

NCLS Review Committee Meeting Summary

21 April 2010

The DoubleTree Hotel – Potomac View Room

300 Army Navy Drive

Arlington, Virginia

Attendees

Janet Bly, National Association of Flood & Stormwater Management Agencies

Doug Bellomo, Federal Emergency Management Agency

Charles Berenbrock, US Geological Survey

Joseph Capasso, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Vicki Deisner, National Wildlife Federation

Mark Dunning, CDM

Wanda Edwards, Institute for Business & Home Safety

David Greenwood, American Council of Engineering Companies

Jim Gutshall, Mississippi River Commission

Andy Haney, American Public Works Association

Victor Hom, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Peter Hradilek, US Society on Dams

James Keith, US Bureau of Reclamation

Enrique Matheu, Department of Homeland Security

Sally McConkey, Association of State Floodplain Managers

Jim Murphy, American Society of Civil Engineers

Alexa Noruk, National Emergency Management Association

Mark Ogden, Association of State Dam Safety Officials

Lori Spragens, Association of State Dam Safety Officials

Ronnie Taylor, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Rob Vining, HNTB

Eric Halpin, NCLS

Bill Blanton, NCLS

Susan Gilson, NCLS

Karin Jacoby, NCLS

Craig Kennedy, NCLS

Rod Mayer, NCLS

Sam Riley Medlock, NCLS

Carol Sanders, NCLS

Mike Stankiewicz, NCLS

Dusty Williams, NCLS

Terry Zien, NCLS

Linda Manning, Council Oak

Liz Rettenmaier, Council Oak

Introduction and Update on NCLS Activities

Eric Halpin, NCLS Vice-Chair, reviewed the National Committee on Levee Safety's key actions since January 2009.

The comments NCLS heard, from the review committee, during the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee hearing (May 2009), and the webinar generally focused on three areas:

- Need better cost/benefit justification for the National Levee Safety Program (NLSP);
- Concern as to how to achieve NLSP implementation (e.g., governance, legislation needed); and
- Need to further engage stakeholders.

The NCLS, under the authorities of the Levee Safety Act of 2007, which established the Committee, is moving ahead to prepare for the implementation of the National Levee Safety Program and their recommendations. Under current authorities, USACE and NCLS are working together to:

- Expand the National Levee Database
- Develop levee safety standards via the International Levee Manual
- Develop Tolerable Risk Guidelines for levees
- Explore levee liability concerns
- Develop the costs and benefits of the NLSP

In addition, USACE is conducting additional activities through its own Levee Safety Program, including:

- Developing a Portfolio Management Process for levees;
- Developing and beginning to conduct Levee Risk Assessments that include risk screening and issue evaluation studies;
- Conducting Periodic Inspections of all levees in the USACE portfolio, funded with Recovery Act dollars;
- Developing Levee Safety Policies (vegetation, levee evaluation for the NFIP);
- Aligning Federal Programs through engagement with a Task Force under CEQ; and
- Conduct benchmarking, in coordination with the Dutch.

Q&A

Q: If the NCLS was charged with developing a report to Congress, and you have done that, why are you still convening?

A: The NCLS was authorized through the 2013 Fiscal Year (ending 9/30/12) to develop recommendations to Congress for a National Levee Safety Program (within 180 days) and a strategic implementation plan. In considering the NCLS's "due diligence" to the work they had done to develop recommendations for a National Levee Safety Program, the Committee is moving forward working within existing authorities to better define recommendations where necessary and lay the groundwork for handing off a NLSP to the National Levee Safety Commission.

Q: Why is the National Committee working on implementation of the recommendations if the Report has not been accepted by the Administration?

A: Although the Office of Management and Budget has not signed off on the report, they have clearly given us the direction to move ahead with the recommendations that can be accomplished under current authorities. In areas where agencies/programs do not have sufficient authorities to implement NCLS recommendations, it is within the authorities of the Levee Safety Act of 2007 for NCLS to engage with stakeholders to better define the recommendations and plan for their implementation. In addition, the nonfederal members of the Committee have responded to informal requests from Congressional staff to identify the areas of the NCLS recommendations that would need additional or expanded authorities.

Q: Can OMB “approve – with comments,” so the report moves forward?

A: OMB can clear the Report as it is, they can not clear it, they can clear it in part or with comments, or they can decide it’s a Report that doesn’t have to be cleared. It is uncertain which path they will take.

