

Improving Flood Management in the Central Valley

FloodSAFE VISION

A sustainable integrated flood management and emergency response system throughout California that improves public safety, protects and enhances environmental and cultural resources, and supports economic growth by reducing the probability of destructive floods, promoting beneficial floodplain processes, and lowering the damages caused by flooding.



The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is leading a multifaceted initiative called FloodSAFE California to improve integrated flood management throughout California, with an extra emphasis on better managing flood risk related to the State-federal flood protection system in the Central Valley. Several bills¹ passed in 2007, adding considerable new state laws related to flood management in the Central Valley and affecting how DWR and local entities work to manage flood risk. Some key new requirements include:

- **State Planning** – DWR, in close cooperation with the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), is required to describe and document all aspects of the existing State-federal flood protection system², assess current performance of the system, and evaluate alternatives to improve flood management system-wide, all published in a document called the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP) by January 1, 2012.
- **Local Planning** – Local land use planning agencies in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley are now required to revise their general plans and zoning ordinances to consider flood risks based on available information, including information provided in the CVFPP. Local agencies must prepare thorough local flood risk management plans and define flood emergency response and recovery procedures. Approving development in areas of moderate flood risk will require providing specified levels of flood protection.
- **Risk Characterization and Hazard Notification** – DWR is to map areas at risk of flooding in the Central Valley. Also, DWR must map areas that receive protection from the State-federal flood protection system, notify landowners in those areas about the flood risks they face, and offer information about how land owners can better manage their risk.
- **California Building Standards Code** – DWR, in consultation with the CVFPB, the Division of the State Architect, and the Office of the State Fire Marshal, must propose for adoption and approval by the California Building Standards Commission updated requirements to the California Building Standards Code for construction in areas protected by facilities of the CVFPP that are subject to deep flooding during a 0.5% chance flood event.
- **Levee Status Reports** – Local agencies responsible for operation and maintenance of State-federal flood protection system levees must submit annual reports to DWR describing levee status and work done to keep levees functioning as designed. DWR must provide annual reports to the CVFPB describing levee status, work being done to inspect and maintain the system, and any planned repairs or improvements.



¹ Senate Bills 5 and 17; Assembly Bills 5, 70, 156, and 162; and Propositions 1E and 84 added Sections to the Government Code, Health and Safety Code, Public Resources Code, and Water Code.

² This system is referred to in the legislation as the State Plan of Flood Control.

FloodSAFE activities are being managed as discrete programs using a consistent project management approach. Several FloodSAFE programs are taking place in the Central Valley, and people working on them will interact often with federal, state, and local agencies, local and regional sponsors, Tribal entities, and other interested parties over the next several years. The diagram below shows several FloodSAFE programs and associated deliverables that will be managed carefully to support effective coordination and meaningful outcomes.

DWR has already begun cost-sharing flood protection improvements through Early Implementation Projects, and will continue to cost-share locally sponsored flood protection improvement projects while the CVFPP is developed. In addition, DWR has begun other FloodSAFE programs in the Central Valley to meet the new legislated requirements:

- **Central Valley Flood Management Planning** – a program to document and assess current performance of the State-federal flood protection system, develop the newly required CVFPP, and provide assistance to locals to meet new planning requirements related to flood risk management
- **Urban Levee Evaluations and Non-Urban Levee Evaluations** – two programs to assess the current level of performance of State-federal (and related) levees, and prepare preliminary, remedial alternatives and associated cost estimates necessary for acceptable levee performance
- **Central Valley Floodplain Evaluation and Delineation** – a program to update analytical tools for understanding how floods can be expected to move through the Central Valley in the future, support analysis of proposed flood management system improvements, and map areas at risk of flooding



These FloodSAFE programs are designed to supplement other ongoing flood management programs, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) map update program, active Corps investigations and feasibility studies, and National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) activities. These FloodSAFE programs are also being coordinated with initiatives to improve conditions in the Delta, such as the Bay Delta Conservation Plan. All outreach and coordination with local flood management partners and stakeholders in the Central Valley will be coordinated through the CVFMP Program communications team.

CENTRAL VALLEY PROGRAM RELATIONSHIPS

