

Re: new information regarding earthquake faults and the proposed reservoir.

There continues to be concern about the proposed Dungeness Reservoir on River Road in Sequim. In general, people support the concept of setting aside water from the river to help ensure that adequate water is available for irrigation late in summer. Keeping the river flow strong enough for our salmon to swim upstream to their breeding grounds is the priority. And during draught time, that means diverting water for irrigation may be stopped. So, finding ways to keep the lawns in Sequim green and our dwindling agricultural base in business makes sense (although it is worth noting that some question the need).

For years people have perceived that the reservoir would be a recreational lake of sorts, like many of the other reservoirs in Washington. In October of 2021 a group of engineers and County employees charged with finding the lowest cost solution proposed a design that requires a 35-foot-high earthen embankment to contain over 500 million (500,000,000) gallons of water. A substantial portion of that water will be above ground. Note that access will be prohibited. There is no recreational access to the reservoir area with no fish, no boating, no hiking. It will be blocked with a chain link fence.

The neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the proposed site are home to over 500 people. All their homes are below the level of the water in the proposed reservoir. None of the neighbors were involved in the proposed design that is focused on cost rather than safety.

Neighbors have expressed concerns about that much water above their head. In a catastrophic event resulting from extreme weather or an earthquake, a breach in the earthen dam could send millions of gallons of water into their homes. There would be no warning. And no time to even run for the hills like we are told to do if we have a tsunami.

We are told that we should not worry. The State will issue a permit and the engineers have it under control and we should trust them. Perhaps that is true. Or perhaps something has been overlooked. In the past several years, extreme weather events have closed our roads, cut off our power, backup generators have failed, communications dropped, dams fail, and emergencies happen. Power stations in Tacoma were attacked recently and there are random earthquakes throughout the western states. At best, it is difficult if not impossible to predict what might happen.

Risk management is a complex science. It is hard to understand, but it is more than just engineering. Ordinary people take risks every day. If it is a choice they have made themselves, they generally are willing to take the risks once they have taken precautions. Just yesterday an older friend sent me photos of himself in a kayak between enormous rocks and a cliff in six-foot waves. He had a helmet, wet suit, life jacket, not to mention extensive training and years of experience. Even with those protections, I would not be in that kayak in these near freezing waters as it is not my choice. But he made the decision to do so based on his protections, his skill, and his free will. The neighbors have not had that opportunity. We have not made that choice. Where are our life jackets? We have not volunteered to accept this risk.

Now we learn that the government has identified earthquake faults on the actual site that is proposed for the reservoir. This is not acceptable. Clallam County has an extensive earthquake preparedness program. We are cautioned to expect the possibility of a month of isolation, taught to drop and cover, run for the hills in a tsunami. And in contrast, we are now being told not to be concerned about all those millions of gallons of water over our heads if an earthquake occurs. "It will have a permit. Don't

worry about it.” The County told local government that it had not yet studied the risk if there were a breach of the earthen dam holding that water and suggested that the neighbors might see a few inches of water in their yards if such occurred, despite the engineers saying lives would be at risk.

Please see the USGS map below that shows fault lines in the River Road and Happy Valley area. Note that one of the faults is shown as crossing River Road into the northern edge of the proposed dam. The neighbors all live on the eastern and northern edges of the proposed design. We assume there are regulations about critical infrastructure placement near fault zones. And one asks how there can be any justification for placing such a facility designed in this manner where so many could die.

It is time to reconsider this design and revise the plan to place that water below the ground any reasonable person would. It is time to have the neighbors at the table. And time to consider safety first.

Please contact the County Commissioners and ask them to revise the plan with safety first and bring all the stakeholders to the table. [Address: 223 E 4th St #4, Port Angeles, WA 98362](mailto:223 E 4th St #4, Port Angeles, WA 98362) [Phone: \(360\) 417-2233](tel:(360)417-2233)

The map can be found at

<https://usgs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5a6038b3a1684561a9b0aadf88412fcf>

Note the green lines at the bottom on the image that roughly mark the proposed site and the yellow fault lines in the center of the image circled in red. (The choice of Yellow for the fault lines was not ours, this was the USGS choice.)

