



Black Pond Slough Detention Facility For Floodwaters

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

Desha County, Arkansas

McGehee, AR - The City of McGehee has experienced flooding in the residential area east of and adjacent to Black Pond Slough many times over the last 10 years. Up to 25 houses in this area have received repetitive damages of more than \$1.1 million during this period. Due to the recurring nature of the floods, the City could expect annual damages in the amount of \$150,000.



The proposed mitigation alternative was the construction of a detention basin on the west side of the affected subdivision. It was conceived for the storm water to flow and to be held in the 17-acre basin for a period of time instead of overflowing into the subdivision. When the slough returns to normal levels, the water in the basin would be slowly pumped back into the ditch. The Army Corps of Engineers provided information about past flooding events. The East Arkansas Planning and Development District assisted the City in preparing the application for this project.

This project has greatly reduced the flooding risk in the project area. In early January of 1999, over eight inches of rain fell in McGehee, an equivalent to the 75-year storm. As noted from a local newspaper, "Many residents breathed a sigh of relief as they realized the onslaught of water was draining away from their homes instead of steadily rising toward them, as had been the case in the past."

The Mayor of McGehee sent a letter of thanks to the Arkansas Office of Emergency Services for working with them to decrease the potential for flooding in McGehee. He stated in the letter that "had the detention facility not been in place, some 15 to 20 homes would have received damage. I was pleased that this flood control project was in place." In addition to the above benefits, infiltration into the city sewer system during flooding has been significantly reduced and damage to city streets will be minimal.

Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County in a State**

FEMA Region: **Region VI**

State: **Arkansas**

County: **Desha County**

City/Community: **McGehee**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**
Hazard Type: **Flooding**
Activity/Project Type: **Flood Control**
Activity/Project Start Date: **11/1995**
Activity/Project End Date: **10/1998**
Funding Source: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP); Local Sources**
Funding Recipient: **Local Government**
Funding Recipient Name: **City of McGehee**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **\$582,000.00 (Estimated)**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal Disaster? **No**
Value Tested By Disaster? **Yes**
Tested By Federal Disaster #: **No Federal Disaster specified**
Year First Tested: **1999**
Repetitive Loss Property? **Unknown**

Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: <http://www.floodsmart.gov/>
Reference URL 2: <http://www.adem.state.ar.us/>

Main Points

- It was conceived for the storm water to flow and to be held in the 17-acre detention basin for a period of time instead of overflowing into the subdivision.
- This project has eliminated flooding in the project area. In early January of 1999, over eight inches of rain fell in McGehee, an equivalent to the 75-year storm and people were relieved at the sight of the water draining away from their homes inside of rising toward them.
- In addition to the above benefits, infiltration into the city sewer system during flooding has been significantly reduced and damage to city streets will be minimal.