

Corps approves request for advance measure project in northern Idaho; work begins today

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SEATTLE – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has approved funding for one of two advance measure projects in northern Idaho. Snowpack in northern Idaho is above normal this year and concerns about the spring thaw and possible flooding resulted in a request from the Idaho governor for advance measures assistance from the Corps in the northern panhandle.

In the City of Clark Fork, Idaho, in Bonner County, the Corps started work today on eliminating the accumulation of large woody debris in Lightning Creek. A very large number of trees and branches were deposited in the creek channel upstream of the town during a flash flood in November 2006. The high water associated with the spring snowmelt is predicted to dislodge the woody debris and potentially clog openings under the Highway 200 and Montana Rail Link bridges. The clogging could damage or destroy the bridges and may cause backwater that could flood portions of the City of Clark Fork. Eliminating debris in the channel could help to restore the capacity of the channel to minimize the impacts of flooding in this area. The project was funded by the Corps at an estimated cost of \$254,705.

"An additional request for protection of a sewer line and manhole cover on the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River near Osburn, Idaho, has been denied by the Corps," said Paul Komoroske, chief of Emergency Management in the Corps' Seattle District. In the meantime, the local sponsor, Shoshone County, has enhanced and protected the manhole.

"The Corps will be available to help protect the sewer line if a flood occurs and protection is beyond the local capability," said Komoroske.

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 risk management structure.

The Corps may also perform advance measure projects prior to flooding or flood fighting activities. Advance measures are conducted to protect against loss of life and significant damages to urban areas and/or public facilities when an imminent threat of unusual flooding exists. The Corps worked with local and state emergency managers to determine what type of assistance could be provided.

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