Comment(s): There are a lot of concerns about the NFIP right now, on the Hill and in the field being driven by the certification (accreditation) issue and the uncertainty of what flood risk communities are really facing. It is not necessarily a philosophical opposition to flood insurance driving the dialogue, but rather the perception of “having to pay for something we don’t need.” As such, there is a lot of momentum behind this issue at the moment and we, as a community, need to get ahead of it.

- Senator Landrieu (LA) is chairing a high level group commissioned by the White House to review and offer recommendations on how to improve the Governmental implementation of water resources projects with a focus on Louisiana. This effort will include looking at levee implementation as well as ecosystem restoration, and other water resources projects. The focus on this is based on what could be improvements to the actions the responsibility of the Corps of Engineers. Their recommendations are expected within weeks.
- The “16 Senators” sent a letter to Administrator Fugate (FEMA) and ASA Darcy (USACE) regarding the expiring provisionally accredited levees and the role of the Corps in conducting levee evaluation studies (certifications).
- A “Congressional Levee Caucus” has been formed by Representatives Alexander (LA) and Costello (IL); they are primarily concerned with the updating of flood maps and deaccreditation of levees for flood insurance purposes.
- At least two bills in the House are focusing on flood insurance (NFIP) that are getting a lot of attention (one House hearing scheduled for 4/21, another being marked up the following week).

A: What we’re confronting is the lack of risk awareness, and it’s not just in the general public – even agency leadership and those on the Hill don’t fully understand the issue. It’s a complex topic, and the federal agencies don’t have perfect alignment in how they address / explain the issue, adding to the confusion.

The actions by FEMA are not a change in policy or regulation; 44 CFR 65.10 – Mapping of Areas Protected by Levee Systems – was established on August 25, 1986. What really has changed is that FEMA is updating their maps based on the latest available data. The fact that they are updating maps is having a significant impact on some communities and their cost of meeting the regulations (doing the certification, upgrading to meet accreditation requirements).

The Corps’ policies in conducting levee system evaluations have not significantly changed either; they consistently have stated that the decision to apply for levee accreditation for the National Flood Insurance Program is a local responsibility and that accreditation under the National Flood Insurance Program is not indicative of meeting a safety standard.

Exploring and Detailing the NCLS Recommendations for a National Levee Safety Program

Members of the NCLS conducted small group discussions on the Recommendations and activities of the NCLS. Review Committee members were invited to circulate to tables / topics they were interested in discussing, finding out more about, or sharing information. Attendees were asked to visit at least four tables during the period. NCLS representatives reported out some key ideas / topics that were discussed.

Aligning Federal programs

- The family of Federal agencies has work to do: there are opportunities for aligning programs without impacting jurisdiction / authority (e.g., coordinating research and development for wise federal use of federal dollars); there are also concerns about jurisdiction / authority between agencies (e.g., USBR does not believe it is included in the WRDA 2007 Title IX Levee Safety Act).
- A national program that establishes national guidelines that seeks to influence infrastructure, no matter who owns it, is going to run into jurisdiction issues (federal – state – local – private) that need to be addressed.
- The spirit of the NCLS is clear in encouraging federal alignment; how to get there is less clear.
- The group discussed some of the challenges in creating an interagency committee to coordinate and advance alignment.
 - o Agency leads will need to buy-in to the need and process;
 - o Agencies don't / won't have jurisdiction over each other's authorities / programs;
 - o Consider rotating chairs;
 - o Owners, regulators, and contributors (HUD, SBA) need to be at the table;
 - o Consider including the private sector in alignment discussions because they understand the full life cycle (finance, real estate, business, government, economic development);
 - o Coordination will be difficult to measure.
- The discussion included criteria for alignment, not just how federal agencies align their programs internally, but when they go / communicate externally. There is a need to engage states (and other stakeholders) consistently, to "speak with one voice."
 - o A message shared by a Review Committee member, "The feds have got to get their act together and stop perpetuating that 1% is a safety standard – you are part of the problem."
- There was a sense that agencies are better coordinated outside the beltway than inside, and part of that is due to leadership turnover and its significant impact on federal agencies.
- There is an opportunity through federal alignment to be more efficient and save federal investment. There is also an opportunity to provide needed standards, action and advice / models for communities and property owners faced with unsafe levees; share solutions, not just words.
- There was also the recognition that once the risks are identified, the Federal government needs to be ready to stand up and say what they are going to do about it.

Addressing liability concerns

- Any comments / suggestions regarding the liability issue paper are welcome.
- The issue of addressing liability is not part of a legislative package that we're pursuing right now, but what we're working to do is acknowledge the importance of the issue and do some diagnostics, gather data and better understand the issue, how it is playing out in the engineering, insurance, and law communities of practice.
- While there is a sense that the problem may be so significant and the consequences of not getting this right are so great that we may have to pursue legislation down the road, it was helpful to hear that gathering data, not relying on rumor, is the right way to go, and investigating options is a good way to go.
- An NCLS member posed the question: are we approaching a place where levee services are simply not reasonably insurable? There was a mix of responses from "eh, maybe" to an emphatic "Yes." The perception of concern is strong out there.
- We understand the *Design and Construction of Levees Manual* (USACE Engineering Manual (EM) 1110-2-1913) is being updated now, and that is going to be very important.
 - o Review Committee member suggested the Standard of Care needs to include "reasonable expectation" and "foreseeable expectation."
- The concerns about liability related to engineering services (design, construction, maintenance) and that for evaluation for accreditation ("certification") are very similar.
- Another next step is an outreach to state attorneys general and how they might handle putting together a state levee safety statute. *<Note this idea/feedback for the State delegated programs group.>*
- *Question:* There was a lot of concern in the engineering community about accreditation as a guarantee or warranty; has that changed in the engineering community from a year ago? There are a number of firms that are very capable of performing this service that have decided it's not worth the risk. In the past month, we've had two good meetings with FEMA on the PAL issue in my community – give me a list of qualified firms that are willing to do the work; I want to get it done.
 - o FEMA – we don't have a list of firms. I don't know what the barriers are to producing a list. On the NFIP side, there is a list of companies that will write flood insurance policies, but that is under a specific contract with the government. It's not that FEMA is shielding the info – we just don't have it assembled.
 - o ASCE / ACEC should be able to bring some of these answers to the table.
 - o FERC has an approved list of Part 12 inspectors; maybe FEMA can follow that model for developing a list of firms providing certification services.
 - o While some firms have changed their business plans to no longer provide certain levee services, other continue to do so. In fact, another review team member representing a nationally-recognized engineering firm provided the questioner with his business card, since they are providing levee accreditation services.

State Programs and NLSP Governance

- What we heard is that states are not aware of the program recommendations and therefore are not weighing in, at the policy-making level. While Congress is asking us how the states

are going to react, we are pretty sure that the states don't have an opinion because they aren't even aware of the option / recommendation. The NCLS needs to engage the policy level people at the states.

- An interesting point made is that there is a movement in Congress and the Administration that may result in legislation which will preempt a national levee safety program, if it were to create a federal responsibility for levee safety.
 - o Some states have taken a political position that levee safety is a federal responsibility and that they will resist any "unfunded mandate."
- There are some organizations that can help us put that message forward, e.g., ASDSO, by pushing the issue paper out there and starting the conversation.
- We had some good discussions about issues of flood risk management and levee safety – this is an issue with different points of view. There are benefits – and limitations – of a single focused commission on levee safety vs. one that addresses flood risk management as a whole. There is also a concern with the broader flood risk focus that hanging too much on the Commission would be a barrier to establishing national standards. There was support from stakeholders for both approaches – a National Levee Safety Program focused on levees and the need to put the NLSP in the broader flood risk management context.
- One Review Committee member cautioned against combining levee safety and dam safety at the national level. While states may choose to combine those functions, if combined at the federal level, one or the other "will wither."
- The table had a brief discussion about what recommendations need to move forward sooner rather than later. Representatives from ACEC responded that addressing the liability concerns and technical standards were the top priorities. Additional comments or recommendations from the Review Committee members on the most important parts of the recommendations to implement or address immediately are welcome.

Environmental protection & safety

- As much as any of the recommendations, the recommendation to more closely integrate environmental protection and levee safety is significantly interconnected with other NCLS recommendations.
- The group discussed three main aspects when it comes to environmental protection:
 - o Maintenance of existing levees – there wasn't a lot of concern about managing the environmental aspects in these cases;
 - o Decisions about what you do about failing levees – those that need either repair or removal; and
 - o Construction of new levees altogether, and potential alternatives to new levees. Maybe no levee is the best levee?
- This table also addressed the interest in an expanded focus on flood risk management, and the difficulty of limiting the conversation to just levees. Conversely, other members of the Review Team reinforced the need to focus on levees, given the charge by Congress for the National Committee on Levee Safety.
- The difficulty of "getting the message out" was also raised, including some potential areas for tying in / piquing peoples' interest such as improved drinking water quality.

