



# LEVEE SAFETY CONNECTIONS

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- NCLS Regional Stakeholder Workshop, Montana – July 2011 (more details to come)

## TEST YOUR LEVEE IQ

**How many miles of levees are estimated to be within the United States?**

- 10,000 miles
- 50,000 miles
- 100,000 miles
- 500,000 miles

### True or False?

All levees in the United States are under the jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Look for answers to Test Your Levee IQ in the next issue of *Levee Safety Connections*.

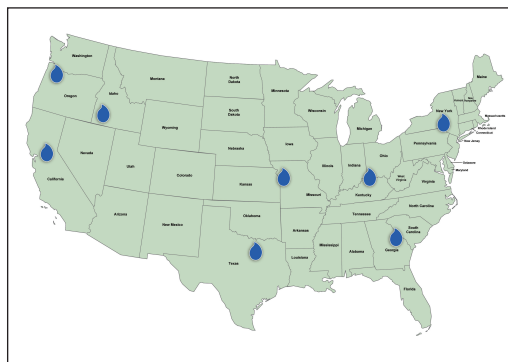
**LEVEE SAFETY CONNECTIONS**  
A Publication From The National Committee On Levee Safety

For more information or to provide an idea for an article, please e-mail [contact@leveesafety.org](mailto:contact@leveesafety.org).

**WELCOME** *This is the first edition of Levee Safety Connections, a quarterly newsletter with status updates on the recommendations for a proposed National Levee Safety Program, stakeholder feedback, and information about the state of levees in the nation. Please feel free to pass this on to interested colleagues. More in-depth information can be found on the NCLS website at [www.leveesafety.org](http://www.leveesafety.org).*

### Regional Workshops Solicit Feedback on NCLS Recommendations

The NCLS held eight one-day regional stakeholder workshops across the country in 2010, sharing information and soliciting feedback on recommendations from the 2009 Report to Congress. More than 450 individuals participated, learning more about the recommendations for a National Levee Safety Program and providing their feedback to the NCLS. Participants included state, regional, and local agencies and elected officials, levee owners and operators, planners, emergency managers, and those with interests in local and regional economic development, environmental and natural resources protection, and public health and safety. Workshops were held in Binghamton, NY; Kansas City, MO; Covington, KY; Dallas, TX; Sacramento, CA; Portland, OR; and Augusta, GA. The first workshop of 2011 was held on February 10 in Boise, ID.



Presentations from past workshops are available on the “Events” page of the NCLS website. Workshop summaries and a final report of what we heard will be available on the website in April.

### Coming Soon: Updated NCLS Website

A complete redesign of the NCLS website, [www.leveesafety.org](http://www.leveesafety.org), is under way. Be on the lookout for more information and improved usability.

### OPT IN — BE LEVEE AWARE

The NCLS has created an opt-in electronic mailing list to distribute *Levee Safety Connections* and information on the NCLS and its activities, as well as information on other levee-related activities. To sign up, follow the link on the “Contacts” page on the website.

### Getting the Word Out: Issue Papers on Recommendations

The NCLS has prepared 13 short, easy-to-read issue papers to communicate the need and recommendations for a National Levee Safety Program with a broader audience. These papers provide the rationale, context and interconnectivity of key recommendations and important principles related to the need for and development of a National Levee Safety Program. Visit the “Documents” page of the NCLS website to see existing issues papers. Feel free to share these broadly.

### NCLS Members on the Road

Members of the National Committee have recently presented the recommendations for a National Levee Safety Program at the following annual conferences and workshops:

- Upper Mississippi, Illinois & Missouri Rivers Association (Feb)
- 2011 River Restoration Northwest Annual Symposium (Jan)
- Floodplain Management Association (Nov)
- US Society on Dams Levee Workshop (Nov)
- Association of State Dam Safety Officials (Sept)

If your organization would like to hear from the NCLS, please contact Terry Zien at [contact@leveesafety.org](mailto:contact@leveesafety.org).

### International Levee Handbook—Technical Foundation for a National Levee Safety Program

An international consortium including United Kingdom/Ireland, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and the United States is working to develop an International Levee Handbook. The goal is to collect and organize international practices and knowledge with an eye towards developing more consistent yet flexible approaches and standards, decision tools, and ways to share best practices. NCLS members participating in the effort hope that the handbook will provide a foundation for the development of national levee safety standards, a hazard potential classification system and other technical aspects recommended as part of a National Levee Safety Program. For more information, please contact Kristina Gamst, International Levee Handbook project manager at [kristina.gamst@ciria.org](mailto:kristina.gamst@ciria.org).

### NCLS Testifies on Levee Safety

At the invitation of Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee Chairman Barbara Boxer (CA) and Ranking Member James Inhofe (OK), Steve Verigin, vice president, GEI Consultants and a member of NCLS, testified on behalf of the NCLS on levee issues that could be included in a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) bill. His testimony from the November 18th hearing can be found on the NCLS website. Because levee safety is not confined to a single committee's jurisdiction, members of the NCLS will continue to share information about their recommendations with EPW, the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, the House Financial Services Committee, the Senate Banking Committee, the Senate and House Appropriations Committees and others.

### FEDERAL AGENCY UPDATE

For a National Levee Safety Program to be successful, existing federal programs must be aligned toward the promotion of levee safety. This section provides descriptions of some of the federal activities currently addressing levee safety.

**Corps Developing Comprehensive Levee Safety Program Guidance.** The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) launched an effort in December to update and align policy and guidance for the USACE Levee Safety Program. The results will be a comprehensive "engineer circular" used by USACE in the future management of the levees within their portfolio. If you would like more information, please visit the USACE website at: [www.usace.army.mil/leveesafety](http://www.usace.army.mil/leveesafety) or send an email to [USACELeveeSafetyPolicyandProceduresTeam@usace.army.mil](mailto:USACELeveeSafetyPolicyandProceduresTeam@usace.army.mil).

**FEMA Considers Substantial NFIP Reform.** The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conducting a critical review of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). They are developing analytical "packages" for Congressional consideration, with the goal of addressing immediate concerns such as affordability and coverage as well as long-term relevance and viability. The NCLS will continue to share its views with FEMA on the portrayal of levees on flood insurance rate maps, requiring of insurance behind all levees and adjustments to the Community Rating System to encourage good levee safety behavior. Please see [www.fema.gov/business/nfip/nfip\\_reform.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip/nfip_reform.shtm) for more information.

### SPOTLIGHT ON LEVEE SAFETY

#### California FloodSAFE Initiative

California's FloodSAFE Initiative is working to improve public safety and flood management in California through a system-wide integrated approach. FloodSAFE's Flood Risk Notification Program aims to increase flood risk awareness by effectively communicating flood risk to individual property owners, the public, and local, state, and federal agencies. Elements of the program include: a website with an interactive map that a property owner can use to determine whether their property is at risk of flooding; an annual written notice of flood risk, which was first sent out to more than 275,000 property owners in September 2010; and other educational tools. For more information, see [www.water.ca.gov/myfloodrisk/](http://www.water.ca.gov/myfloodrisk/).