

## Background

*NAFSMA 2005 Annual Meeting*

*August 2005 – Anchorage*

*Intergovernmental Flood Risk  
Management Committee*

*December 2006 Wye River Flood Risk  
Policy Summit*

*National Levee Safety Summit – February  
2008*

## 2006 Flood Risk Policy Summit

Jointly Sponsored by NAFSMA and  
ASFPM

Supported by FEMA and USACE

60 Professionals Participated by Invitation

National Organizations Represented

The Nature Conservancy

Coastal States Organization

National Association of Homebuilders

## Wye River Participants

### National Organizations (cont.)

National Wildlife Federation  
Assn. of State Wetlands Managers  
Interstate Council on Water Policy  
National Lenders Insurance Council  
Public Entity Risk Institute  
National Assn. of Realtors  
ASCE, ACEC and AWRA

## Wye River Focus

- Purpose: National discussion of mutual concerns about current national flood risk policies to explore improvements
- Focus: Nexus Between Corps and FEMA Programs
- Facilitated Discussions
- Participation at Highest Levels of Corps and FEMA

# Wye River Levee Policy Recommendations

Jointly Developed by the  
Association of State Floodplain  
Managers (ASFPM)  
and the  
National Association of Flood and  
Stormwater Management Agencies  
(NAFSMA)



## Policy Issues

- 1. Need for a National Levee Inventory and National Levee Safety Program.**
  - Inventory federally funded
  - Includes levee miles and population at risk
  - Levee Safety Program to be designed by levee safety Committee
  - Needs to look at roles of states, regional flood management authorities and non-federal sponsors
  - Corps oversight of program
  - Call for delegated program
- 2. Incentives and Disincentives Needed Based on Effective Local/Regional/State Actions**



## Policy Issues

3. **Public Safety Needs to Have Equal Standing to National Economic Development Standards.**
4. **Ensure Operation and Maintenance of Flood Risk Reduction Structures.**
5. **Operations & Maintenance Issues**
  5. Upfront assurances needed for financial capability for conducting O&M
  6. Environmental permits need to be issued and mitigation for O&M needed when project construction is completed.



## Policy Issues

5. **Operations & Maintenance Issues (Cont.) for Existing Projects**
  - Permits Needed when projects complete
  - Adaptive management needed
  - Clear Requirements needed for levee maintenance under PL 84-99
  - Need for outreach on O&M to levee owners
  - Interim approach needed where levee owner is unable to provide O&M
  - Levee Risk Assessments need to be done on regular schedule (5-10 years)
6. **Identify Areas of Residual Risk**



## Policy Issues

7. Level of Protection Commensurate with Risk.
8. Holistic Management – systems based and account for changing future conditions (development or climate change).
9. No flood disaster assistance for non-NFIP communities
10. NFIP rates need to reflect risks



## Operational Improvements

1. Need for Federal Consistency on Certification
    - Federally-partnered levees providing at least 100-year protection should be certified by Corps when complete
  2. Improvement Needed on USACE-FEMA Planning and Guidance
  3. Consistent Definition of Flood Protection
  4. FEMA/Corps Non-Federal Partners Work Group Needed
  5. Risk Communication Needs to be included in Corps Projects and FEMA Programs
- ); Ongoing TO&M raining Needed At all Govs.



## National Levee Safety Summit

- St. Louis – February 25-28, 2008
- Extremely Successful
- Close to 500 Participants
- Jointly Sponsored by ASFPM & NASMA – Supported by Corps and FEMA
- High level support by Corps & FEMA – Gen. Riley, ASA Woodley, David Maurstad
- Lessons learned Hon. Michael Brown, Mayor, Grand Forks, ND, from 1997 when a 500-year flood resulted in the evacuation of 50,000 people and fires gutted much of the downtown.

## Program Design

Program Designed Jointly by USACE, FEMA, NAFSMA & ASFPM

### Four Facilitated Breakout Sessions

Public Safety and Levees – Eric Halpin, USACE

Management Options for Flood Risk - Dusty Williams, NAFSMA

Flood Maps & Certification – Doug Bellomo, FEMA

Risk Communication – Paul Osman, ASFPM

## Public Safety & Levees

1. Effect of O&M on Levee Safety
2. What happens if levee fails inspection?
3. How Safe is Safe – Is 100-year levee safe?
4. Difference between FEMA 100-year Standard, Corps Standard Flood and Probable Maximum Flood
5. Can multiple objectives be integrated without compromise – public safety shouldn't be compromised
6. Resource Orgs. Need to be in process early
7. Technical Standards Need to be Forward Leaning

## Flood Risk Management Options

1. Gen. Observations
  - All have role in communication and collaboration
  - Need natl. guidelines, but flexibility for local conditions
  - Business and Industry, realtors and lenders also involved.
2. Levee Owner Responsibilities
3. Appropriate Roles for levee owners, local govts, states and federal government
  - Local – education, emergency planning, land use decisions
  - State – Funding, monitor, performance standards and levee safety program, facilitate communication
  - Regional – Watershed Management
  - Federal – Funding, technical assistance, national goals/standards with flexibility for local standards

## Management Options (Cont.)

4. How could current federal policies and programs better reduce risk?
5. How can local and state policies better reduce risk?
6. How can we improve intergovernmental communication and cooperation?
7. Other Topics
  - Conflicting federal and state policies need resolution
  - Environmental Permitting Issues
  - Link between environmental and public safety concerns
  - Levee Public Safety Needs to be Separate from Flood Insurance
  - How do you get out of levee business?

## Flood Maps & Certification

1. Levee Protected Area Definition
2. Type of Insurance – no consensus, but leaning toward flood insurance requirement
3. Type of floodplain management – consensus that building standards and protected areas need to be unique and managed differently (flexible to meet local conditions?) Emergency response and evacuation need to be incorporated.
4. Certification Issue is the most burning issue that needs to be addressed.
  - Frequency? Diff. standards for rural vs. urban

## Risk Communication

### Gen. Observations

People don't know their risk

Perception of risk differs

Personal Responsibility

### Different definitions of residual risk

risk that remains are construction and maintenance of levee

damage that would occur if levee fails or overtops

dynamic – risk changes over time

amount of risk willing to accept

## Risk Communication (Cont.)

### Key Questions –

What is residual risk?

What is levee residual risk area?

What is levee flood hazard area?

How can people reduce their residual risk (step slide)

How do we more effectively communicate risk?

How do we get those behind levees to take action?

## Major Accomplishments Since 2005

Interagency Collaboration Greatly Improved

FEMA & Corps – Currently meeting with other federal agencies

Collaboration between national organizations greatly improved

NAFSMA Peer Reviews HPDC

Moved from “flood control” to flood risk management

National Flood Risk Management Program Established

WRDA Enacted

National Levee Safety Committee Established