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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Provides Locations of Unacceptably Maintained Levees

WASHINGTON--After completing its notification of levee owners, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers today released the locations of the levee units nationwide with unacceptable maintenance inspection ratings.

An unacceptable maintenance rating means a levee has one or more deficient conditions that can reasonably be foreseen to prevent the project from functioning as designed. Examples of maintenance deficiencies include: animal burrows, erosion, tree growth, movement of floodwalls or faulty culvert conditions.

“Levee safety is a shared responsibility with our local, state and other federal partners,” said Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley, Director of Civil Works. “We considered it prudent and proper to speak directly with levee owners prior to releasing the information to national media outlets.

“Our ultimate goals are reduced risk and increased public safety through an informed public, empowered to take responsibility for its safety. We are working closely with federal, state and local partners to inform the public so they understand the risks associated with living and working behind levees. This is best accomplished at the local level where levee activity most directly impacts the public,” said Riley.

The Corps inspects some 2,000 levee units, or 13,000 miles on an annual basis, which levees include projects built and maintained by the Corps; projects built by the Corps and transferred to a local owner to operate and maintain; and non-federal projects built by a local community. The latter two project categories, if properly maintained and operated by the owner, are eligible for federal rehabilitation assistance.

After conducting the inspections and entering the data, local Corps District offices have reviewed the results with the local levee owner responsible for operations and maintenance. The Corps is ensuring the levee owner understands the deficiencies and the consequences if not corrected.

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The national levee inventory data base is dynamic and updated regularly, and therefore subject to change as new inspections take place and the levee owner addresses maintenance deficiencies.

“We understand the challenge this presents to local communities,” said Riley. “We will be working with our partner agencies at all levels during a correction period of one year to allow local owners time to address project maintenance deficiencies.”

The list of levee units may be viewed at
<http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/releases/leveelist.pdf>

For specific information about local projects, please contact the respective Corps District.

In Walla Walla District, three levees were identified on three rivers. One in Umatilla County, Ore., on the Walla Walla River, one in Elmore County, Idaho on the Boise River, and one in Nez Perce County, Idaho, on Lapwai Creek off the Clearwater River.

For more information, contact Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, by calling (509) 527-7020 or by emailing cenww-pa@usace.army.mil.

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