



**July  
2014**

# River Run

A newsletter for the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition: Working together makes sense.

## Executive Director Report:

### The End Is Near!

Now that I have your attention, I want to remind you **July 25th** is just around the corner and I hope your plans are to attend the TCRFC annual meeting in Bastrop!

TCRFC only has one meeting each year. We use this meeting to vote for board members in "uneven numbered" years. Since this is an "even numbered" year, there are no elections, but we will have a few bylaw changes. We also have new policies the board voted to institute which we will report during the business meeting. The business meeting will start at 9:30 and conclude at 9:55. Our regular meeting will begin at 10:00. We have substantial topics, great speakers, and a delicious meal...you don't want to miss this!

TCRFC is working closely with our state and federal agencies to help our members with mapping needs, hazard mitigation plans, and anything else we find helpful. All of this and more will be discussed at our annual meeting!

Please be there, bring a fellow member or interested person, and enjoy the education and networking.

Thank you for all you do to make your communities better places to live and for being a part of the TCRFC community as well.

See you July 25<sup>th</sup>!

It is a blessing serving as your ED.  
*-Mickey Reynolds*



Like us on facebook!



## Outreach Update from Llano County!

Llano County Land Development and Permitting office has been working on outreach in order to educate individuals on Floodplain Management. Two Floodplain Informational meetings have been held and more will be scheduled in the future. The first presentation was directed toward builders, realtors, insurance agents, lenders, elected officials and the general public. Guest speaker, Shawn Snyder, with the Texas Water Development Board was present to give an update on the Biggert-Waters Act. The second presentation was held at the request of the Women's Council of Realtors in Marble Falls. These presentations were an opportunity to deliver floodplain guidance in the unincorporated areas of Llano County and to answer questions regarding development in flood prone areas.

If you would like more information about the presentation please contact the Llano County Floodplain Manager, Cristy Rogers at [cristy.rogers@co.llano.tx.us](mailto:cristy.rogers@co.llano.tx.us).

## Floodplain Managers at Work

The TCRFC includes large and small cities and counties within and close to the Texas Colorado River watershed. As I travel to and through our Coalition area, I see activity in each of our member's jurisdictions. People involved in economic development get much attention when things are growing and going. News people interview them to get the newest stories about development (good or bad) in their areas. The folks behind the scenes, who are affected by growth, aren't in the headlines and don't want to be. It is interesting, though, to see the work these people do for their community. Floodplain Administrators, Emergency Management Coordinators, Environmental Health Directors, and others are all in the trenches getting the work done, even when, and especially when things are booming!

A short visit with Lisa Krobot, Matagorda County Floodplain Manager, helped me understand the importance of her job and the plight of other CFM's. While many of our Texas counties are experiencing phenomenal growth in the oil boom, Matagorda County is growing industrially. Tenaris chose to build in the county, which has led to other industries choosing to locate there (Some had already planned to build there). Tenaris is a leading supplier of tubes and related services for the world's energy industry and certain other industrial applications.

RV parks are springing up in the county (also affected by growth in nearby county with expansion of Conoco Phillips). New subdivisions, hotels, apartment buildings, shopping plazas, and more becoming reality. Dunn Heat Exchangers is coming to town. They are a leader in cleaning, repair, fabrication, design, and testing of shell and tube-type heat exchangers and unfired pressure vessels. Century Refining, an oil recycling industry, has chosen to locate in Matagorda, County. More small business, like Speedy Stop, Stripes, and more are being planned or built.

That's great news for the area!

That's also more work for the permit department, FPM, etc. While I was in Lisa's office there were stacks and files of permits for her to accept and approve. It is always great to have awesome people working to ensure development is good, but not detrimental to your neighborhood. We need to thank folks like Lisa for proudly doing their job. She has been a loyal employee of Matagorda County for 26 years. Thirteen of those years she has been serving as the Floodplain Manager.

Thanks Lisa for a job well done and being willing to do like Larry the Cable Guy says, "Get 'er' done".

