

Corps responds to governor's request for advance measures in northern Idaho

Contact: Nola Leyde (206) 764-6896

SEATTLE -- Snowpack in northern Idaho is above normal this year and concerns about the spring thaw and possible flooding have a team from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers looking at two areas in the northern panhandle of Idaho.

The Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has a team of two flood engineers and a hydrologist on the ground in Idaho looking at two sites that the governor has requested advance measures assistance from the Corps. The Corps' team is visiting the areas of concern to determine the appropriate response in the form of technical assistance.

In the City of Osburn, Idaho, in Shoshone County, a concern about a public utility immediately adjacent to the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, resulted in a request from the county and was supported by the governor. The area includes a sewer line, and there is also the potential to affect water supply, power and communication lines.

In the Town of Clark Fork, Idaho, in Bonner County, there is concern about the accumulation of large woody debris and gravel in Lightning Creek. The debris has reduced the channel capacity and could cause significant flood damage if the creek were to rise quickly from the spring melt. Much of the debris is a result of a flash flood that occurred in the fall of 2006. With a snow pack slightly above normal, and more snow on the way, local officials are concerned is that there could be a significant flood event, and they have asked if removing the debris in the channel would help restore the capacity of the channel to mitigate the impacts of flooding in this area. The work could help to reduce the risk of flooding to the City of Clark Fork, the State Highway 200 Bridge, and the Montana Rail Link Bridge.

The Corps is working with local and state emergency managers to determine what type of assistance can be provided. Public Law 84-99 enables the Corps to assist state and local authorities in flood fight activities and cost share in the repair of flood protection structures. The Corps can provide technical assistance before, during, and after flood events. This assistance can range from how to place sandbags to helping design a permanent flood control structure.

The Corps may also perform advance measure projects prior to flooding or flood fighting to protect against loss of life or damages to property. An imminent threat of unusual flooding must exist to justify advance measures assistance from the Corps.

For more on the Corps and the emergency management mission, visit the Seattle District Web site at www.nws.usace.army.mil.