



December 1, 2014

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attn: CECW-CE (Lisa Kiefel)
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

RE: FR Doc 2014-18495
Proposals for inclusion in the Annual Report to be issued in February 2015
City of Des Moines, Iowa

Ms. Kiefel:

This letter is in response to the August 5, 2014 Federal Register Notice, FR Doc 2014-18495, titled: **Proposals From Non-Federal Interests for Proposed Feasibility Studies and Proposed Modifications to Authorized Projects or Feasibility Studies for Inclusion in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Annual Report.** The City of Des Moines, Iowa, hereby supports and submits the following two proposals for modification to authorized USACE water resources development projects: General Reevaluation of Des Moines & Raccoon Rivers (DM-I, II, & III) and Reservoir Regulation. Both proposals are a result of the findings provided in the US Army Corps of Engineer's Des Moines River Regulated Flow Frequency Study released in January 2011. This is the third Federal study within the past twenty-five (25) years that showed flood flow frequencies have increased over the previous estimate. In addition to identifying the higher risk of flooding, the Corps of Engineers' study showed the levees in downtown Des Moines do not provide the required freeboard for a 100-year flood, thus affecting accreditation of the levees and affecting FEMA flood hazard mapping.

I. Des Moines & Raccoon Rivers (DM-I, II, & III) General Reevaluation

1. Non-Federal interest planning to act as sponsor: City of Des Moines
2. Modification to an authorized USACE project:

GI - General Investigations -- Resolution adopted by Congress on July 1, 1958, following appropriation of funds in the 1998 E&WDAA, also Section 216 of the 1970 Flood Control Act (Public Law 91-611)

Southeast Des Moines levee is part of the Red Rock Dam, Lake Red Rock - Flood Control Act of 1938; Public Law 75-761

3. Project purpose: Evaluate the impacts of the increased flood risk identified in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's 2010 Des Moines River Regulated Flow Frequency Study, which indicated the system provides lower than 100-year (0.1% annual chance exceedance)

level of protection. The study would evaluate a variety of structural and nonstructural flood risk management measures to increase their level of protection. The study area would include the entire downtown area, and the Southeast Des Moines levee, which is part of the Lake Red Rock project, and is connected to the downtown levee system. The study is needed to evaluate impacts of climate change and make recommendations that would reduce risk and improve resilience to future flooding.

The Des Moines and Raccoon River project was authorized for construction in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007, and funds were appropriated in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2010. The project has completed reconstruction of levees at Birdland Park and Central Place as recommended in the 2005 feasibility report, and construction of closure improvements in the downtown levee system, is scheduled to be completed in 2015. The 2010 Des Moines River Regulated Flow Frequency Study identified a high risk of flooding in the Des Moines area - significantly higher than estimated in a 2005 feasibility report. The resulting hydraulics show that the existing levees in downtown Des Moines do not provide reliable protection against a 100-year flood. A General Reevaluation Report is warranted to determine if the Federal projects should be modified to reduce flood risk.

4. Estimated Total Cost of the proposed study or modification: The General Reevaluation Report is estimated by the COE to cost \$2.8 million.

The City of Des Moines has estimated costs for modifications of the levee system (DM-I, II, III & SEDM) to be approximately \$50 million, including levee raise, certification requirements (riprap, seepage) and interior drainage improvements require for FEMA accreditation.

5. Anticipated monetary and non-monetary benefits of the proposal, including benefits to the protection of human life and property; improvement of transportation; the national economy; the environment; or the national security interests of the United States: The existing levee system protects much of the city's critical infrastructure, including City Hall, the Police Station, a regional sewage treatment facility, and aviation fuel facilities. Downtown Des Moines is also a national center for the insurance industry. Flooding of these areas would result in extensive flooding of neighborhoods and commercial/industrial areas that could cause serious contamination of Red Rock Reservoir. Approximately 600,000 people would be impacted by the flooding. The metropolitan area annually generates \$42 billion in Gross Domestic Product, the equivalent of \$115 million per day.
6. Local support for project: Local support for the project is very strong.
7. Non-Federal interest financial ability to provide for the required cost share: The City of Des Moines has programmed \$20 million in the Capital Improvement Program, and initiated professional services to develop the necessary improvements to satisfy COE Section 408 and FEMA accreditation requirements. An application has been submitted, to the State of Iowa Flood Mitigation Program that requests \$95 million to support projects identified to reduce flood risk to the City of Des Moines and Wastewater Reclamation Facility.

8. Statement of Support: The City of Des Moines has been and continues to be supportive of providing and maintaining flood protection as evident in the significant investment in the last 20 years and the ongoing efforts to address the increased risk identified in the US Army Corps of Engineer's Des Moines River Regulated Flow Frequency Study released in January 2011.

II. Reservoir re-regulation

1. Non-Federal interest planning to act as sponsor: City of Des Moines
2. Modification to an authorized USACE project:

Red Rock Dam, Lake Red Rock - Flood Control Act of 1938; Public Law 75-761

Saylorville - The Des Moines local flood protection project was authorized by Congress on December 22, 1944. In 1958, after investigating nine sites, six on the Des Moines River, two on the Raccoon, and one on the South Raccoon, Congress authorized construction of Saylorville Lake by the U.S. Army of Engineers at a site about 11 miles upstream from the City of Des Moines.

3. Project purpose: The principal purpose of the Saylorville project is to provide additional storage to supplement the flood control capacity of Lake Red Rock downstream, and help reduce flood crests on the Des Moines and Mississippi Rivers. Saylorville Lake, acting in conjunction with the completed local protection works of the City of Des Moines, also provides flood protection for the city. As identified in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's 2010 Des Moines River Regulated Flow Frequency Study, Saylorville reservoir does not provide any significant reduction in the 100-year event. A comprehensive study is needed to determine what modifications are needed, both physical and regulatory to provide meaningful flood protection for the City of Des Moines.
4. Estimated Total Cost of the proposed study: \$3 million
5. Anticipated monetary and non-monetary benefits of the proposal including benefits to the protection of human life and property; improvement of transportation; the national economy; the environment; or the national security interests of the United States: The existing levee system protects much of the city's critical infrastructure, including City Hall, the Police Station, a regional sewage treatment facility, and aviation fuel facilities. Downtown Des Moines is also a national center for the insurance industry. Flooding of these areas would result in extensive flooding of neighborhoods and commercial/industrial areas that could cause serious contamination of Red Rock Reservoir. Approximately 600,000 people would be impacted by the flooding. The metropolitan area annually generates \$42 billion in Gross Domestic Product, the equivalent of \$115 million per day.
6. Local support for project: Local support for the project is very strong.
7. Non-Federal interest financial ability to provide for the required cost share: The City of Des Moines has programmed \$20 million in the Capital Improvement Program and applied for state funds to support flood protection.

8. **Statement of Support:** The City of Des Moines has been and continues to be supportive of providing and maintaining flood protection as evident in the significant investment in the last 20 years and the ongoing efforts to address the increased risk identified in the US Army Corps of Engineer's Des Moines River Regulated Flow Frequency Study released in January 2011.

If there are any questions or need for additional information on the two proposals, please contact me at (515) 283-4920 or pscooksey@dmgov.org .

Sincerely,



Pamela S. Cooksey, P.E.
Interim City Engineer

cc: Scott E. Sanders, City Manager