

1. Comments from John Whitfield who lives at 300 Mill road.

I agree with Neil Horn. The Hilger ditch would be a great place to start to keep water running into the Subdivision. I have the property west of Hilger. I have stated in the past I would be willing to have the county utilize a portion of my property to improve the Hilger ditch.

Thanks **John W**

2. Comments from Neil and Darlene Horne who live at 419 Mill Road

Just a few words of concern and encouragement, as stated in the email from Roger, now is the time to speak out about the valley flooding.

This is not an easy fix. Everyone has their individual concerns and that is expected. The County has a plan and a direction they want to go forward on and I am sure in the next couple of weeks we are going to find out more of what to expect. My concern is are we going to spend more unproductive time trying to work around private property, instead of doing what we can on public right of way. It is obvious the water doesn't care if it is private or public, it will do what elevation dictates.

I know Eric Griffin has a plan to work from Forestvale Cemetery back to Ten Mile. I don't disagree with him but maybe we should have a couple different plans, so, we could fall back to plan "B" or "C" if plan "A" would encounter problems.

The work completed on Forestvale proved to be beneficial to the neighboring residents. I didn't see anyone that was affected by the flood water. That is a positive.

Other projects that should be looked at and started sooner than later are the Mill Road ditch and the Hilger ditch. The Mill Road ditch is the only way to protect the Big Sky subdivision and the residents on Mill Road west of McHugh. The private property fence on the south side of Mill that encroaches on County right of way should be moved now, in preparation for the ditch to be installed. Utilities may need to be addressed and a final plan developed.

The old Hilger ditch on the west end of the Mihelish property should be looked at now. Thanks to the Mihelish family they have agreed to do what is needed to help out. It is good jesters like this that need to be acted on. The same as the Mill road ditch the old Hilger ditch needs to address utilities/easements and a final plan.

I look forward to seeing what is being planned at the VFC meeting the 27th. Anything that can be done now would be good. Thank you for your time. **Neil M. Horne**

3. from Jeannene Mass who lives at 770 Sewell Road

Hi –I missed a training opportunity on flood insurance, as I was on the road --- however, passage of the new flood insurance bill will have an impact on our valley community. Lots of rules yet to be written --- processes to be followed ---- but the process is moving along <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/05/us-usa-flood-congress-idUSBREA2400120140305> . Of interest is the goal (as opposed to a mandate) that flood insurance costs should not exceed 1% of total coverage. As I get more of these materials, I'll share them back with you *Jeannene Maas*

4. Comments from Danyel Sheen, 675 Edgerton Road

Roger - thank you letting us borrow your copy – I'm printing off a copy of the final plan from the County website.

I wasn't able to visit with Skeeter and go on the land tour last night with Bob. I do know that Bob has some opinions of what should be accomplished, sooner rather than later. I will let him address his opinions and concerns in a separate email. I believe that the existing ditches across Skeeter's land must be excavated deeper as their current depths are not sufficient enough to aid in controlling water across his land to Mill Road. Skeeter has expressed his cooperation at making them deeper, but does not have access to a backhoe. I have connections I can tap into for that. However, the ditches along the roads in the county right-a-ways are just not deep enough or non-existent. I agree that the water must be captured right away and re-directed to the holding ponds at Forestvale and on out to Lake Helena. However, the Forestvale holding pond can only hold so much water before it breeches the banks. So, do we know just how much that pond will hold before a bank breach??

Bob and I are new to this area of the county, but have lived in Helena for over 8 years. Bought our house in July and since this last flood we are learning more and more about the flood issues that exist. It is belief (correct me if I'm wrong) that the county has had this project on the table for a few years now, and are taking their sweet time at accomplishing it as it keeps getting pushed to the side or traded for fancier, more appealing county projects. My fear is the neighborhoods are going to start taking matters into their own hands in order to protect their properties, livelihoods, and families. The county must move forward with this project to protect the many hundreds of residences from the devastating future floods.

Susan – in a previous email, you had asked for a rough estimate of expenses incurred with this last flood. After sitting down and adding up all the figures, my family incurred nearly \$1800 in unexpected expenses.

5. from Roger LaVoie, 512 Stadler

Bob and Danyel, thanks for returning my copy of the Master Flood Plan so quickly. It seems like every few days I want to look something up. Do you still want them to hold a copy of the Plan in the Commissioners office for you to borrow?

What are you thinking about the water that spills across Skeeter's land from culverts #2, #3, #4, and #5 after having a look at the lay of the land yesterday? My thoughts are as follow. The flood water comes under the canal onto McHugh's land before it reaches Skeeter's property. I think what the county would like to do is *immediately capture the water after it comes under the canal* from these four culverts and route it in *one ditch* to the Forestvale Cemetery retention pond in the most efficient and safe manner possible pursuant to competent engineering recommendations. (I may be wrong with this assumption but I am pretty sure it is the direction Derek Brown was going with planning. It certainly seems like the most direct and efficient option to me.) However this is not possible because it would require at least one easement across private property that has not been forthcoming.

