

JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER
3RD DISTRICT, SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON



□ 2352 RAYBURN HOB
WASHINGTON D.C. 20515
(202) 225-3536

□ GENERAL O.O. HOWARD HOUSE
750 ANDERSON STREET, SUITE B
VANCOUVER, WA 98661
(360) 695-6292

WWW.JHB.HOUSE.GOV

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1602

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
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U.S. JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

April 28, 2021

The Honorable Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger,

I am requesting funding for Mt. St. Helens Sediment Monitoring in fiscal year 2022. The entity to receive funding for this project is the Northwest Division United States Army Corps located at 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd Ste 400 Portland, OR 97232-1257.

Cowlitz County communities have had to live with the aftermath of the 1980 Mt. St. Helens eruption for over 40 years. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is mandated by Congress to manage flood risk associated with the continued flow of sediment through the Cowlitz and Toutle Rivers from Mt. St. Helens, and to establish safe flood protection levels for the cities of Castle Rock, Lexington, Kelso and Longview. A key element of the Corps' protection efforts is to collect data on an annual basis through bathymetric surveys, a LIDAR survey and USGS water level gauges and sediment transport monitoring.

Funding for these critical data points has been inconsistent and in recent years have required aggressive advocacy by stakeholders and officials at all levels of government on an annual basis. The data is used to ensure that the Corps is meeting federally mandated flood protection levels when dredging may be required and when the crest of the Sediment Retention Structure needs to be raised. Leaving years between these vital monitoring activities creates glaring omissions in the data and increases the risk of a devastating flood. Fiscal year 2022 funding would be used for managing the flood risk to downstream communities.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress