Levee Accreditation Process

Accreditation Definition

- Accreditation of the levee system affects FEMA flood-mapping.
- Without accreditation, the area behind the levee is considered a “significant flood hazard” area
- Documentation is required by FEMA (“Certification by Engineer”) that the levee is protective of 100-year flood.

Accreditation Definition

- Corps of Engineers is *not* providing Certification,
- The districts are contracting with a private engineering firm, Cornforth Consultants.
- Certification is of *actual* (in place and operating) levee system

Accreditation Process

- Current lack of certification in Pen 1 and Pen 2 does not automatically bring de-accreditation.
- Accreditation Clock has not started, not imminent
- FEMA *could* initiate at any time

Accreditation Process

- Officially, 90-days to submit required documentation, including certification of levee
- Up to 5 years before significant consequences, i.e. de-accreditation and re-mapping of area.

Accreditation Process

- Events that might trigger a re-mapping effort by FEMA would be:
  - No demonstrable effort or progress to re-certify
  - Landowner requests a map revision (because of error or dispute)
  - Flooding in the Columbia River Basin, or another part of the country similar to Portland

FEMA Design Criteria

- Freeboard – above base flood elevation
- All openings must have closure devices
- Embankment Protection – protect against erosion
- Embankment and Foundation Stability
- Settlement Analysis - freeboard maintained
- Interior Drainage

Certification Process

- Step 1 - Initial Engineering Review
  - What needs to be done to bring levee up to 100-year flood performance standard
  - Cost of necessary changes
  - Generally 1 year

- Step 2 - Securing funds and permits to do necessary work
  - Best scenario - 3-4 years
  - Intermediate scenario - 7-10 years

Certification Process

- Step 3 - Complete construction, on-the-ground changes
  - Best scenario - 2-4 years
  - Intermediate scenario - 3-5 years
- Step 4 - Final Engineer's certification - 1 year
- **Total Certification Timeline - 6-16 years**