# TCRFC: Hazard Mitigation Action Plan Update

The current TCRFC Hazard Mitigation Plan will expire in 2016; therefore, TCRFC has initiated steps to begin the next update. This fall, we selected the JSWA Team to prepare our Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates. The JSWA Team consists of Jeff Ward (JSW & Associates) and Halff Associates. Upon coordination with FEMA, the team learned that this update will require the TCRFC Hazard Mitigation Plan to be split into separate plans covering a maximum of two counties per plan. Although this increases the effort necessary for the plan updates, these two-county plans will ensure a more localized approach to hazard mitigation for our members.

TCRFC has worked with the JSWA team to apply for Hazard Mitigation funding through FEMA's Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant program. Due to the limitations on grant funding per applicant, grant money will also be applied for through the West Disaster Declaration funding. Applications for the West Declaration will be submitted early next year. It is possible that not all grants will be funded this year. The team will prioritize the plans and appropriate funds accordingly such that all plan updates will be complete prior to the current plan expiration. Be sure to attend your annual meeting to hear important updates from Jeff Ward. •

## Everyone Needs Friends!

Would you or someone you know like to be our friend? TCRFC is now offering a new way to participate with our coalition. Organizations, Corporations, and any other concerned person can be our friend and as friendships work, everyone will benefit!

**Benefits for TCRFC:** More involved people, much needed income for our Coalition so that we can offer more ways to help our members, and increasing our pool of knowledge and wisdom for all!

**Benefits for You:** You will be a part of a multi-city and county organization, your business will be advertised within our Coalition, and you will be informed of happenings concerning you and your business.

**The requirements and levels for Friends are:**

### Diamond - \$1,500

- Entity Logo on front page of the TCRFC Website acknowledging level of support with a link directly to their website,
- ¼ page ad in each of the TCRFC's newsletters,
- Banner acknowledging level of participation at the TCRFC Annual Meetings,
- Logo running continuously on the plenary session screens during breaks,
- Verbal level of support acknowledgment at all BOD meetings,
- Your level of support on TCRFC promo pieces such as the *Friends of the Coalition Program* brochure, and
- One time mailing list of key member contacts (membership directory mailing labels only – no phone #s, or emails).

### Ruby - \$1,000

- Entity logo on the front page of the TCRFC website acknowledging level of support,
- ¼ page ad in each of the TCRFC's newsletters,
- Banner acknowledging level of participation at the TCRFC Annual Meeting,
- Verbal level of support acknowledgment at all BOD meetings, and
- Your level of support on TCRFC promo pieces such as the *Friends of the Coalition Program* brochure.

### Sapphire - \$500

- Entity logo on the front page of the TCRFC website acknowledging level of support,
- Sign acknowledging level of participation at the TCRFC Annual Meeting, and
- Your level of support on TCRFC promo pieces such as the *Friends of the Coalition Program* brochure.

**July will start your year's membership, so call us ASAP!!!**

# What is a Levee?

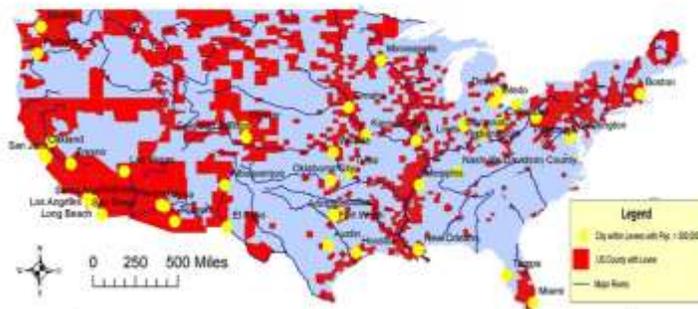
By: Wes Birdwell, Halff Associates

Years ago, we may have said “anything that can temporarily hold back water long enough to keep us from flooding”. Thus, railroads, highways, canal embankments, and almost anything that could deflect the advance of high tide or a river rise was considered a levee. Floodplain mappers were aware of many of them when drawing our floodplain maps, and they tended to artificially draw the edge of a floodplain along these man-made obstacles. But then, we had a little something in Louisiana several years ago, called Hurricane Katrina. Levees which had been constructed by the Corps of Engineers failed due the tremendous surge caused by the strength of that storm, and our nation watched in horror on our TV’s as a major US city tried to evacuate. What a nightmare. And the world of levees changed. FEMA began to enforce a little known clause in their regulations called CFR 65.10 which says that if a levee could not be proven to hold back the 100-Year flood, the area it protects must be shown as ***in the floodplain***. This began to get the attention of communities who were in the process of getting new maps. Now, they needed to get an engineer to certify their levees and the world of levees suddenly got very complicated.



