



Floyd County, Kentucky - Flood Damage Reduction Study

Floyd County and the US Army Corps of Engineers

“Working together today to reduce flood damages tomorrow”



BACKGROUND

Since the earliest Levisa Fork Basin settlements, the residents faced the problem of frequent and severe flooding. Significant floods occurred in 1862, 1957, and 1963. Then, in early April 1977, communities in Floyd County were devastated by the April 1977 flood. In 1980, the Corps of Engineers received authorization to implement projects by partnering with the counties and states to prevent future losses to communities from a recurrence of a flood such as the April 1977 flood. Beginning in 2002, the Huntington District of the Corps of Engineers initiated a flood damage reduction study for Floyd County. The area that we will be focusing on initially will be the City of Prestonsburg and the Lower Levisa Fork.

WHAT YOU WILL BE SEEING

In the recent past, you may have already seen Corps of Engineers representatives and our contractors out in the field busily collecting information. You may have already talked to them. As we continue on with our study to provide your community with the most effective measure of flood damage reduction, you will be seeing even more Corps team members and contractors in your neighborhood. They will be collecting detailed information so together we can select the best flood damage reduction alternative for your community.

WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE

Currently, we have completed the following milestones: determination of study area, aerial photography, topographical mapping, bridge surveys, hydraulic modeling, and structure surveys. With this data, we are now analyzing various project alternatives. The current alternative we are focusing on is a short floodwall to protect the business district of downtown Prestonsburg combined with nonstructural measures.

WHAT WE HAVE LEFT TO DO IN THE FIELD

In order to fully develop these alternatives, we still have a bit more field data to collect. We need to complete a drilling program in order to analyze the foundation materials in the area where a possible small floodwall may go. We need to survey underground utilities. This information is very important, because it will allow us to properly design the underground internal drainage system, which will accompany the possible short floodwall, for the main downtown area of Prestonsburg. Another type of field work we have left to do is what we call Phase I Environmental Assessments. The purpose of these assessments is to verify that we are not going to construct a project on contaminated property, for example, abandoned gas stations that may have underground gasoline tanks. We need to ensure that property we build on is free from hazardous materials. This work will require site visits and interviews with property owners. One last thing that we will be doing in the field is conducting various site visits by our engineers and architects. They will need to visit certain areas to ensure that we can actually build the alternatives we are analyzing.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Gathering the most accurate information in the field plays an important role. It will allow us, the Corps of Engineers and Floyd County, to make an informed decision on the best alternative. Some of the information will require input from occupants and owners and other information may require us to have official (written access) to your property. You can become an active participant with this project by cooperating with our requests for information and access. The more accurate information we can gather, the better the project will be for your community.

WHY WE WERE HERE TODAY (DATE: Aril 5 – June 30)

Drilling may be taking place near this property during the period of time listed above. Borings DC-03-07, DC-03-08, DC-03-09, DC-03-30, DC-03-31, DC-03-35, DC-03-36, and DC-04-37 are planned to be completed within the vicinity during this duration. This information is necessary to fully understand the type of foundation material that is present in your area. Your cooperation throughout this period will be greatly appreciated. If you have any further questions regarding these activities please feel free to contact us using the information provided below.

MORE QUESTIONS?

We will do our very best to keep you informed of our field activities, as well as, other project activities. Should you have any more questions about this project, please contact:

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If you would like to visit us in person, please stop by our weekly office hours between 10:00am thru 6:00pm every Tuesday located at the Courthouse Annex, 313 Westminster Street, Prestonsburg, Kentucky, 41653, on the second floor. Appointments after 6:00pm can be made by calling (606) 886-0498.

We truly appreciate your cooperation with this project.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: Are you definitely going to build a floodwall?

Answer: No, our goal is to look at an array of possible alternatives and recommend the alternative that reduces flood damages for the least cost. We, currently, are still in the study phase.

Question: Will a floodwall push water onto other communities?

Answer: Currently the short floodwall alternative will have an insignificant effect on the water level. Should at any time, an alternative impose more flooding onto a structure, we would provide that structure protection.

Question: Why don't you dredge the river?

Answer: Dredging provides very short-term benefits. For the Prestonsburg area, we would have to dredge the Levisa Fork a great distance upstream and downstream in order to reduce the water elevation

enough to reduce flooding. There are also very high costs with maintaining dredging projects, as well as, environmental issues associated with the placement of the dredged materials.

Question: We never flood, why do we need a project?

Answer: The study area is located in the floodplain, which means you are at risk of flooding. You may live in an area that hasn't seen a large flood in many years, but there is always a chance. We are in a position now to put in place a project before a devastating flood strikes.

Question: Who makes the final decision?

Answer: The local sponsor, Floyd County Fiscal Court, makes the final decision. The Corps of Engineers will make a recommendation based on the least costly alternative. The local sponsor can agree with the recommendation, decide not to build a project, or select a different alternative. If another alternative is selected, the local sponsor will pay the cost difference between the recommended plan and the locally preferred plan.