasts to see how high the streams might peak and especially when they might peak. All in all, please tell the flood authority thank you for their funding and efforts. I know it has been a great benefit to our community.

In addition to that, the flood inundation maps were well used in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). It was very beneficial to be able to pull up those maps to show law enforcement and emergency responders a likely scenario (or our best information) of what was happening in the field, and what was likely to happen. I had an entire EOC wishing they had access to the same type of information on the east end of the county, so please thank the flood authority and West Consultants for that as well.

One of the challenges we faced was that there were some lag time in the gages as the event was unfolding. There were times that the available information was more than an hour (and sometimes "hours") behind real time. I think for most people this isn't too much more than an inconvenience, but as we were in the EOC determining whether or not to issue a voluntary evacuation or shelter in place notice, (while hoping for the river to crest), it was very important to us. I'm assuming this is due to the gages being called from the outside by people who have the phone numbers, but that is only conjecture on my part. If that is the case, I would support a tiered system for calling into the gages, or actually changing the phone numbers and only have the agencies be able to access the data now that we have the stream gage information so readily available to the general public. (At one point, we in the EOC resorted to calling the gages ourselves but could only get through to a couple of the gages and after about ½ hour we accepted the information as it was fed to us.)

As far as suggestions go, I would second your thought earlier today that we should have an after incident meeting for the gages. Prior to the event, I asked our crews to note times on their logs as they were noting "water over roadway" so we should be able to use that information to ground truth the inundation maps in some areas (knowing that every event will be a little different with influence from other streams, especially the Newaukum/Chehalis/Skookumchuck). We also sent survey crews out to capture the high water marks so that will be useful information too. Our survey crews also assisted USGS after the event.

I also noted some little anomalies in the inundation maps that we need to note and update. (i.e. SR 6 showed as being inundated just west of I-5 when in actuality the area around SR 6 was under water, but the highway was not in danger of being inundated at that location)

My final suggestion would be that I would really like for the Flood Authority members to come down and see our county Emergency Operations Center. Our IT team has worked incredibly well with the Sheriff's office and it is truly impressive to see the different work stations (each with its own phone and computer hookup) and to also see the 4 large screen monitors (three of which were Black Friday deals) where we could pull up the stream gages, google earth, NOAA forecasts etc... as the event was unfolding.

Scott, there is no doubt that you, the Flood Authority, West Consultants, J Vander Stoep, the Governor, the legislature (not to mention our local emergency responders, public works team and all the others that are too many to name) should be commended for laying the ground work for all of the improvements to infrastructure and information that we benefited from during this event.

Thank you,

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The foundation stones for a balanced success are honesty, character, integrity, faith, love and loyalty.

[Zig Ziglar](#)