



5. Proposed Projects

This section includes future efforts, projects, and programs of each Task Force agency, department or organization. It includes a brief description of the projects or programs each agency currently proposes to address the flood-protection needs of the region in accordance with their mission, roles, and authorities.

a. State Agencies

West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection has three proposals that will help reduce the risk of flood damages:

1. Improve identification of deficient dams.
2. Require owners of all high-hazard dams to implement an approved Monitoring and Emergency Action Plan (EAP) coordinated with local offices of emergency services.
3. Upgrade to proper safety standards or remove all deficient dams in order to prevent flooding due to dam failure.

West Virginia University Extension Service

Extension Disaster Education Network. Recently, the WVU Extension Service signed a Cooperative Agreement to become an active partner of the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN). EDEN is a national extension organization committed to interstate collaboration in disaster education. In the months ahead, the Extension Service will undertake the following activities:

1. Develop Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with the West Virginia Office of Emergency Services, the American Red Cross, and other agencies and organizations active in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.
2. Develop an expanded program capability within the WVU Extension Service to respond to disaster events on a more systematic and comprehensive basis.
3. Develop and conduct training programs.
4. Facilitate the sharing of materials and technical expertise across state lines.

The West Virginia Flood Recovery Special Needs Project. In response to the summer of 2001 flooding events in West Virginia, West Virginia University Extension Service applied for and received a \$93,971 grant from the USDA Extension Service entitled *West Virginia Flood Recovery Special Needs Project*. With funding available from this grant, the University is pursuing the following objectives to strengthen the capacity of the WVU Extension Service to respond to future natural disasters on a more systematic and comprehensive basis:

Objective 1: To investigate the structure and function of disaster-recovery programming capabilities in other state Extension Services and to begin to network with these programs via the EDEN national network.

Objective 2: To develop a proposal to be submitted to the WVU Leadership Team for the establishment of a new Disaster Response and Recovery Extension Program.

Objective 3: To develop and pilot test a new volunteer-based, rapid-response educational program capability to provide timely and factual information to victims of natural disasters.

Objective 4: To develop and pilot test a new Swift-water Rescue Training Program for volunteer fire departments and other search and rescue agencies.

Objective 5: To develop and pilot test a new training and technical assistance program for flood-impacted communities that focuses on the rebuilding of their water and sewage infrastructure. This new program will include training and technical assistance extended to flood-impacted homeowners who have private septic systems and/or water wells.

Objective 6: To assist the State Disaster Recovery Board in the development and implementation of plans and proposals to rebuild local communities impacted by the flood. This includes assuming a lead role in helping to secure community and citizen involvement in this planning and development effort.

Objective 7: To promote and support the placement of university students from a variety of disciplines in service-learning field experiences in communities impacted by flooding.

Objective 8: To conduct Community Design Team site visits in several communities impacted by the flood event. The intent is to assist local citizens to identify opportunities for rebuilding their homes and communities outside of the floodplain.

b. Federal Agencies

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Section 322: Mitigation Planning – Disaster Mitigation Assistance Act of 2000.

The new 322 Mitigation Planning initiative requires that local governments develop and submit mitigation plans to the State/FEMA for review and approval. The revised act authorizes up to 7 percent of HMGP funds for local planning purposes and increases HMGP funds from 15 to 20 percent for states that meet enhanced planning criteria.

A State Mitigation Plan is required as a condition of the State receiving the minimum HMGP funding.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Huntington, Pittsburgh and Baltimore Districts

Currently the Corps of Engineers is involved in a number of flood protection projects throughout the State. Current project involvement ranges from initial basin-wide, countywide or community-level planning to more detailed design and construction activities. A complete listing of the existing and planned flood protection projects is shown in Section 4 of this report.

Flood protection projects in the planning phase are located within the communities of Milton, Marlinton, Philippi, and Belington. Flood protection studies are also scheduled for Parsons and Rowlesburg. The planning studies in Philippi and Belington in the Tygart Valley River Basin and Parsons and Rowlesburg in the Cheat River Basin are being conducted under Section 581 of Public Law 104-303. The Section 581 authority allows for design and construction of structural and non-structural flood protection measures in the Cheat and Tygart Valley River Basins at a level of protection sufficient to prevent any future losses from flooding such as occurred in January 1996, but no less than the 100-year level of protection without regard to the benefit/cost ratio. The ability to pay provisions included in Section 103(m) of Public Law 99-662 allow for a reduced local cost share, which can be as low as 5%.

