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**(Revised Draft) Section 1**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Flood Hazard Management Plan (FHMP) details the planning process, technical analysis, and improvement recommendations to reduce flood hazards in the South Beach area of Washington. South Beach, a coastal community in Grays Harbor County, has a history of regional and localized flooding. The area is characterized by flat, low-lying land and wetlands. Precipitation in the region exceeds 70 inches annually, with 80 percent of this occurring between October and March.

This document is the second phase of a planning effort undertaken by Grays Harbor County for the coastal area from Westport to Tokeland. In 1995, the County prepared the Grayland Flood Hazard Reduction Plan for the southern portion of this area, extending south from Salt Aire Shores to a natural drainage boundary east of Grayland Beach State Park. This FHMP covers the area from Salt Aire Shores north to Westport. Figure 1-1 shows the planning areas for both phases. The entire coastal area is generally referred to as South Beach; however, for the purposes of this plan, the term is used only for the area north of Salt Aire Shores.

## **PROBLEMS, ISSUES, AND GOALS**

An advisory committee, made up South Beach property owners and agency representatives, was established to guide the planning process of developing the FHMP. Although the possibility of widespread flooding from the main drainage channel (Winter Creek) running through the northern part of the planning area and into the City of Westport was considered, the consensus of the advisory committee is that the more frequent, localized drainage issues are their main concern.

There are numerous locations throughout the planning area that are frequently inundated by stormwater. Figure 3-3 in Section 3, shows identified flooding locations based on information gathered during the advisory committee/public meetings. Although no formal property damage reports have been filed, residents and local jurisdictions report the following concerns:

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- **Public Health and Safety:** Emergency access can be limited by inundated intersections and segments of roadway. Numerous large ponds along State Route (SR) 105 are perceived as driving safety hazards.
  - **Nuisance Flooding:** A number of properties, local roads, and private driveways flood during the rainy season. This causes access difficulties, as well as aesthetic problems. Some residents have expressed concern that the prolonged saturation of their properties may cause septic failure.
  - **Water Quality:** Flooding increases erosion, sedimentation, and the risk of moving pollutants to otherwise uncontaminated areas. This can impair agricultural and natural resources.

The main goals of this FHMP are as follows:

- Develop a positive working relationship among community and governmental agencies. Ensure that all parties are aware of the issues, processes, and implications of an FHMP. Reach public and agency consensus on solutions and funding options.
- Improve the protection of public health and safety from flooding threats in the South Beach study area drainage basin.
- Provide practical, cost-effective solutions that will result in measurable reductions in flooding frequency, duration, and frequently flooded area damages.
- Improve appropriate regulations to control future growth impacts to flooding.
- Document solutions consistent with Ecology FCAAP requirements (WAC 173-145-040) to permit further grant funding opportunities for plan implementation.

## **MAJOR FINDINGS**

By performing simple hydrologic and hydraulic modeling of the main drainage channel, along with more detailed analysis of localized drainage conditions, and working with the advisory committee, the major issues related to stormwater runoff and conveyance in the South Beach

