Control Project Stops Rensselaer Flooding

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

Rensselaer County, New York

Albany, NY - A flood control project completed three years ago in the City of Rensselaer has spared some residents of their traditional spring flooding, even during the early-April storms this year that led to Rensselaer County's inclusion in a federal disaster declaration.

Working together, local, State and Federal agencies solved the perennial flooding problem by using the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program administered by the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) and funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The grant program assists state and local governments in efforts to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural disasters.

The Rensselaer project involved construction of a flood retention structure that temporarily impounds water from Quackenderry Creek and allows its gradual release. The creek is the primary drainage feature of a watershed that begins in neighboring East Greenbush and North Greenbush, an area that has seen significant development during the previous three decades.

Residents along the creek historically experienced flood damage during high-water periods.

"There used to be severe flooding in that neighborhood called 'the hollow.' Since the project was completed the flooding has stopped," said City Planner Marybeth Pettit. "I would say it's been very successful."

The project involved installation of concrete anti-scour pads upstream and downstream of an outlet control structure, a steel pad in the creek bed and stone riprap around the control structure.

The total project cost was about $536,000, of which the Federal share was $402,000.

"Mitigation activities such as these are a smart way of doing business by expending monies now to lessen the threat on communities before an event occurs in the future," said SEMO Director and State Coordinating Officer James W. Tuffey.

"This is an excellent example of an investment in infrastructure improvements that will pay dividends for years to come," said FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer Marianne C. Jackson.

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following an incident of national significance. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

Activity/Project Location	
Geographical Area:	**Single County in a State**
FEMA Region:	**Region II**
State:	**New York**
County:	**Rensselaer County**
City/Community:	**Rensselaer**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector:	**Public/Private Partnership**
Hazard Type:	**Flooding**
Activity/Project Type:	**Flood Control**
Structure Type:	**Concrete, Reinforced**
Activity/Project Start Date:	**05/2000**
Activity/Project End Date:	**11/2002**
Funding Source:	**Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**
Funding Recipient:	**Local Government**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost:	**$536,000.00 (Actual)**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal Disaster?	**Yes**
Federal Disaster #:	**1196 , 01/10/1998**
Value Tested By Disaster?	**Yes**
Tested By Federal Disaster #:	**No Federal Disaster specified**
Year First Tested:	**2005**
Repetitive Loss Property?	**Yes**

Reference URLs

Reference URL 1:	**http://www.floodsmart.gov/**
Reference URL 2:	**http://www.semo.state.ny.us/index.cfm**

Main Points

- The Rensselaer project involved construction of a flood retention structure that temporarily impounds water from Quackenderry Creek and allows its gradual release.
- Residents along the creek historically experienced flood damage during high-water periods.
- The total project cost was about $536,000, of which the Federal share was $402,000.

Flood control project