The alternative is the messy option of allowing the flood water coming from culverts #2, #3, #4, and #5 to spill over the land until it reaches Mill Road and McHugh Lane, capture it there in ditches, and route it to the Forestvale Cemetery retention pond. This is messy because the water spilling over the land greatly exacerbates the ground water problem in our neighborhood. You have seen a copy of the email I sent to Eric Bryson asking how this will be accomplished, i.e. route all of this water up McHugh Lane or direct part of it to the Hilger Ditch. If I am off base with my assumptions I hope that Eric will clarify things.

Thanks for all or your interest and involvement in correcting our flooding problems.

6. From Les Harris, 901 Menlo Park Rd

Several issues that I would like see make the agenda are:

1. What are the budget considerations for the rest of the year from the county for flood mitigation other than the maintenance budget? We have flood issues in East Helena, Augusta, and the Helena Valley. While the maintenance staff have made headway on water flow issues they should not be expected to take on major improvements without funding. What can we expect from the county?
2. I believe the county budget is formulated around July of each year. For 2015 (and going forward) what level of funding is the county willing to make so a long term flood mitigation solution can be achieved?
3. Is each of the commissioners willing to step up to help resolve the flooding issue? If not we need to understand where they stand on this issue.

7. From Ralph Peck, 650 Stadler

Julie & I will be out of town on the 27th. Please represent us at the mtg. I am wondering if some of us need to discuss alternatives to push on the County for approving our sub development and then continuing to pour water through that culvert on Mill Road into ou[r] houses. They are delinquent in putting ditches along mill and should be

liable. Why are the fences along Mill allowed to encroach on the right of way and a diversion allowed on the county right of way? This forces water into houses in the subdivision.

The county continues to give us lip service for 35 years but do nothing for the Subdivision unless we do it ourselves. (Roads)

I don't know how to get their attention. We tried the nice approach for so many years. I am going to die before they respond.

8. Comments from Gary Mihelish

Thanks for your hard work and incredible persistence.

I'm a bit removed, but my two bits is this. Feel free to pass this along to your neighbors or county officials.

Public input is always good, but there's a point where we need to stop talking, debating and trust the experts. There has been plenty of time taken talking about solutions. Everyone has a different opinion. We talk in circles and get no where. Can we keep it more simple?

Qualified, trained engineers have identified that we can improve our situation by building flood canals north along McHugh Lane and the Hilger ditch to the west. Our family is willing to do what it takes to help get the Hilger Ditch open if it can help.

It is more obvious to all of us that a McHugh ditch would do wonders, even if nothing else can be done. This may not be the perfect solution and it may not be the cure all for everyone, but it's a start.

So let's start there now... before it's too late again.
Good luck!

9. From Archie Harper, 901 Lynn Road

For planning purposes, here are my own comments coming off the heels of the recent winter floods in this area:

- ✓ From the Montgomery and Anderson flood study, the 2011 event approximates a 25-year flood in terms of its magnitude. The seven storm culverts under the HVID have a combined capacity = 594 cfs; these HVID culverts act a lot like flow regulators once Tenmile Creek experiences a 25-yr or higher magnitude flood event. Of those seven culverts, culverts #2-5 combined allow for about 204 cfs—this is the water that poses a lot of trouble for a lot of home owners and businesses downstream of the HVID.
- ✓ For the most part, these floodflows via **culverts 2-5** have a direct impact on the Big Sky Subdivision and surrounding areas downstream northeast through Forestvale road and to Rossitor School. This is a focal point for county priority because these areas have the largest number of residents at risk, including businesses, Rossitor School, the North Montana trailer park residential area, utilities and transportation infrastructure.
- ✓ With 200+ cfs routing through these neighborhoods compounded by obstructions due to development (transportation, housing and agricultural), it makes sense to split (channelize) the flows up three or more ways rather than routing the majority of flows down two channels. In fact, there would be ONE short segment along the eastern border of the Big Sky subdivision to convey 200 cfs before part of it splits off towards the Forestvale/Kerr intersection. That is just too much flow to handle in one ditch segment in an area already experiencing some of the worst flooding impacts. Therefore, I maintain that the **Hilger ditch** must be considered as an adjunct to the McHugh-to-Cemetery and Forestvale-to-Gun Club floodwater conveyance channels.

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- ✓ After observing the recent winter snowmelt flood event in these areas, it is clear that the combination ditch /36" squash pipe stormdrain proposed along the north side of Forestvale is very much needed to provide the added relief from flood waters channeling down along this road and adjacent properties. Despite the 2012 improvements along the south side of Forestvale Road, recent floodwaters overtopped the road substantially and locals once again experienced flood impacts, although not groundwater that is a risk during spring runoff floods.
- ✓ The crossing at the junction of North Montana and Forestvale Road is identified as a hydraulic constriction and needs upgrading sooner than later to accommodate conveyed floodflows along both sides of Forestvale so floodwaters can more efficiently pass under Montana Ave on to the Gun Club pond. This will require coordination with MT Dept of Transportation.
- ✓ We all must not forget our neighbors further to the north in the Sewell subdivision (Silver Creek). I understand they had a problem with a plugged (or iced up) culvert, which locals cleared providing the needed relief from localized backwater flooding. The VFC has a member who resides in that area who I rely on as my 'eyes and ears' for flood related problems tied to Silver Creek.