

# Levee Safety

Congress Examines  
The Impacts of Reform

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# Presentation Overview

- Levees in the United States
- The Collision of Map Mod and Katrina
- Federal Reforms
- Case Study
  - Metro East, IL
- Congress Examines the Impacts of Reform
  - Pending Legislation
  - Congressional Levee Caucus
- Levee Issues Alliance
- Next Steps

# Levees in the U.S.

## Non-federal levees

- Estimated 100,000 miles
- Levees found in 22 percent of Nation's 3,147 counties
- Forty-three percent of US population lives in counties with levees
- Many are 50 years old or older and originally designed agricultural and rural areas... not businesses and homes

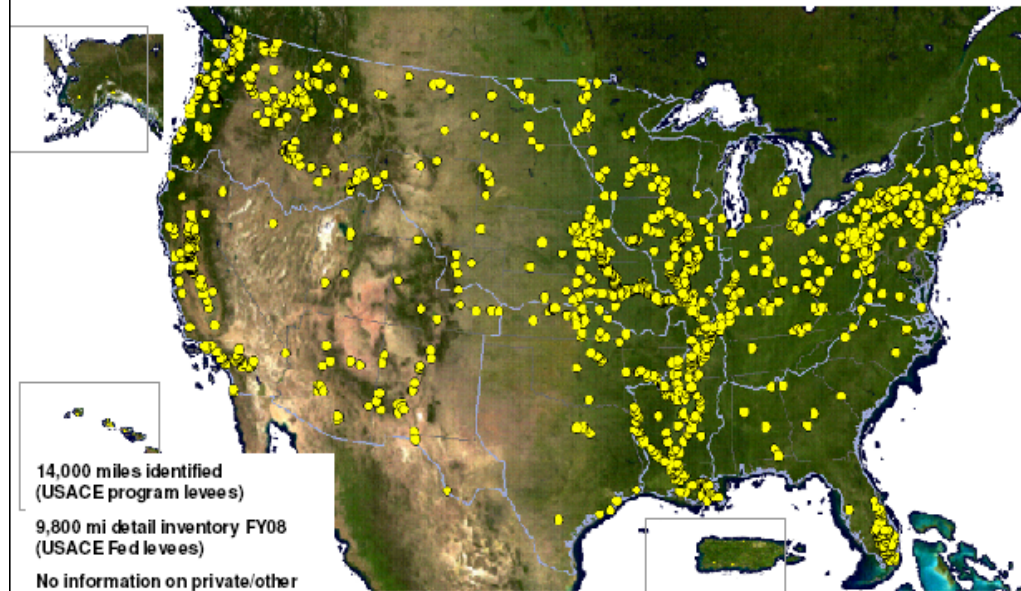


# Levees in the U.S.

## Federal System Levees

- 14,000 miles
  - 2000 Federally built and maintained
  - 10,000 Federally built and locally maintained (ICW and RIP)
  - 2,000 Locally built and maintained to Corps standards (RIP)
- 6:1 return on flood damages prevented
- Inspected on an annual (Routine) and 5-year (Periodic) basis

## USACE Program Levees



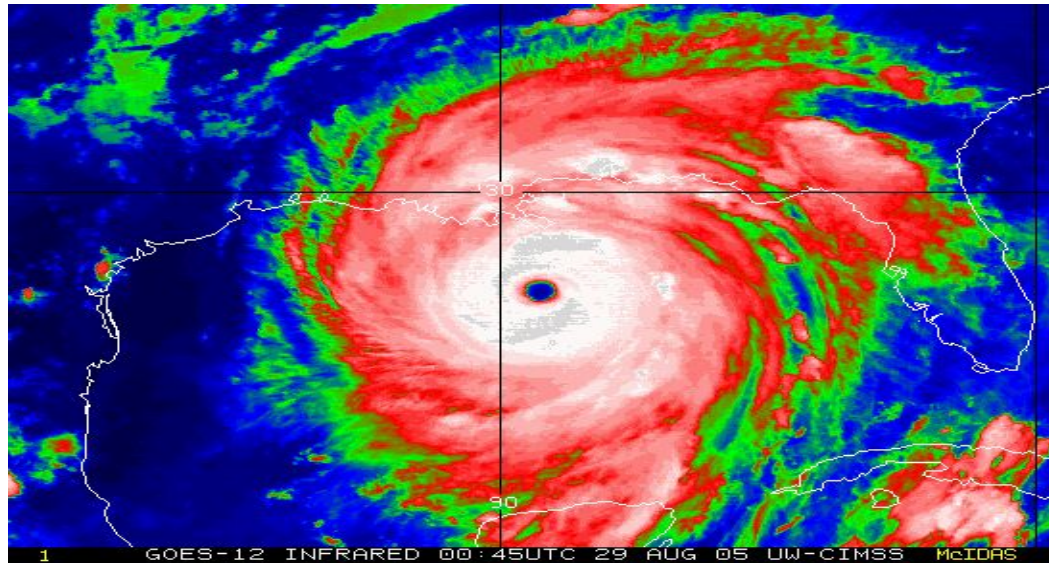
*Shared Risks. Shared Solutions*

# Collision of Map Mod...



- \$1.6B since FY 2003 to update and digitize 20+ year old maps
- 50 percent of the NFIP's 106,000 maps more than 15 years old as of April 2008

# And Hurricane Katrina



- “The Wake-Up Call We Cannot Ignore”
  - National Committee on Levee Safety, June 2009

# Federal Reforms -- FEMA



- Policy to verify (“accredit”) that levees can withstand 100-year flood per 44 CFR 65.10
- August 2005 Procedure Memorandum No. 34 issued to “clarify” certification responsibilities
- September 2006 establishment of 2-year PAL program
- Failure to show compliance results in:
  - Mandatory flood insurance
  - New floodplain management regulation
  - Likely property value and local tax base declines
  - Potential business relocation/relocation avoidance

# Federal Reforms -- Corps



- Under NFIP, the Corps adopted statistically-based criteria for levee-height certification vs. the previous 3' freeboard requirement
- Risk and uncertainty analysis applied as basis for project review
- A more comprehensive and rigorous inspection process disallowing any “Unacceptable” O/M feature
- 12-month MDCP for 2007-inspected projects

# Federal Reforms – WRDA 2007



- Title IX “the National Levee Safety Act” of WRDA 2007
  - National levee inventory
  - Increased and improved inspection process
  - Establishment of National Committee on Levee Safety

# Case Studies



- Metro East, IL
  - Industrial bottomlands
  - 170,000 population
  - Estimated \$300M-\$500M levee repair costs
  - \$0.025 local sales tax (\$130M) based on early estimates
  - 16.5' BFE

# Congress Examines Impacts

- HR 3415, Rep. Jerry Costello (D-IL)
- S. 3051, Sen. David Vitter (R-LA)
- Bipartisan Congressional Levee Caucus

# Levee Issues Alliance

- Communities, state, private and non-profit stakeholders from Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Illinois
- Overarching Goals:
  - Achieve reasonable application of the Corps' PI
  - Ameliorate or delay the adverse local economic impacts of levee decertification
  - Identify resources and methodologies to assist correction of levee deficiencies

## Next Steps

- Improve and advance Costello-Vitter-like legislation on the FEMA side
- Carefully explore administrative remedies with the Corps
- Examine WRDA options
- Work closely with key members and the new Levee Caucus

# Questions?



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