- It was recommended that youth / school-aged children are a good potential audience for getting the message out.
- There was also general acknowledgement among those at the table that you need to meet local conditions; one size does not meet all. There are unique qualities to the state and local communities.
- Maintaining stream gage program is critical to understanding of risk, water level and surge predictions, dynamic nature of flood peaks.
- Understanding how levees break affects downstream forecasts, warnings and advisories from National Weather Service. Could NWS be the agency in charge of levee breaking forecasts, too?
- Consider controlled breaches, planned overtopping, acquisition of overflow rights and flowage easements, and design specifications for managed releases in National Levee Safety Program.
- Review Committee members suggested changing PL 84-99 to consider other measures such as setbacks, not just rebuilding the same levee again.
- The question was posed: What will we do with levees that will never be safe (function as levees but never designed to be)? Should we remove them?
- Review Committee members suggested that the NCLS better articulate the environmental values that levees protect and environmental/pollution effects of levees breaking.
 - o Assign values for recreation and environment.
- Environmental issues should be talked about as a system, just like a levee.
- Correlate family safety with wildlife safety
- The message that the NCLS recommendations are not promoting the building of new levees could still be clearer / more consistently articulated.
- Environmental issues are a good lever to get people to the table to talk (e.g., ESA, CWA). In the end, it is really about land use. Don't want to move everyone out of the floodplain only to discover additional development is causing increasing impervious surface further exacerbating the flooding issue.
- Review Committee members suggested NCLS review case studies of cities and towns that have done climate adaptation planning (e.g. San Francisco, Boston wastewater treatment plant) where levees are playing a role.

National Levee Rehabilitation, Improvement, Flood Mitigation Fund

- There is a new National Mitigation Alliance with Review Committee partners such as NEMA, FEMA, ASCE, and APWA participating. The Alliance may be interested in use of a fund like this and applying it in leveed areas, may be an opportunity to get the message out and build support for this Recommendation.
- In communicating about the Fund / Recommendation, the NCLS needs to be careful to not mislead people. If this is funded, it's not going to solve the levee program, even if funded at the levels we propose.
- There was a concern that the NFLRIFM funding would be used to meet the 100-year level and that risk actually increases.

- There is also concern that FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation funding may be tapped for levee repairs / structural approaches; having the NLRIFM Fund and not allowing the PDDM to be used for levee repairs would be preferable.
- Benefits should exceed the costs, but we shouldn't limit the benefits costs analysis by only considering the economic costs and benefits of the fund.
- It was recommended that some small communities will not have the staff or the expertise to take the funds and do levee repair / mitigation. Furthermore, there will be a real affordability problem for small communities re: cost share.
- It is important to include nonstructural alternatives, and highlight the mitigation part of the proposal overall, both structurally and nonstructurally.
- A concern was expressed that only urban areas will get the funds. That is the NCLS's initial recommendation until risk is assessed nationwide (expanded National Levee Database inventory and inspection).
- There was a concern that the states need to have a role in the grant administration for those funds. The report isn't very clear about that. The state recommendation talks about administering grants, but it doesn't tie it directly to the National Levee Rehabilitation, Improvement, and Flood Mitigation Fund.
- An overarching argument supporting this recommendation is that you (Congress) can pay now (the Fund) or pay later (disaster relief).
- A participant noted it is very expensive to move people out from behind levees in small communities into areas where there is not existing infrastructure to support them, where there aren't utilities / etc.

Mandatory Risk-Based Flood Insurance

- Review Committee members expressed concern about putting the requirement for risk-based premiums into legislation before it was understood how they would work, what they would look like, what the financial impact on individuals/communities would be.
 - o It was suggested that a premium set to reflect the real risk may be very expensive and difficult, politically, to implement.
- One review committee member pointed out the concept of the NFIP being "actuarially-based" is fallacious; the NFIP cannot be actuarially sound at rates people can afford.
- Issues of affordability and fairness were raised with such ideas as an "insurance stamp program" / voucher system to offset the costs of flood insurance for individuals (means-tested) suggested (but ensuring that the premiums remain at the point where people "pay attention" to them). Creating a system that included a combination of rates and credits (the Community Rating System) was also suggested.
- Because individuals can reduce their own risk, that should have a positive effect on individual premiums.
- Risk communication is at the heart of the recommendation, and those at the table believed that risk-based insurance required in leveed areas would communicate that risk.
 - o One way that risk would be more accurately communicated would be to have a sliding scale of rates, not "you're in or you're out."