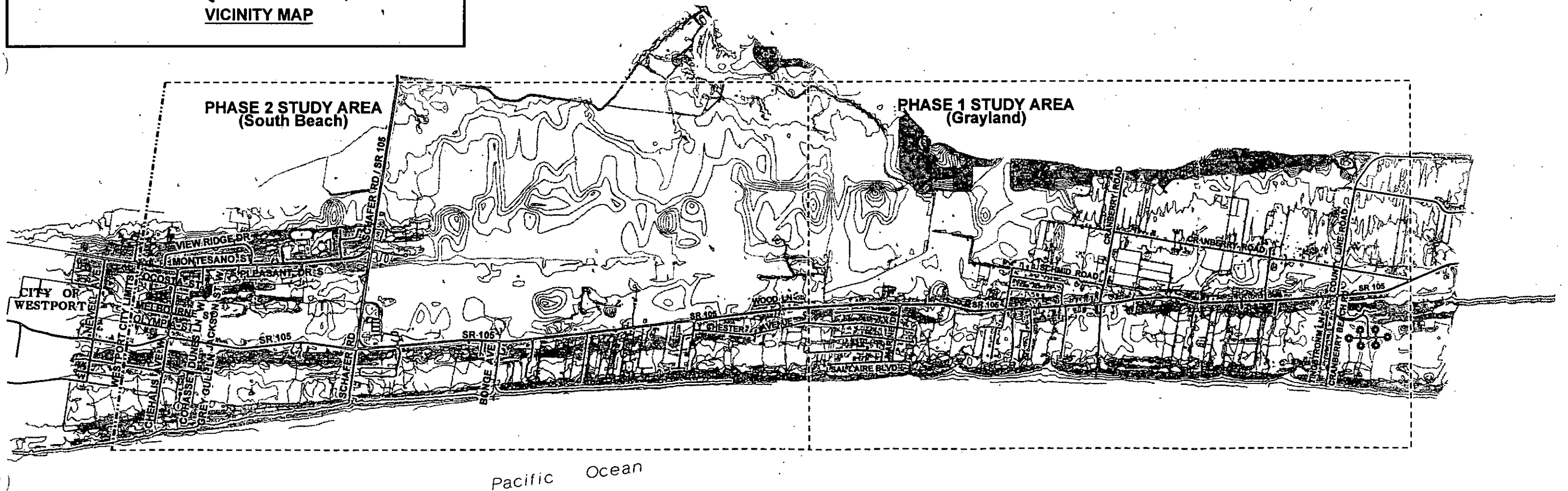
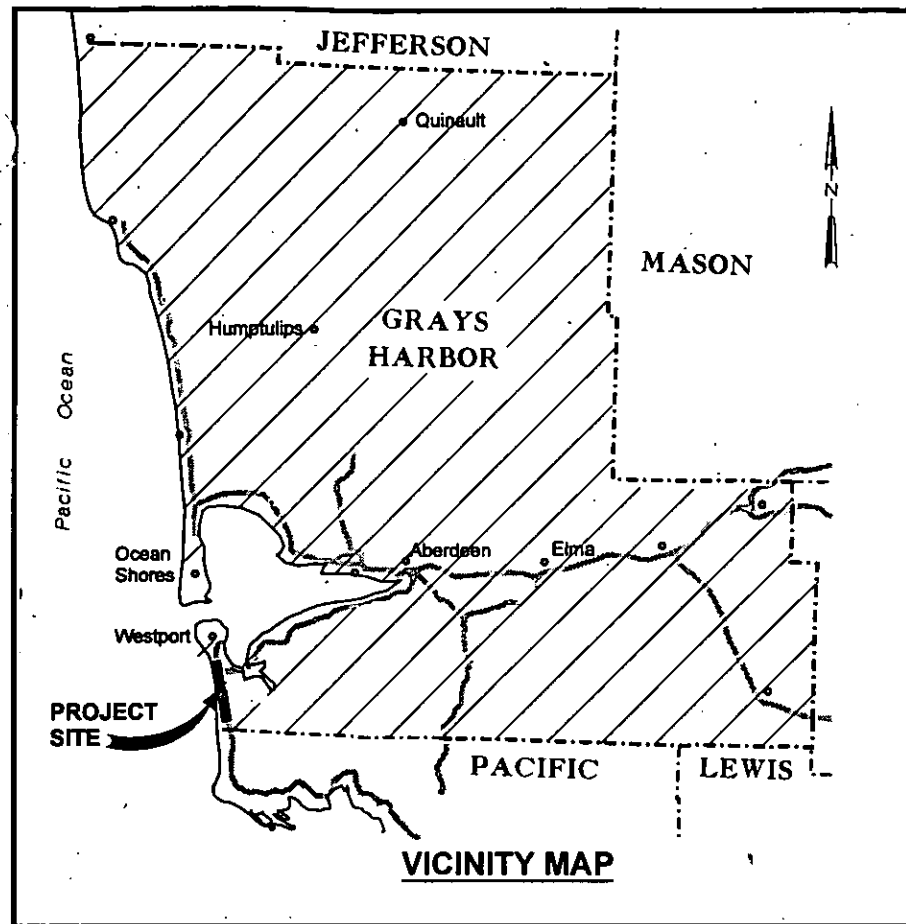