It might be surprising to realize that almost every metropolitan area has a levee or a flood wall. Even on our Colorado River, I have personally been acquainted with the floodwall in Brady, the new levee on Onion Creek in Austin, the levees along

## US Cities and Counties with Levees



the river in Matagorda County, the Corps of Engineers ring levee in Matagorda. Levees are located in many of our Texas cities (shown here in yellow) and our counties (shown here in red). No doubt we have built billions, if not trillions, of dollars in homes, factories, and businesses behind levees. Levees are different than dams in that dams hold back water every day, and levees only hold water back occasionally. And, there are levees and then there are levees. A coastal levee must hold back the high tide for only a few hours, as the hurricane comes in and passes. So realistically a coastal levee can be even more permeable than a river levee. But, a coastal levee still must hold back the ocean and its powerful waves which is, indeed, no

small task.

A wise man said, “If you’ve seen one levee, you’ve.....really seen only one levee”. Because every levee is different. Some of our levees were constructed literally as the farmer raised his plow to turn his tractor around at the river bank to start another row. Then a city grew and someone built a subdivision behind that “turn-row”. Now, rather than a crop, we have people in homes living there. The current floodplain map shows it not be floodplain, but now FEMA is saying that the community there must hire an engineer to “certify” that it will hold back the 100-Year flood. And the community finds itself needing to pay a large engineering fee.

It helps if the levee is in an area that has been studied recently. Because, if the levee is in an “A-Zone”, the engineer must first determine the Base Flood Elevation. Then he or she can measure if the levee is high enough to not be overtopped by the 100-Year flood. If there are BFE’s, but the study that determined those elevations is 30 to 40 years old and was based on twenty foot contour maps, it may not be accurate enough to determine, within a few inches, if the levee could be overtopped. The engineer may consider re-studying the river to validate the BFE before asking the local community to modify the levee. Unfortunately, the alternative to certifying a levee is that existing homes and businesses might be re-mapped into a floodplain, requiring homeowners to go purchase expensive flood insurance. Our communities with levees are facing a tough question. The simple world of levees has changed.



And, it continues to change. Recent actions by our legislators have formed a national levee safety program at the Corps of Engineers and new mapping standards at FEMA. The world of levees will no doubt keep changing for some time.

# Floodplain Mapping Update

## (June 2014)

### San Bernard HUC:

In September 2011, FEMA officially awarded the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) and the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition (TCRFC) \$700,000 in grant funding to perform FEMA tasks within the San Bernard watershed. Halff Associates were contracted to execute the tasks under this Year 1 San Bernard Mapping Activity Statement (YR 1 MAS) grant. The project is implemented in multiple phases; the initial task is to Perform Project Discovery and associated Project Outreach activities. The goal of YR 1 MAS is to utilize planning information previously developed by the TCRFC communities, to document the Discovery Process and prepare floodplain mapping, and eventually update DFIRM maps for areas within the San Bernard watershed. In November 2012, Halff completed the Discovery task for the San Bernard watershed. Halff has completed the incorporation of the 2005 Floodplain Studies to update DFIRMs in Wharton and Fort Bend Counties. They have also completed the extension of the hydrologic model from FM1301 to the Gulf of Mexico. The resulting preliminary maps are expected to be released in August of this year. This schedule is dependent upon FEMA approval.

Revised YR 1 MAS Schedule For San Bernard HUC																																				
YR 1 MAS TASKS	2012												2013												2014											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Discovery / Outreach	Complete																																			
Topography and Base Map						Complete												Complete																		
Hydrology, Hydraulics, and Mapping						Complete														Complete																
Non-Regulatory Products																				Complete																
Map Production / Prelim Distribution																																				

### Colorado-Cummins HUC:

Earlier this year, TCRFC through the TWDB applied for FY14 FEMA funding to perform Discovery in the Colorado-Cummins HUC. FEMA has not yet released which projects were funded. FEMA selections will be posted in September.