- If it's too easy to ignore (really low insurance rate or perception that disaster dollars will fix everything), they will ignore it and the risk communication will not occur.
- After the initial shock wears off, it is not clear that the risk communication continues.
- In areas where the hazard is widespread, the impact of the education also seems to wane (e.g., in California, where realtors are required to disclose earthquake hazards).
- In order to develop risk-based insurance premiums, data elements should include:
 - Information about local building codes;
 - Information about individual mitigation / actions;
 - Community mitigation plans;
 - Depths / depth grids of flooding; and
 - Information about levee design and maintenance.
- Review Committee members supported graduated insurance premiums, rather than a stark line and large jumps between premiums. E.g., the risk between a 99-year levee and 100-year is essentially the same.
 - Even if there were stair-stepped premiums, you would need gradation within those zones to reflect mitigation and real risk.
- One Review Committee member suggested the requirement for flood insurance in leveed areas should be more broadly applied, not just those with federally backed mortgages.
- It was also cautioned that the NCLS needs to recognize the impact on property values / local tax dollars, and interaction of that, including the social impacts. (Property values may be negatively impacted not only because of the greater awareness of the risk, but the fact that individuals may not qualify for mortgages because of the flood insurance requirement, having a downward pressure on price.)
 - Some research that Bill Blanton (FEMA / NCLS) has run across suggested that while the immediate effect is a drop in property values, that after a period of time, that property values rebound.
 - Insurance companies, realtors, academics may have addressed that and should be brought into the conversation.
 - One Review Committee member added that if insurance were mandatory, it would have a stabilizing effect on property values over time; you would know what you were getting into.
 - The impacts in developed areas vs. nondeveloped should also be considered. If the only choice in established communities is in the leveed area, will risk based or mandatory insurance (or both) what impacts will that have on the community?
- In one Review Committee member's district, individuals pay an assessment for levee maintenance based on a depth grid and the value of their home as part of their property tax bill. They feel doubly hit as they are paying for both that and flood insurance.
- A levee district in Texas proposed the idea of group flood insurance for those in the leveed areas; there may be some promise in that approach re: affordability and ensuring broader flood insurance coverage than under the NFIP.

- Who is responsible for paying for that risk? There is some ownership of that risk at the society level, and some benefit to society for development in areas of high flood risk – the risk, and benefits, are not just local / individual.

National Levee Database: Inventory and Inspection of Levees

- The table heard a lot of favorable comments regarding the recommendation and the need to expand the National Levee Database (NLD) beyond the existing authorities of WRDA 2007. There were some suggestions for performance data and time series data to be collected over time.
- There were a lot of questions about privacy of data, and the level of data communicated out to the public, the federal agencies, state agencies, etc. The concern may be with states / communities being blamed for the condition of the levee if they share that information and it is public. On the other hand, there may be a benefit to hand over the data and then “making the Corps the bad guy” for sharing the news.
- The recommendation talked about extending authorization and appropriation for a one time inspection and initial inventory.
- We talked about the challenges of getting voluntary data and ways to incentive that – from communities, states, other federal agencies:
 - o There needs to be some incentives to share that data
 - o Maybe there is CRS credits for sharing data, or other federal programs that could be used to incentivize?
- There were questions about how to get people educated / trained on using the web portal, and how people would get the data into the database.
- The table talked about the roll-out of voluntary data collection for the NLD and ASDSO cooperation. Also need to capture all perspectives, including private sector.
- There was a concern about definition of a levee, what goes into a levee database. Are we including berms, railroads embankments that tie into levees, highways, etc? Confusion about the Corps definition vs. the NCLS definition of levee and what would be included in the NLD.
- There were questions about the standards for collecting data. What is the minimum level of data needed for the NLD to be beneficial? And, if a local levee owner wants to populate the database, there may be a challenge in ensuring that data meets a standard.
- It was also noted that it would be very expensive to capture all the levee data.

Estimating the Costs and Benefits of a National Levee Safety Program

Eric Halpin led a discussion on the work of the NCLS to estimate the costs and benefits of a National Levee Safety Program, including the challenges associated with the lack of consistent, comprehensive data related to levees.

Q&A

Q: Have you shared this information on the costs and benefits? What is the reaction been? My intuition is that this is a compelling story, and we should share it, especially with OMB.

