



FEMA

Newton - Acquisition Project Buyout as an Effective Investment

Baker County, GA - In 1994, Tropical Storm Alberto devastated central and southwestern Georgia. The river communities of Newton and Albany were among the hardest hit by floods from the storm. Alberto, which meandered over the state for several days before dying out, dumped up to 28 inches of water in some areas. One-third of Georgia's counties were declared federal disaster areas.

Located in Baker County, Newton is a small rural town with a population of less than one thousand. The town lies about 20 miles southwest of Albany and is located next to the Flint River. Alberto left the downtown area under 12 feet of water; flood depths were as high as 20 feet; 150 homes and businesses flooded; and several historic structures were damaged. Newton suffered \$4.5 million in damages.

In the Newton mitigation project, FEMA funded the acquisition and demolition of 20 residential and 19 commercial structures. The total cost of the project was \$754,464. All but one business moved out of the floodplain.

For five of the first nine days of March 1998, a storm system inundated Georgia with torrential rain. More than 40 percent of Georgia's counties had some level of flooding. The buyout of 39 residential and business properties after the 1994 flood proved to be an effective investment in Newton. Nearly \$2 million in damages and losses were avoided. If these buildings had merely been repaired after the 1994 flood, many would have been completely destroyed in 1998.



**Baker County,
Georgia**



Quick Facts

Sector:

Public

Cost:

\$754,464.00 (Actual)

Primary Activity/Project:

Acquisition/Buyouts

Primary Funding:

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)