



FEMA



The Local Levee Partnership Team

Recently, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) released its updated *Levee Analysis and Mapping Procedures for Non-Accredited Levee Systems*. (See the process chart on page 3). The collaborative engagement with local stakeholders, including a smaller group called the Local Levee Partnership Team (LLPT), will assist FEMA with (1) acquiring and evaluating appropriate information and data; and (2) selecting appropriate technical analysis procedures. The procedures will result in the depiction of flood hazards on updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps and other related products.

Levee Analysis and Mapping Process

The figure on page three provides an overview of the new levee analysis and mapping process in a workflow. This figure identifies both the historic approach tasks (in grey) and the tasks which have been added (in blue) to enhance the collaboration between FEMA, Federal, Tribal, State and local partners throughout the update process. The figure has phases identified to allow further understanding of the process.

Phase Zero - Flood Structure Identification and Review

Levee systems are identified and verified to be built, operated, and maintained as flood control structures. Local Levee Partnership Team is established during this phase.

Phase One – Analysis and Mapping Plan Preparation

LLPT meetings are periodically held to review available data, documentation, and information. Discussions assist in the preparation of an Analysis and Mapping Plan with suggestions for analysis and mapping procedures based on the data, documentation, and information available.

Phase Two – Analysis Preparation and Results Review

Analysis is performed by FEMA and shared with the LLPT to validate results against available data, documentation, and information. Results are reviewed against effective Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panels to update scope of work, if necessary.

Phase Three – FIRM Update, Due Process and Effective Issuance

FIRM panels are updated with analysis and mapping results. Communities and FEMA proceed through all due process procedures and updated FIRM panels are adopted for local floodplain management purposes.

Definitions*

Levee: Man-made structure, usually an earthen embankment, designed and constructed in accordance with sound engineering practices to contain, control, or divert the flow of water so as to provide protection from temporary flooding.

Levee System: Flood protection system that consists of a levee, or levees, and associated structures, such as closure and drainage devices, which are constructed and operated in accordance with sound engineering practices.

Non-Accredited Levee System: Levee system that does not meet the requirements documented in Section 65.10 of the National Flood Insurance Program regulations (44CFR65.10).

*As defined in 44 CFR 59.1

Resources & Related Links

Levee System Accreditation:

The Code of Federal Regulations can be accessed at: <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov>
Levee System Accreditation is outlined in 44CFR65.10.

Living with Levees:

For more information on levees, please visit: <http://www.fema.gov/living-levees-its-shared-responsibility>

New Analysis and Mapping Procedures for Non-Accredited Levees:

To review the suite of procedures, please visit: <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7841>

The Local Levee Partnership Team (LLPT)

FEMA will coordinate with Tribal, local officials and levee owners to convene a LLPT when appropriate. The primary function of the LLPT will be to provide feedback, additional data, and other input about the levee system in question. FEMA's role will be to listen and gather the necessary information to effectively analyze and map the flood hazards in the area landward of the levee. The other partners will provide input on local conditions and situations.

This engagement will enable FEMA to make a better-informed final decision, using local input on how the levee system will be analyzed and how the flood hazards in the area landward of the levee will be mapped. There will be flexibility in how meeting(s) are executed including either in-person or by phone, depending on the complexity and need. FEMA or one of its representatives will participate and act as the group facilitator. The LLPT will assist FEMA to:

- Identify non-accredited levee systems within a community
- Collect existing local data & system knowledge
- Determine additional data communities plan to submit
- Review information to segment a levee system into multiple reaches for further assessment, if required
- Review of data available for identified levee reaches to determine the applicable levee analysis and mapping procedures for each
- Review of intermediate hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) analyses results

LLPT Participants

FEMA will contact Tribal, State, and local officials and levee owners once a project has been identified for funding to begin coordination with the local entities to form a LLPT. The following is a list of considerations for Tribal and local officials to reference as they work with FEMA to identify potential members:

- Where appropriate, FEMA will contact its Federal, Tribal and State partners
- LLPT members should be able to contribute to the discussion on potential analysis and mapping options
- Local officials from each affected community should be included in the membership
- LLPT would benefit if it included someone who can address local funding requirements that may be necessary to perform the work required or identified by the LLPT
- Local technical or levee system operation knowledge may provide necessary information and understanding to appropriately categorize a levee system (or levee reaches) for further analysis
- Discussions will be benefited by a mix of both technical and political participants
- It may prove beneficial to include a large industry/employer that may be affected by the LLPT recommendations and ensuing updates to the FIRM
- Review levee system length to identify all partners for LLPT creation

Important Considerations for Communities who Live Behind Levees & Flood Control Systems

- Levee owners will still be required to provide the documentation and certifications as outlined in 44CFR65.10 for levees and levee systems to be shown on the map as accredited. FEMA has not made any regulatory changes to 44CFR65.10 during this process.
- Non-Accredited Levee systems cause great concern for community elected officials, emergency management staff, and federal agencies like FEMA due to the possible damage that could be realized due to failure of a portion or component of a levee system during a storm event, overtopping of a levee system, or both.
- No levee can completely eliminate flood risk. Living with levees is a shared responsibility, and local community officials and communities as a whole should remain engaged in flood risk management activities.
- It's important for all to know the risk, know their role in helping to reduce that risk, and what specific actions they can take, including the purchase of flood insurance to further reduce the financial risk associated with living and working in levee-affected areas.

Meeting Frequency and Type

Coordination between FEMA and the LLPT members will include face to face meetings at appropriate junctures in the process, however, the LLPT will also meet more frequently via conference calls, web-based meetings, or other forms of two-way communication. The number and frequency of meetings will be determined for each project. Members can expect FEMA to work with them to establish a schedule for coordination once the LLPT has been established.

Figure 1: New Levee Process Workflow