A: We haven't yet briefed this; it's still in development. But we're working to tell a credible story so that we can share it as soon as possible with OMB, with Congress, and with others that are interested.

Additional comment: This should be shared, as soon as possible with OMB and Congress.

Q: Can there be options for communities in risk communication, how to get the information out?

A: The NCLS is considering that with Tolerable Risk Guidelines, how risk helps inform decisions.

Additional Comments:

- How you keep the topic of levees or flooding relevant when people don't experience it often is hard. If you are in a place that does not have a lot of frequency, it is a lot of effort to keep that in people's minds, communicate that risk. There may be an opportunity now with all the Congressional interest.
- FEMA is working to go beyond identifying the risk of flood hazard to do what the law requires. Moving forward in RiskMAP, the idea is to move beyond lines on a map to the broader aspect of risk, how it can be managed and communicated. What we know about social science is it can't just come from FEMA, or the Corps or federal government; it needs to come from multiple channels to be heard well.
- That speaks to expanding the sideboards. People in Louisiana get it, but even some communities that have been flooded multiple times don't think it will happen again. But, if mitigation in the floodplain can create recreation, if wetlands improvement guarantees your water supply, maybe you can retain that engagement. What are the multiple benefits of levee protection?
- There are some forces against being open and transparent about flood risk (e.g., economic development).
- The Committee should recognize that FEMA's efforts to revisit these communities every five years are a good thing. That does cause the same reaction as a flood as far as getting people's attention. The NCLS should recognize that FEMA's efforts are forcing people to face that issue every five years. It's better that they look at your map every five years than flooding every five years as far as raising awareness.
- When you did the analysis, did you assume that the population and economic activity increased behind the levee? It seems that one thing we always struggle with is how you measure development that did not occur.

Q: Did you quantify the cost associated with the lines?

A: We don't have solid numbers right now, but we also recognize that if we flipped a switch tomorrow, it would take 10 years to do this. Some of the recommendations are phased over time, and a lot of them are intertwined. We looked at the interdependencies – this is a work in progress.

Q: Would you be able to provide some of the state-specific costs and benefits to be able to sell the idea of levee safety to a particular state that is not California or Louisiana?

A: There is no reason we couldn't run this exercise on the levees of a particular state.

Additional Comment: If one of the recommendations is for strong state programs, this would be a useful piece of information for states.

Plenary Questions & Answers

Eric Halpin and the members of the NCLS took additional questions and comments from the Review Committee.

Q: I thought there was going to be a more thorough reporting of the comments that came in. What happened with those?

A: This meeting is part of that process. The Committee, in responding to those comments is moving forward with:

- Additional stakeholder involvement. This is one step; there will be additional meetings that are mixed in leveed areas with a local / regional focus, some that are focused on specific stakeholder groups such as the states, levee owners/operators, etc.;
- A more informed plan on how to move recommendations forward;
- Adding detail to the recommendations.

Q: Are you going to do a stakeholder meeting focused on federal agencies?

A: Yes, probably this summer.

Comment: Many of us on the review committee have been under the understanding that your mission was to get the report completed and our mission was to provide feedback and then something would happen and OMB would act and something else would happen. I think you need to make clear that you are starting to implement solutions and reach out to stakeholders to solve the problem, rather than just writing a report.

Comment: When you reach out to stakeholders, you need to get the economic development folks in the room and find out how these recommendations challenge them, how a National Levee Safety Program would work with them? For RiskMAP, we want those people in the room, they are a very specific target audience for us, whether it is national organizations or associations or local chambers.

Comment: There are big differences between existing development and new development; recognition of that and suggestions for addressing that would be very helpful.

Comment: I think you would gain something by asking people who live in leveed areas what they like about living behind levees. You may get some answers, or a blank stare, or what they don't like. You may get a sense of where people are re: what they see as the benefits, the costs.

Comment: The NCLS should reach out to the Review Committee and key stakeholders to help communicate their messages. E.g., information can be put on a local website; it may not get a lot of hits, but it's going to get it out there.

Closing Comments

Eric Halpin provided brief closing comments:

- Thank you for your good feedback today. We are going to keep working on stakeholder events and getting the word out. We have included a comment form in your folders, where you are invited to share your feedback on how we can be more effective in our outreach and how we can make our recommendations smarter, clearer, and more effective.
- We'll post our presentations and the issue papers (once finalized) on our national committee website.
- The NCLS is in a bit of reinvention, and we are asking you to consider the same. We may come back to you as we continue forward, but some of that will be based on what you want your feedback to be.