We thank Cruden and Lu for their comments regarding the potential importance of debris flows in causing channel-planform changes in the braided reach of Squamish River discussed in our paper. We agree with the discussants that, in general, such events are capable of causing such changes, but we seem to disagree on the role of debris flows in this particular case. The matter should have been addressed in our original paper, however, and we welcome the opportunity to correct the omission here.

There is little doubt that the June 1984 debris flow represents a major and spectacular pulse of sediment down Turbid Creek to Squamish River. But there also is little doubt that it did not cause a major reorganization of the braided reach at this time. Our aerial photographs, obtained by the Remote Sensing Unit at Simon Fraser University in September 1984 (i.e., after the June debris flow), show no major channel realignment in this reach of the river (see our Fig. 4, based on these photographs). The discharge of Squamish River in late June (about 800 m³ s⁻¹ at Brackendale) was simply too low to effect such changes, although it was sufficient then and later (about 500 m³ s⁻¹ during July and August) to flush most of the debris flow through the reach of channel in question.

Although debris flows are at least annual events in Turbid Creek, the distinguishing condition of the October 1984 flood (which was almost certainly accompanied by yet another Turbid Creek debris flow; Empire Logging crews had to replace the culvert washed away at the road crossing) was simply the enormous discharge of Squamish River.

We are not suggesting that the flood volume in October was the only cause of channel change in the braided reach. Obviously the river cannot escape its history, and some preconditioning for change almost certainly occurred. Debris flows may have contributed by reducing channel capacity through aggradation. The high floods of 1980 and 1981 likely helped by accessing previously abandoned secondary channels, which would become major sites of erosion in October 1984. Furthermore, the channel alignment at the head of the braided reach has been ideally configured for the last two decades to maximize the effects of breaches of the eastern channel banks.

But in all of this we find no reason to reject our earlier conclusion that it was the October flood per se that was overwhelmingly responsible for the major reorganization of the channel in the braided reach of Squamish River.

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