



King County

News Release

Date: Oct. 17, 2014

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Annual flood protection work along White River begins Monday in Pacific

For the fifth-consecutive year, people who live and work in the City of Pacific along the White River will have additional flood protection this flood season, thanks to a temporary flood barrier that will soon be in place.

King County is scheduled to begin work on Monday, Oct. 20, to close the gaps in the temporary barrier at Pacific Park that provides increased flood protection to Pacific. The work is funded by the King County Flood Control District and the barriers, known as HESCOs, are provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

This work is expected to take about one week to complete, and residents can expect truck traffic, large equipment and crews working within construction areas.

The HESCO barrier was installed as a temporary flood protection measure along the White River following flooding in 2009. Last year, the height of the flood barrier was raised because sediment build-up in the White River created a higher flood risk.

"The HESCOs are a temporary fix while the Flood Control District moves forward with a long-term plan to reduce flooding concerns in Pacific," said Reagan Dunn, Chair of the King County Flood District Board of Supervisors.

"In 2009 the City of Pacific experienced significant flooding into residential areas after a major storm required controlled water releases from Mud Mountain Dam," said Flood District Supervisor Pete von Reichbauer, who represents Pacific on the Metropolitan King County Council. "The HESCO barrier is one of many actions we are taking to prevent flooding from happening again."

The White River is notorious for the high sediment load it carries from Mount Rainier. The river segment alongside Pacific is particularly vulnerable to gravel deposition and rapidly changing conditions because of the natural drop in channel gradient through this area. As the channel fills with sediment, the chance the riverbank will overtop increases.

“We appreciate the partnerships and the work that is being done to protect our residents from the White River flooding,” said Pacific mayor Leanne Guier. “But it is equally important that everyone also personally prepare themselves, their family and where they live for potential flooding.”

The Flood Control District is moving forward with two levee setback projects along the river that will reconnect more than 120 acres of floodplain to the river channel, giving the river room to fan out and deposit sediment.

Residents can learn more about how they can prepare for flooding, including the use of sandbags to protect their property, by visiting www.kingcounty.gov/floodservices.

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The King County Flood Control District is a special purpose government created to provide funding and policy oversight for flood protection projects and programs in King County. The Flood Control District's Board is composed of the members of the King County Council. The Water and Land Resources Division of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks develops and implements the approved flood protection projects and programs. Information is available at www.kingcountyfloodcontrol.org.