More comprehensive planning studies are recently completed or underway in Mercer County, Greenbrier River Basin, New River Basin and the Little Kanawha River Basin. The purpose of these studies is to identify flooding problems, formulate feasible protection alternatives and recommend economically justified protection projects. The planning studies also identify opportunities for cooperative efforts with Federal and State resource agencies to restore damaged terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. The proposed Mercer County flood-warning system component is a direct spin-off of the current Mercer County planning studies.

Several local protection projects have moved into the design/construction phase of development including a Section 205 small flood protection CAP project in Huntington (Krouts Creek), a channel modification project (Island Creek near Logan), and ongoing county-wide nonstructural flood damage reduction projects in Mingo, Wayne and McDowell counties. These nonstructural projects consist of floodproofing or elevating structures above a design flood level for eligible structures and permanent removal of other structures from the floodplain (see Appendix L-Flood Damage Reduction Strategy). In addition, schools and other public buildings in those counties are being protected by ring walls, ring levees or through relocation to flood-safe sites. The countywide nonstructural projects are being implemented under the authorization of Section 202 of Public Law 96-367.

As outlined in Chapter IV of this plan, the Corps of Engineers has a number of flood-damage reduction programs available that can be applied in West Virginia. Those programs include:

- Section 205 – Small Flood Control Projects under the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP),
- Section 22 – Planning Assistance to States (PAS), and
- General Investigations Program (GI Program) for flood control, water supply and environmental restoration.

Under the GI and CAP programs, the Corps could investigate, evaluate and recommend alternatives for flood damage reduction within the State. The Section 22 PAS program is restricted to comprehensive planning studies only (no project construction recommendations permitted) for water resources problems such as reducing flood damages.

Under either the Section 205 CAP or GI programs, the initial \$100K reconnaissance study is conducted at full-Federal expense. Any additional studies to determine project feasibility are subject to cost sharing at a 50%-50% rate with a non-Federal sponsor. The maximum annual Federal limit for planning studies funding under the PAS program is \$500K per state (requires 50%-50% cost sharing with the State).

A feasible solution identified under the Section 205 program can be designed and constructed without additional Congressional action provided that a non-Federal cost sharing sponsor could be identified. The Federal funding limit for each Section 205 project is \$7 million with a cost sharing rate of 65% Federal and 35% non-Federal. Under the GI program, additional Congressional authorization would be required following the feasibility study phase to design and construct flood protection projects. Again, a non-federal cost sharing sponsor must be identified to provide cost sharing funds (65% Federal and 35% non-Federal) for design and construction and to provide 100% of the costs for operation and maintenance (O&M) of the project.

The State of West Virginia could provide the financial support for a project otherwise operated and maintained by a county or municipal entity. Under any of the available Corps programs full compliance under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is required and recommended projects must be economically justified unless otherwise exempt by legislation.

Under the CAP and GI programs, the Corps could evaluate both structural and non-structural measures to reduce flood damages in the State. Structural measures may include retention structures on tributary streams or main stem rivers, channel modifications, river diversions, floodwalls and levees. Nonstructural measures include floodproofing (wet and dry), permanent floodplain evacuation, elevation of structures, floodplain zoning, ring walls or ring levees and flood warning/emergency evacuation systems.

In an effort to maintain the centers of government (county seats) and commerce centers in the State, more densely developed communities could be protected in-place through

structural measures. These measures would have to be economically justified and documented through the NEPA process. Scattered, low-density residential and commercial development, occurring along the stream between incorporated areas within the counties, could be protected through nonstructural measures. Projects can address single municipal areas or be applied to countywide areas.

Initiation of flood damage investigations under the CAP, PAS or GI programs is the responsibility of a non-Federal sponsor. Under the PAS program, the State, a county or a municipal government are acceptable non-Federal sponsors and may initiate the planning effort through a letter of intent. Overall program and project priorities are coordinated through a State point of contact.

Under the CAP program, a county, municipal government or the State may act as a sponsor and may initiate the program by a letter of intent. General Investigation (GI) studies (reconnaissance level) are initiated through Congressional legislation as requested by a State, county or municipal government.