

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
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October 4, 2010

Lieutenant General Robert Van Antwerp
U.S. Army Chief of Engineers and Commanding General
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear Lieutenant General Van Antwerp:

I write regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (COE) Final Decision on the Matter of Variance from Vegetation Standards for Levees and Floodwalls, which I understand is expected by the end of October 2010.

This letter is to let you know that I support immediate efforts by the COE and affected parties in Washington State to create and implement a standard for vegetation management that fits the unique conditions in our watersheds and ensures the safety of our levee systems. Towards that end, I strongly advocate for the "regional framework" approach outlined in the enclosed August 5, 2010, letter addressed to you by the three federal executives from the Pacific Northwest region. I have also included a letter from our Congressional Delegation that endorses this type of approach as well.

I believe it is important for the COE and Washington State stakeholders to collaboratively move forward toward addressing the technical and policy issues essential to developing a meaningful and lasting solution. In my view, the regional framework approach would provide this strong foundation and will enable us to create and implement a management approach for levee vegetation that effectively provides for the public safety and protection of property, while helping us preserve and restore endangered fish species.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Gregoire".

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor

Enclosures (2)

cc: William Stelle, Regional Administrator, NOAA/NMFS, Northwest Region
Robyn Thorson, Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Region
John R. McMahan, Brigadier General, U.S. Army, Division Commander

