



**Executive Order 11988
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Proposed Changes to Executive Order on Floodplain Management

Executive Order 11988, originally issued in 1977 by President Jimmy Carter, established protections for the nation's floodplains, and in application, recognized the need for and allowed consideration of net-beneficial effects. Efforts are underway within the Obama Administration to amend Executive Order 11988. In crafting its revisions, we urge the Administration to ensure that its new policy recognize the important economic and human uses of lands within the floodplain, along with the environmental considerations.

- The Federally regulated and managed floodplain should continue to be the 100-year floodplain. Creation of a 500-year standard would significantly expand limitations on state and local land use choices and restrict economic uses of the floodplain. The ramifications extend far beyond new land use choices, potentially impacting such things as mortgage applications for existing residences and commercial developments, limiting established agricultural practices and devaluing existing property values.
- Promotion of non-structural measures, such as permanent evacuation of the floodplain, must not force communities to accept non-structural measures against their will, especially where economic hardships would result. Where a competent planning study identifies a structural plan with net beneficial effects, the affected community must be guaranteed the opportunity to select such a plan without Federal opposition.
- In evaluating ecological goals, due consideration must be given to water supply, navigation, hydropower and structural flood control projects, to ensure that they, along with certain agricultural practices and communities located in floodplains, are not severely disadvantaged.
- Additional compliance requirements through federal agency actions and limitations must be avoided. Floodplain regulation related to Federal undertakings should never impose environmental compliance requirements, mitigation or restoration standards over and above those determined to satisfy the requirements of existing statutes such as Water Resources Development acts, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

Action: We support a balanced approach to floodplain management, giving due consideration to the economic and human uses, as well as environmental and ecological considerations, to ensure the wise use of our floodplains for the safety, security and well-being of all Americans and their families.

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The National Waterways Conference, established in 1960, is the leading national organization to advocate for the enactment of common-sense water resource policies that maximize the economic and environmental value of our inland, coastal and Great Lakes waterways. Conference membership is comprised of the full spectrum of water resources stakeholders, including waterways shippers and carriers, industry and regional associations, port authorities, shipyards, dredging contractors, flood control associations, levee boards, engineering consultants, and state and local governments.