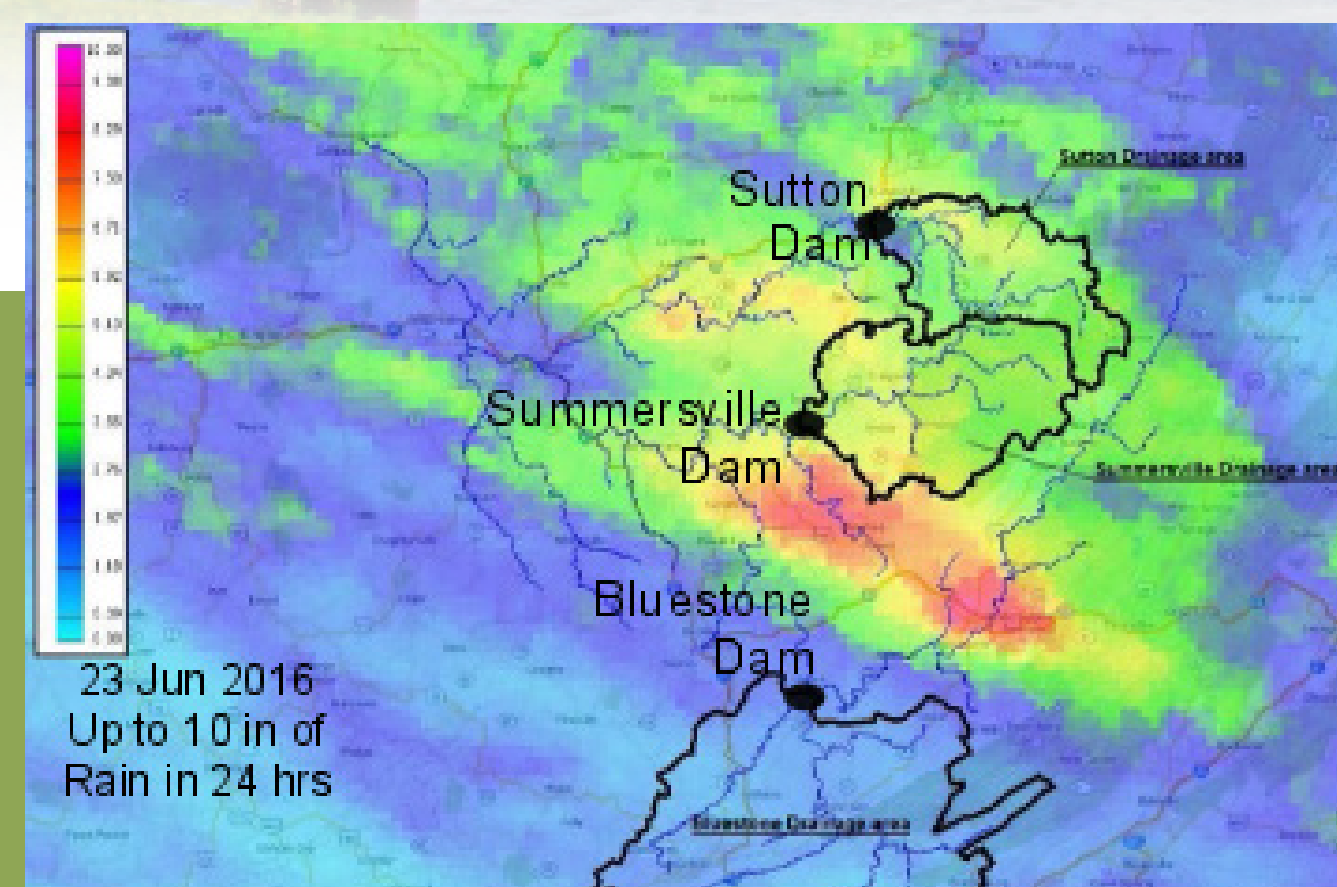




US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Huntington District  
BUILDING STRONG®

# Flood Risk Reduction: What You Should Know

## Living Downstream of a Dam comes with both Risks and Responsibilities



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers owns and operates approximately 700 dams throughout the United States. Many of these structures were built to reduce the risk of flooding, but cannot completely eliminate the chance of flooding. In general, these dams hold back storm water in the upstream lakes to protect downstream areas from flooding. If the storm is extremely severe, water in the lake may rise too high and the Corps would have no option but to make emergency discharges to protect the dam from failing. When this happens, flooding will occur hillside to hillside throughout the New and Kanawha River valleys and all the way to Point Pleasant, West Virginia and beyond.

A dam can be a benefit to residents. It provides flood risk reduction, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat. Dams provide millions of dollars in flood risk reduction and economic benefits each year.

**But, living downstream of a dam brings important responsibilities and risks.**



Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Huntington Western River Flood Punt Team providing lifejackets to locals near Clendenin, West Virginia, June 24, 2016. Photo courtesy the Coast Guard News.

- **Understand your risk if you live downstream or upstream of a dam.**
- **Develop an evacuation plan.**
- **Be prepared to evacuate.**
- **Listen for advisories and follow instructions.**
- **Know your triggers to evacuate.**
- **Conduct a practice evacuation drill.**
- **Pay attention to the warning signs of a flood: National Weather Service advisories, sirens, public service announcements and other forms of communication and follow directions.**
- **Flood insurance is strongly suggested to protect your property.**
- **Learn who your appointed and elected officials are at the local, state and national levels.**
- **Know your local emergency managers.**
- **Avoid all floodwaters. Protect your life and that of your loved ones.**

For more information, please visit [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov) in addition to [www.LivingNearDams.org](http://www.LivingNearDams.org).

You may also visit the Corps of Engineers site at [www.usace.army.mil](http://www.usace.army.mil) and contact the USACE Huntington District Office at (304) 399-5353 or [PublicAffairs@lrh01.usace.army.mil](mailto:PublicAffairs@lrh01.usace.army.mil).