



Legislation Text

File #: 2017-0384, **Version:** 1

A MOTION establishing a policy that determines the financial responsibility between King County and the King County flood control zone district for either the removal or the relocation, or both, and mitigation of logjam hazards in King County rivers; and requesting the department of natural resources and parks in concert with the King County flood control zone district to develop an implementation plan to effectuate the financial responsibility policy.

WHEREAS, King County and the King County flood control zone district, although separate legal entities, share the common goal of helping to protect residents of King County from the effects of flooding, and

WHEREAS, the King County flood control zone district contracts with King County to perform flood protection projects, flood facility maintenance and support services, and

WHEREAS, in 2016, multiple logjam hazards developed along the Cedar river, and

WHEREAS, in July 2016, the King County sheriff's office closed nine miles of the Cedar river between Maple Valley and Renton to all recreational use due to the hazards of the large trees and logjams, and the river remains closed in 2017, and

WHEREAS, policy RCM-1 in the 2006 King County flood hazard management plan states: "naturally occurring accumulations of large woody debris should be repositioned or relocated for flood hazard management purposes only if one or more of the flood and channel migration risks in policy G-2 is present and all reasonable flood and channel migration risk reduction alternatives have been considered," and

WHEREAS, the policy G-2 flood risks in the 2006 King County flood hazard management plan identified "threats to public safety" as the top priority risk when evaluating flooding and channel migration, and

WHEREAS, the King County "procedures for managing naturally occurring large wood in King County rivers" states that if a logjam has been determined to be a risk to public safety "actions should be selected to mitigate the risk of public safety while minimizing disturbance to the river. Actions may include, in general order of preference, site monitoring, installation of informational or warning signs, pruning portions of the large wood pieces, closure of a river reach, or repositioning or relocation of large wood pieces," and

WHEREAS, the King County flood control zone district has removed the hazard of approximately nine logjams to reopen the Cedar river for recreational use in August 2017, and

WHEREAS, because mitigation required by the hydraulic project approval permit has become increasingly costly, at the direction of the King County flood control zone district, the department of natural resources and parks has engaged the Cedar river comanagers, the Washington state Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe fisheries division, to explore developing a new cost-effective permitting approach for large wood relocation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. King County shall be financially responsible for either the removal or the relocation, or both, and mitigation of logjam hazards in King County rivers unless at least one of the following conditions are met:

1. Either removal or relocation, or both, of the logjam is necessary for King County flood control zone district purposes; or

2. The logjam is caused by woody debris associated with a King County flood control zone district project.

B. The council requests the department of natural resources and parks work collaboratively with the King County flood control zone district to develop an implementation plan to effectuate Section A of this motion. The implementation plan shall include, but not be limited to, a description of how responsibility for individual logjams will be determined and identify strategies for payment and reimbursement between King County and the King County flood control zone district to enable either the timely removal or timely relocation,

or both, of logjams, which may involve noncash strategies. The plan shall take into account Washington state policies or practices for banking mitigation credits.

C. The executive shall transmit the implementation plan by December 31, 2017, in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy to the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, the policy staff director, the King County flood control zone district executive director and the lead staff for the transportation, economy and environment committee or its successor.