### Austin-Travis HUC:

The Austin-Travis Discovery was performed by FEMA’s RAMPP Team. The Discovery close out was on September 10, 2013. Items submitted by TCRFC were included in the Discovery report. FEMA is currently scoping studies for new or updated analysis. We encourage you all to participate in these FEMA scoping discussions as you may benefit from new analysis.

### San Gabriel HUC:

Discovery on the San Gabriel HUC is currently being performed. If you are located within this HUC, we encourage you to attend the Discovery meetings and provide input regarding your area. As more information becomes available, we will keep our members updated through our website and news blasts. •

TCRFC is now offering memberships to MUDs, Water Districts, and other local governmental agencies within our Coalition of Counties and Cities. If your District would like to be a member, please contact us for a visit!

The Annual Dues will be \$500.00 and your organization will have one member vote at our annual meeting.

Your membership will help your district concerning floodplain needs, hazard mitigation, and other services we provide. •



## TCRFC Board of Directors:

**Mickey Reynolds:** Executive Director

**Ron Smith:** Chair  
City Councilmember, Lago Vista

**Clara Beckett:** Vice-Chair  
Commissioner, Bastrop County

**Marilee Pfannstiel:** Treasurer  
Floodplain Administrator, Jonestown

**Wayne Boultinghouse:** Secretary  
County Judge, Lampasas County

**Monica Martin:** Region I Representative  
Floodplain Administrator, Wharton County

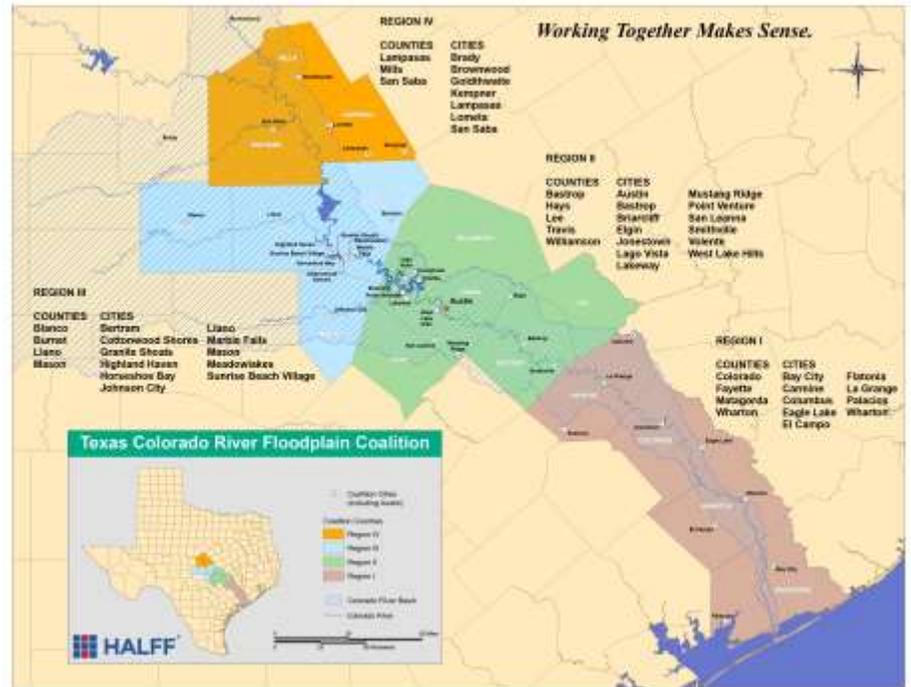
**Vickie Box :** Region II Representative  
Floodplain Administrator, Bastrop County

**Cristy Rogers:** Region III Representative  
Floodplain Administrator, Llano County

**Joe Mosier:** Region IV Representative  
Floodplain Administrator, City of Brady

### Mission Statement:

"Encourage comprehensive consistent management of the floodplain along the Colorado River and its tributaries; provide a forum for data exchange; and facilitate a structured approach to managing the complex issues related to floodplain management."



### History:

Formed in 2001, the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition is a partnership of Colorado River basin communities seeking better ways to prevent flood damage. The Texas Floodplain Management Association provides administrative and technical support to the Coalition, and we are working with LCRA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Texas Water Development Board and FEMA.