



FEMA

Mitigation Division

Flood Insurance Rate Map Update

Rio Grande Citizens Forum

June 23, 2011

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Levee Update

- Levee Certification
- Levee Accreditation
- USIBWC – El Paso Levees
- New Levee Guidance
- Status of Studies
- Current Approach
- Local Concerns
- Factsheets



- **Certification**

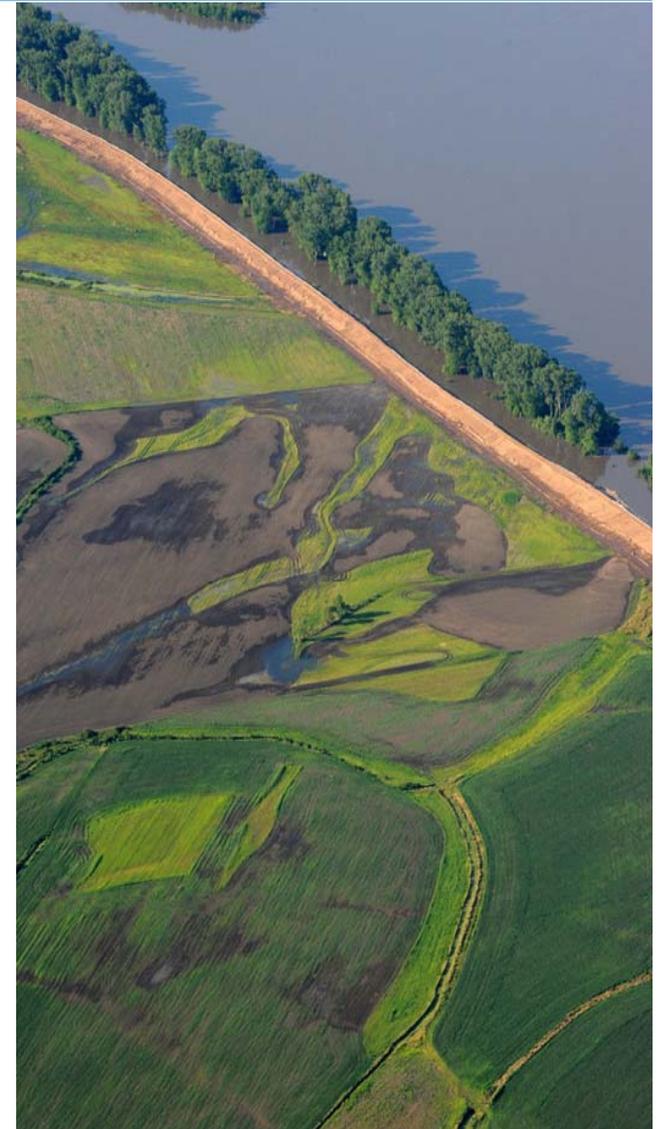
- A levee must meet Federal design, construction, maintenance, and operations standards to provide protection from a major flood
- NFIP is based on the 1-percent-annual-chance risk
- Certification is based on investigations and review of the current levee condition by a registered professional

FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are based on current conditions and reflect the existing risk



- Certification is the responsibility of the levee owner and/or community
- Requirements in 44 CFR 65.10
- Five Categories:
 - General
 - Design
 - Operations plans
 - Maintenance plans
 - Certification of Submittal

http://www.rampp-team.com/fact_region6.htm





If you are currently working on levee certification

- Keep working towards certification
- Certification requirement will remain in place for levee owners and local communities

If your levee is undergoing rehabilitation

- Keep progressing to complete construction
- Collect required certifications & paperwork





Levees reduce the risk associated with flooding where constructed, the risk is not removed and flooding potential remains

- FEMA accreditation **does not** equate to a health and safety standard
- Accreditation allows landward side risk to be identified as moderate risk (shaded Zone X)
- Dissemination of potential flood risk is the goal of the risk identification in the moderate and high flood risk indicated on the FIRMs



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Levee Accreditation

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Once FEMA receives levee certification package from a levee owner:

- FEMA performs a “completeness” review
- FEMA accredits levees based on certification submittal findings received
- FEMA reviews against 44 CFR 65.10
- Checklist attached to Procedure Memo 63, September 2, 2010



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- **USIBWC Responsibilities**

- Structural
- O & M of System (other than interior drainage)

