

Hardant @ 9/9/08 G MNR mtg.

Sept. 9, 2008

2008-30191

Members of the King Council Growth Management and Natural Resources Committee: Chair Larry Gossett, Vice-chair Jane Hague, Members Dow Constantine, Reagan Dunn, Larry Phillips.

My name is Martha Parker. My husband and I started canoeing rivers in 1965. We moved to the tri-cities in 1967, and started our own canoe club there. Five years later we moved to King County and have been here ever since. We have traveled some 46 streams in Washington.

It was beautiful. It was a place where few people went, except those with us on the trip. It was a place where we could enjoy quiet nature, not only the green water swirls, shadows of wavelets on the bottom, but also kingfishers, herons, dippers, otters, deer and elk.

We learned how to boat rivers safely by reading books, re-reading them, and going on lots of relatively easy rivers. We traveled many streams with lots of natural woody debris. Along the way I studied at the UW and received Bachelor's degrees in Civil Engineering and Geology in the late 1970's.

In 1995, I became aware of King County's program of introducing woody debris into rivers for salmon habitat. This first project was some 23 large trees embedded in the bank near the golf course in Renton. They had their rootwads extending out into the main current, and they started on the outside of a river bend. This made them dangerous – not to us, but to inexperienced folks, who seem to think a little common sense is all they need to avoid getting drowned, or a victim of hypothermia, which can also kill.

The design guide for woody debris projects, published by King County in 1993 shows just such a project as the one in Renton. This guide was supposed to be revised, but last year still hadn't been, according to your own manager.

I testified in 1997 at the hearing asking King County to include local boaters in their design protocol for woody debris. I helped convince the hearing examiner that public safety demanded it. My main point was that once people have <sup>started to</sup> created a construction on a river, those people need to take due care of public safety aspects of their design.

Ever since then, after my retirement in 1995, my main job has been woody debris in rivers. I've always been an active member of the former Boater Safety Advisory Committee, which is now the River Safety Council. Last December I testified at the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. In July I had told them about the death of Christina Watson, 20 years old, against a log jam created by the WDFW and WSDOT. In December I asked them, "Is anything different?" Two men came up to me afterwards, and one said, "We didn't mean to kill anybody."

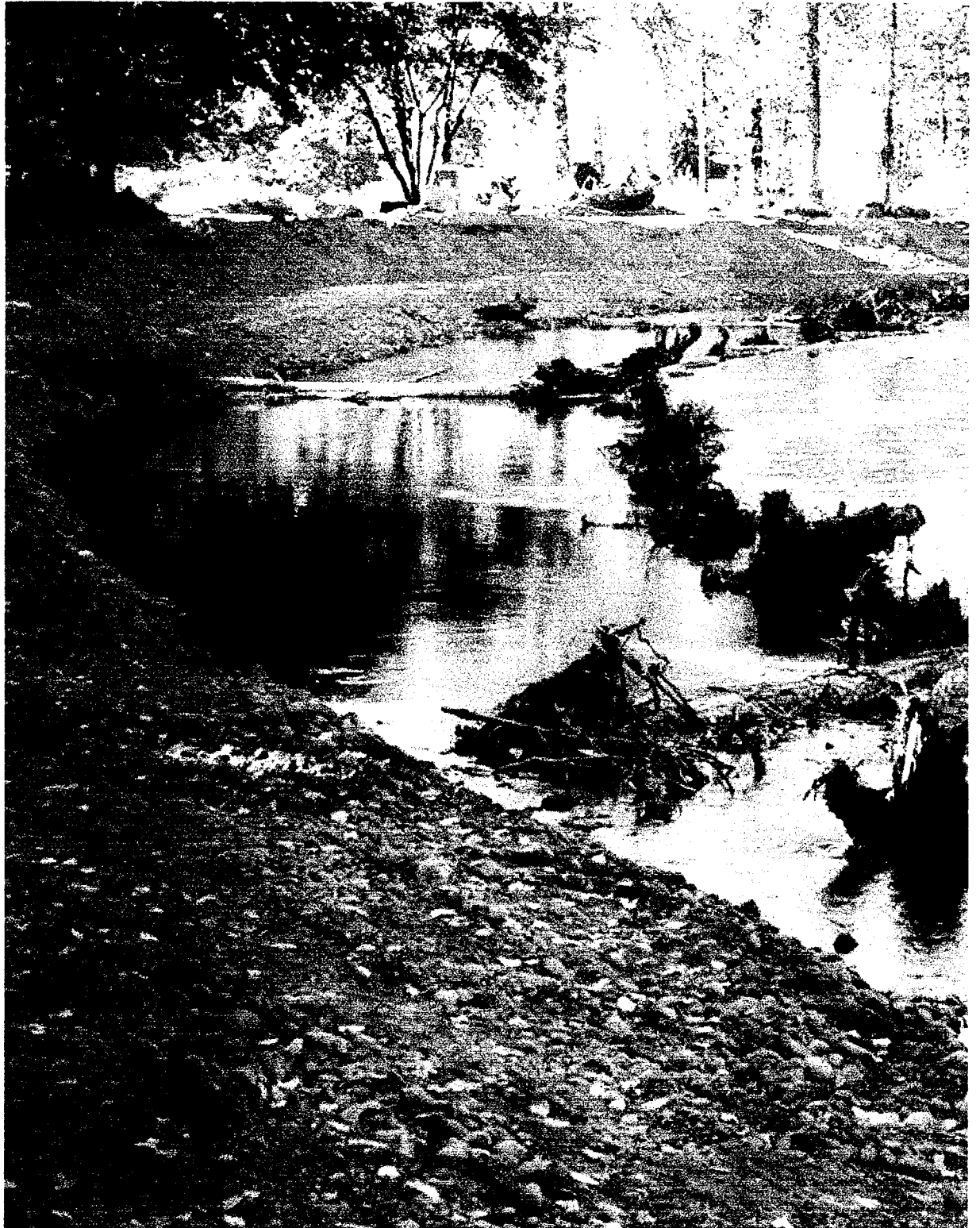
I now quote from a registered professional engineer in this field. "By state law, constructions of this kind must be designed and the construction overseen by registered professional engineers qualified to do this work.". Do today's plans bear the stamp of a registered professional engineer? What does the SEPA permit say about recreation? We have already seen 2 other cases where the SEPA permit says no mitigation for recreation impact will be done. In one case this happened even though the county (not King) representative overseeing the project knew there has been recreation on the stream for a long time.

At the same time there is a National Engineering Standard. Technical Supplement 14J says that woody debris shall not be used where there would be an impact to either commercial or recreation navigation. This standard is being ignored in Washington. Woody debris designers may consult with local boaters, but dangerous designs are still being implemented, and old dangerous ones are still there.

As one person at the King Conservation District said, "It isn't that hard to place woody debris where it won't be dangerous."

Not all states act like this. Information comes from Minnesota that they are adding woody debris, but they are also removing some that is dangerous to boaters.

As a resident in the Wenatchee area said last year, "How can a fish be worth a girl's life?"



• Cedar River, approx mile 7, 2008