Figure 1-1  
 Phase 1 & Phase 2  
 Study Area Boundaries

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area were identified, and preliminary solutions were developed. The key findings of this FHMP are as follows:

- There are numerous areas of localized flooding.
  - The large puddles along and on SR 105 are perceived as a great flood hazard and affect the largest number of people in the area.
  - Most of the remaining ponding in the area is creating nuisances in yards.
  - There are a few areas where hazards are more serious as a result of water on the roadway or where septic drain fields are saturated and run the risk of failure.
  - Problems are getting worse with development because of increased runoff from impervious areas, fill that blocks surface and subsurface flows, and increased water entering the shallow groundwater system through septic drainfields.
- Major flooding associated with the main drainage channel in the South Beach area (Winter Creek) is limited.
  - Only a small portion of Winter Creek through Westport is located in the South Beach FHMP area. Along this portion, there are three properties that report frequent flooding from the channel. These are addressed in the localized solutions that were developed for this report.
- The County has limited funding available for problems that are not related to roadways.
- Much of the area is wetlands and/or floodplain.
  - Flooding in these areas cannot be prevented.
  - Permits will be needed for work in floodplains and wetlands.
  - Solutions to flooding should focus on reducing damages and hazards rather than on preventing flooding. Solutions should not damage wetlands, nor should they simply move the flooding problem to other locations.

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- Historic drainage outlets to the ocean have been obstructed by drifting sand and accretion of ocean beaches.
  - Since there has been minimal property damage, local residents will not likely be willing to spend large amounts of their own money on solutions.

## **SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SOLUTIONS**

The recommended flood hazard reduction measures were selected based on input from the advisory committee. A summary of these policy and capital improvement recommendations is presented in Table 1-1. Seven example projects were selected for the development of improvements. These projects, which are representative of the types of flooding problems documented in the area, can be used as a guide to develop further improvements.

## **LIST OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

Several general actions have been identified that will substantially reduce flood hazards in the South Beach area. The following general actions should be considered as the basis for expanding upon the specific recommendations that follow this discussion; the County and the State, with input from local residents should resolve roadway flooding.

- Development in floodplains, flood storage areas, and drainage courses should be regulated through the following County actions:
  - Identify permanent drainage courses
  - Prevent filling of drainage pathways and wetlands through vigorous enforcement of regulations
  - Review all filling activities for adverse upstream and downstream effects
  - Coordinate planning with County divisions and other jurisdictions
  - Reduce filling of land beneath homes to the minimum necessary for elevation of the homes and their septic systems

**Table 1-1  
South Coastal Flood Hazard Management Plan  
Recommendations**

	<b>Policy and Program Recommendations</b>	<b>Capital Improvement Project Recommendations</b>
Area-Wide Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulate development in flood-plains and wetlands and impacts to drainage courses</li> <li>• Evaluate revisions to FEMA mapped floodplain boundaries</li> <li>• Coordinate flood hazard management activities with other County divisions and other agencies</li> <li>• Consider development of a conservation easement program to preserve flood storage areas</li> <li>• Develop flood hazard public education programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevate affected homes and businesses where necessary</li> </ul>
Winter Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct berms in conjunction with selected example projects if applicable (See example solutions later in report)</li> <li>• Improve portions of the channel in conjunction with selected example projects if applicable (See example solutions later in report)</li> </ul>
Local Drainage Issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Example Project ABCE</li> <li>• Example Project I</li> <li>• Example Project K1/K2</li> <li>• Example Project L</li> <li>• Example Project Q</li> <li>• Example Project R</li> <li>• Example Project X</li> </ul> <p>(See Section 5 for more details)</p>

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- The community needs to solve problems locally and rather than relying on government (County, State or Federal) to solve local drainage problems. Therefore, local residents should organize their neighbors to pursue solutions together. Technical assistance for legal and engineering issues will be needed from the County.
  - Drainage should follow traditional pathways.
  - After implementation of recommended capital improvements, individual homeowners and businesses that are still flooded should elevate their structures as needed.