

# 1999 Whatcom County Flood Fee

## Flood Fee Increase

The flood fee has increased this year restoring it to the original 1993 level. The reason for this is twofold. First, both the state and federal governments have issued mandates that require the County to implement special water resource planning and programs. Second, it is essential that we take action now, before it is too late, to protect and preserve our critical water resources.

It is important to provide for adequate future supplies of clean water for drinking, farming, business and industry, fish and shellfish, recreation and wildlife. The anticipated designation of salmon as an endangered species will require enormous efforts to protect salmon and aid in their recovery.

## The Best Available Short Term Option

While the County seeks other funding, state law allows flood funds to be used for special projects that protect water quality, in addition to fighting floods. The decision to use flood funds enables the County to assess state lands that could not otherwise be assessed. This provides a more broad and fair cost sharing, since these water issues impact every member of this community and are unavoidable.

County government's portion of the property tax levy has not been raised for four years. Instead, the County has chosen to keep county services at basic, but effective levels. This has been done in response to general public concern regarding the tax burden we all face. County budgets are developed to maintain current service levels with minimal increases. Presently, the County's budget is financially stable, but current revenues are not sufficient to pay the enormous costs for these new programs while maintaining current services.

## The Costs

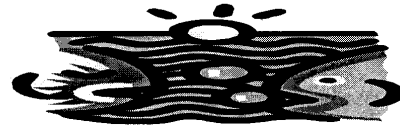
Short term costs are expected to be around \$2-3 million for the next few years. Committing local dollars now increases our ability to gain state and federal matching funds for these necessary mandates.

## The County's Responsibility

The County is responsible for the public health and safety of its citizens. Water issues have and will continue to affect community health and safety. We will continue to work with all local entities to address the critical water-related problems. The County will serve as the lead agency in the water resource planning and program efforts and will direct the funding on behalf of all citizens of Whatcom County.

## **Benefits of Coordinated Water Resource Efforts**

- ◆ Salmon Recovery from Endangered Species Status
- ◆ Lake Whatcom Protection
- ◆ Storm Water Management
- ◆ Enhanced Water Quality
- ◆ Shellfish & Ground Water Protection
- ◆ Watershed Planning



## **Your Flood Fee Cost**

Based on Assessed Value:	1993-95 & 1999	1996-98
\$ 2,500 or less	\$0.00	\$0.00
2,501 to 10,000	\$5.00	\$2.50
10,001 to 30,000	\$7.00	\$3.50
30,001 to 50,000	\$20.00	\$10.00
50,001 to 75,000	\$30.00	\$15.00
75,001 to 100,000	\$40.00	\$20.00
100,001 to 125,000	\$50.00	\$25.00
125,001 to 150,000	\$65.00	\$32.50
150,001 to 200,000	\$80.00	\$40.00
200,001 to 400,000	\$90.00	\$45.00
over 400,000	\$100.00	\$50.00

The average flood fee increase for 1999 is \$17.56 per parcel. From the total assessment, half will be dedicated to flood hazard reduction and emergency response, while the other half will be dedicated to water resource issues.

## **For Information Contact:**

Phone: 360-676-6692 or 398-1310

Fax: 360-738-4561

Email: [publicworks@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:publicworks@co.whatcom.wa.us)



**Whatcom County**