Green River Valley Floodplain: Why Washington's Aerospace Corridor Sits Behind Levees

Pillar: The Valley | **Basis:** Agency Figure + Historical Event | **Primary Source:** King County / King County Flood Control District | **As Of:** 2026-11-16 (2031 Desimone repair horizon)

King County estimates a one-day floodplain shutdown costs at least $46M in lost economic output across a valley supporting roughly 65,000 jobs and more than one-eighth of Washington State GDP.

Operational Continuity & Corridor Facts

• King County reports that businesses in the Green River Valley account for more than one-eighth of Washington State GDP and roughly 65,000 jobs.

• King County estimates a one-day shutdown of economic activity in its floodplains costs at least $46M in lost economic output.

• On December 15, 2025, the Desimone Levee in Tukwila breached, triggering evacuation orders across roughly 1,100 homes and businesses in Kent, Renton, and Tukwila.

• Within 24 hours, on December 16, 2025 (~1:30 AM), aging HESCO barriers along the White River in Pacific suffered a ~120-foot breach impacting over 200 homes.

Green River Valley Core Continuity Baselines (Attributed)

Metric / Event	Documented Figure / Date	Source Agency	Status / Basis
Daily Floodplain Shutdown Cost	At least $46M/day lost output	King County / KCFCD	Agency Figure
Valley Employment & GDP	~65,000 jobs; >1/8th WA GDP	King County	Agency Figure
Desimone Levee Breach	Dec 15, 2025; 6-mi SR 167 closed	King County DNRP / News	Historical Event
Desimone Permanent Repair	Delayed toward 2031	King County DNRP	Agency Schedule (as of 2026)
Hanson Dam Damage Prevented	~$7.8B Green River ($8.7B Puget Sound)	USACE Seattle District	Preliminary Dec 2025 Analysis

Corridor Exposure, Triggers & Facility Actions

• Space manufacturers in Kent (Blue Origin, Stoke Space, Relativity, PowerLight) and Tukwila (Starfish Space, BlackSky) share valley road, power, and rail access behind the same levee system.

• Distinguish physical inundation from corridor isolation: a plant on elevated pad grading can remain dry while SR 167 closures cut off shifts and inbound trucks.

• Verify your facility's exact FEMA/King County flood zone, pad elevation, and access-road elevation against KCC 21A.24 Zero-Rise/+3ft BFE standards.

Cross-Cluster Links & Primary Sources

• **WA Space Cluster Hub (#1382):** https://bcesg.org/washington-space-cluster-census/

• **Kent WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/kent-wa-space-cluster-profile/

• **Tukwila WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/tukwila-wa-space-cluster-profile/

• **Auburn WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/auburn-wa-space-cluster-profile/

• **Renton WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/renton-wa-space-cluster-profile/

• **Facilities / EHS Desk Brief:** https://bcesg.org/wa-space-role-facilities-ehs-desk-brief/

• **Launch Segment Continuity Exposure:** https://bcesg.org/wa-space-launch-continuity-corridor-exposure/

• **King County Flood Services:** https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/nature-recreation/environment-ecology-conservation/flood-services

• **USACE Seattle District (DVIDS):** https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USACE-SD

• **City of Tukwila Official Portal:** https://www.tukwilawa.gov/

• **City of Auburn Official Portal:** https://www.auburnwa.gov/

Provenance Note: Agency figures attributed to King County and King County Flood Control District; Dec 2025 breaches are dated historical events, not forecasts.