- **Additional Responsibilities**

- Interior drainage
- Closures



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Levee Guidance Modification

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- In response to congressional interest FEMA Management is investigating levee modeling practices
 - Aim is to develop approaches to more precisely analyze flood risk for levees that cannot be accredited
- This new approach may require additional insight and information from levee owners and community officials
- 44 CFR 65.10 requirements **are not** changing





- **What are we doing?**
 - FEMA established a multi-disciplinary Project Team to review our current analysis approach
 - Project team includes 60+ professionals, USACE, academic, and engineering experts to evaluate general approach scenarios
- **High Level Criteria**
 - Program Requirements & Obligations
 - Integrity of Approach
 - Repeatability of results
 - Local Documentation & Engagement
 - Cost Effectiveness



- Multiple modeling methodologies will be reviewed for applicability to real-world situations
 - May result in more than one approach for analysis of levee
- These new methodologies may result in different floodplain results than those previously prepared
 - Floodplains may be more conservative in some locations
 - Floodplains may be less conservative in other locations



- Dona Ana County
 - Revised preliminary appeal period ended 11/19/2010. At the 11/29/2010 meeting with the communities, the review period was extended to 1/31/2011
 - The levees along the Rio Grande are currently de-certified
 - FEMA's new levee policy requires a new analysis for those areas no longer protected by a certified levee
 - The guidance to implement this new policy is pending
 - Other remaining appeal/protest cases pending outcome of revised levee mapping



- El Paso County
 - Revised preliminary appeal period ended 6/2/2011.
 - A portion of the levees along the Rio Grande are currently de-certified
 - FEMA's new levee policy requires a new analysis for those areas no longer protected by a certified levee
 - The guidance to implement this new policy is pending
 - Other remaining appeal/protest cases pending outcome of revised levee mapping
 - New protest requesting hold until levees are certified. Acknowledgement letter will be sent.



What if a levee is not accredited?

- FEMA Region 6 will review all levee studies currently underway and contact communities and levee owners with next steps.
 - For those studies not meeting the requirements of 44 CFR 65.10, Letters of Final Determination will not be issued.
 - On hold until we receive levee analysis guidance from FEMA HQ.

Communities and Levee owners should recognize the flood risk associated with levees remain, no matter the status of the current study.



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Local Concerns – Doña Ana

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- Talavera Area – Not eligible for SRP Resolution
- Resolution of other appeals. There are several protests that have not been resolved and no resolution letter sent.
 - Countywide – revision of street names, etc. – this case is on hold pending QC after all panels are finalized
 - Resolution of several other protests are on hold pending resolution of the revised levee mapping
 - Case # DON_NM_1068 in the Chaparral Lake area – this case has been accepted. Resolution letter will be mailed once the finalized panel has been QC'ed.
 - Case # DON_NM_1072 on panel 1570 – this case has been accepted. Resolution letter will be mailed once the finalized panel has been QC'ed



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Local Concerns – Dona Ana

June 23, 2011

- Other concerns??



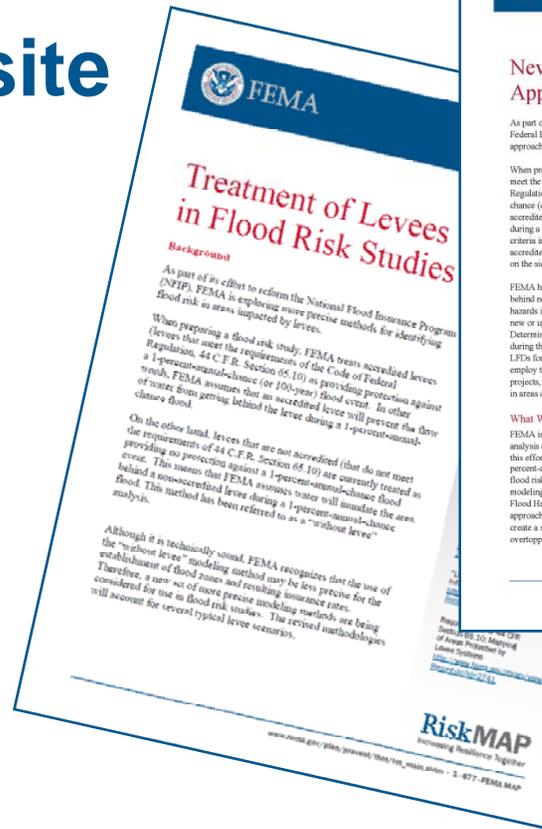
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New Levee Factsheets

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Look for more information on website

under Levee Specific Documents



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