



Institute for Water Resources

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Pilot Program Launched to Increase Public Involvement in USACE Flood Risk Management Activities

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. The commitment of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to improve public involvement across the flood risk management life cycle entered a new phase this summer with the launch of a public involvement pilot program across the nation.

The pilot program is a joint activity of the National Flood Risk Management Program (NFRMP) and USACE's Conflict Resolution and Public Participation Center of Expertise (CPCX). The goal of the pilot program is to improve USACE's capacity to engage the public and agency partners at the county, state, and federal levels, and identify best practices for improving two-way communication with key stakeholders for various types of flood risk management activities.

Public involvement in decision making is key and important to USACE in order to inform agency action and to better communicate to those at risk of flooding to make informed decisions.

Flood risk management activities span the flood risk management life cycle and include coastal and riverine flooding issues, feasibility studies, dam and levee safety concerns, risk communication and [Shared Vision Planning](#) approaches. The flood risk management life cycle includes preparation and training, response, recovery and mitigation.

USACE is implementing the program through 13 pilots in USACE districts across all eight Civil Works divisions. The districts will receive technical assistance to develop and implement public involvement plans. The selected pilots consist of ongoing flood risk management activities that will benefit from public involvement resources. Technical support may include planning, facilitation and documentation services for workshops and public meetings, and design and production of training or educational materials.

"We are really excited about the breadth of issues that these pilots represent and we look forward to supporting these projects and district staff in increasing public involvement," Hal Cardwell, CPCX director, said.

The 13 pilots that will receive additional technical assistance for public involvement through this program over the next year include the following:

1. Whittier Narrows Dam Safety Modification Study, Los Angeles District (SPL), CA
2. Ala Wai Canal Feasibility Study, Honolulu District (POH), HI
3. Interagency Development of a Flood Risk Reduction Public Information Strategy and Demonstration for the Arkansas River and Tributaries, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, Tulsa District (SWT), OK
4. Passaic River Main Stem Flood Risk Management Project, New York District (NAN), NY
5. Minnesota River FRM Community Workshops, St. Paul District (MVP); Rock Island District (MVR), IL
6. Clackamas County / Upper Sandy River, Portland District (NWP), OR
7. Big Blue and Kansas River Confluences, Kansas City District (NWK), MO
8. 2013 Georgia Hurricane Evacuation Study, Savannah District (SAS), GA
9. Upper Cedar River FRM Community Workshops, Rock Island District (MVR), IL
10. Blanchard River Watershed Study, Buffalo District (LRB), NY
11. Interagency Floodplain Area Roundtables, Kansas City District (NWK), MO

12. Pajaro River Flood Control Project, San Francisco District (SPN), CA
13. Northwest Flood Fight Workshops and Training, Portland District (NWP), OR

The pilots also provide an opportunity to supplement and grow public involvement skills available at the districts. As part of the program, CPCX will request feedback from all participating districts on experiences and lessons learned.

The pilot program will evaluate and demonstrate strategies for improving public involvement. Such strategies were identified in a post-Katrina report on public involvement in flood risk management. A report summarizing these best practices will be available in 2015 as a resource for the flood risk management community.

For more information on the Public Involvement in Flood Risk Management pilot program, contact Eileen Takata, USACE Los Angeles District (SPL), or Hal Cardwell, Institute for Water Resources (IWR).

Learn More

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