



FloodWise

WINTER 2014

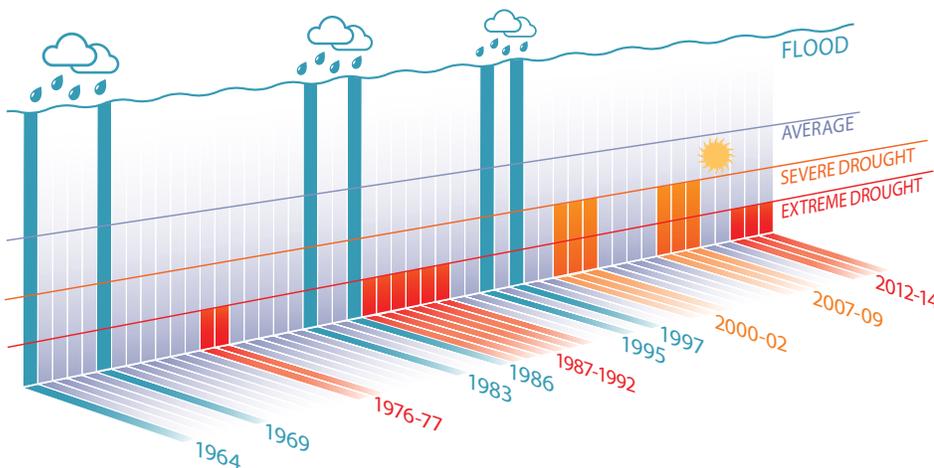
PROTECTING LIVES AND PROPERTY IN OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 1927

Preparing for the Next Big Flood

DURING THE DRIEST YEAR ON RECORD, IT'S EASY TO FORGET THAT WE LIVE IN AN AREA MANY CONSIDER SECOND ONLY TO NEW ORLEANS FOR DANGEROUS FLOODING RISK. The flood control system built in the last hundred years has protected the Sacramento Valley from being submerged under an inland sea that once routinely stretched 100 miles long by 30 miles wide during the rainy season.

To ensure our continued safety, we must also protect the man-made system from developing problems that put us at risk. At American River Flood Control District (ARFCD), it's our job to maintain 40 miles of levees along the American River and parts of Steelhead, Arcade, Dry and Magpie Creeks so that they're ready to perform when the inevitable next big flood comes.

Frequency of Multiyear Droughts & Flood Years



Though we haven't experienced a flood in the past decade, history shows how quickly that can change. We live in a flood-prone region with a carefully engineered system of reservoirs and levees that protect us from the devastating floods of Sacramento's past.

It's Our Job To:

- Ensure levee integrity
 - Perform inspections from land and water
 - Repair erosion
 - Plant native grasses to control erosion
 - Mow levees
 - Trim trees and shrubs
 - Control burrowing rodents
 - Work with neighbors to keep levees clear
- Maintain access roads, gates, and equipment
- Undergo yearly flood-fight training
- Stockpile flood-fight supplies
- Participate in special projects, such as completing slurry-wall construction
- Remove encroachments – We're also charged with enforcing a new law (SB-753) that requires removal of private structures and levee alterations (also called encroachments) that could weaken levees. Although the law gives us enforcement powers, our approach of working with levee neighbors has so far proven successful.

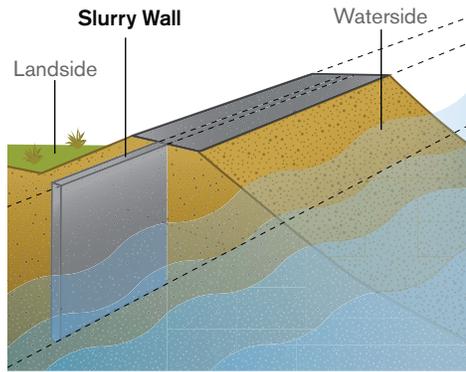
The tasks we perform – big and small – will make all the difference in how well our levees hold back the next big flood.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about our activities, please visit our website at www.arfcd.org.

What's a Slurry Wall?

You may have recently noticed construction crews working on the levee near the Howe Avenue bridge. They're closing gaps in a slurry wall that runs down the center of the American River levees. The foot-wide wall extends down as much as 80-feet deep to reinforce the levee from within.

This year, work has been taking place along the levees near Howe Avenue, H Street, Business 80, and Lathrop/Del Paso Blvd, with completion of all areas expected in 2015.



Slurry walls strengthen levees from within.



Safety Tips

WHILE OUR LEVEE SYSTEM OFFERS PUBLIC ACCESS FOR WALKING AND CYCLING, A LEVEE'S PRIMARY PURPOSE IS FLOOD PROTECTION, which requires that we constantly perform maintenance activities on steep slopes and narrow roadways. We ask that you help us by following a few simple courtesies that will also protect you from moving equipment parts that can be extremely dangerous:

- Stay back or signal the operator
- Never cross under the extended mower arm
- Never sneak by when a tractor or dump truck is backing up
- Don't listen through ear buds while walking or cycling on levee roads
- Watch your speed

REMEMBER, operators on noisy equipment are focused on their work and have limited visibility to pedestrians, cyclists, and pets. Help them get their work done by staying vigilant and giving them plenty of space to maneuver.

Crew Spotlight



ELVIN DIAZ was hired through a California Conservation Corps internship program in 2012. Since coming on board, Elvin has diligently worked at developing new skills, including vegetation trimming, chainsaw work, brush hauling, and line trimming.



KEEP PETS LEASHED AND WELL AWAY FROM EQUIPMENT.

What a Sound Levee Looks Like

Why Looks Matter

When you look at a levee, what you see is the skin. Problems that weaken a levee's integrity internally can be caused by surface changes, such as with paths and encroachments that can weaken the levee. Surface blemishes can also provide clues to internal issues, as in the case of rodent holes, bulges, cracks, etc. Maintaining a clear, mowed-grass exterior both prevents problems from developing and allows maintenance crews to spot surface indicators of deeper problems.

What You Can Do

Levee repairs are often difficult and costly for taxpayers. Being a good neighbor to your levee helps keep maintenance costs down, while also helping us ensure the levee remains structurally sound and able to keep your home and neighborhood protected against floodwaters.

Characteristics of a Sound Levee

A structurally sound levee is unadorned and simple. In fact, the cleaner it looks, the more likely it is to withstand floodwaters.

Characteristics of a sound levee include:

- **Proper geometry** – The levee must be high enough, the crown must be 20' across, and the sides must slope at specific angles.
- **Well-maintained** – Roads and gates are in good order, a sod cover of native grasses is planted and mowed, trees and other vegetation are trimmed.
- **Clear easements** – The 10' easement on the land side is clear and provides full visibility in both directions, with easy access for maintenance crews.

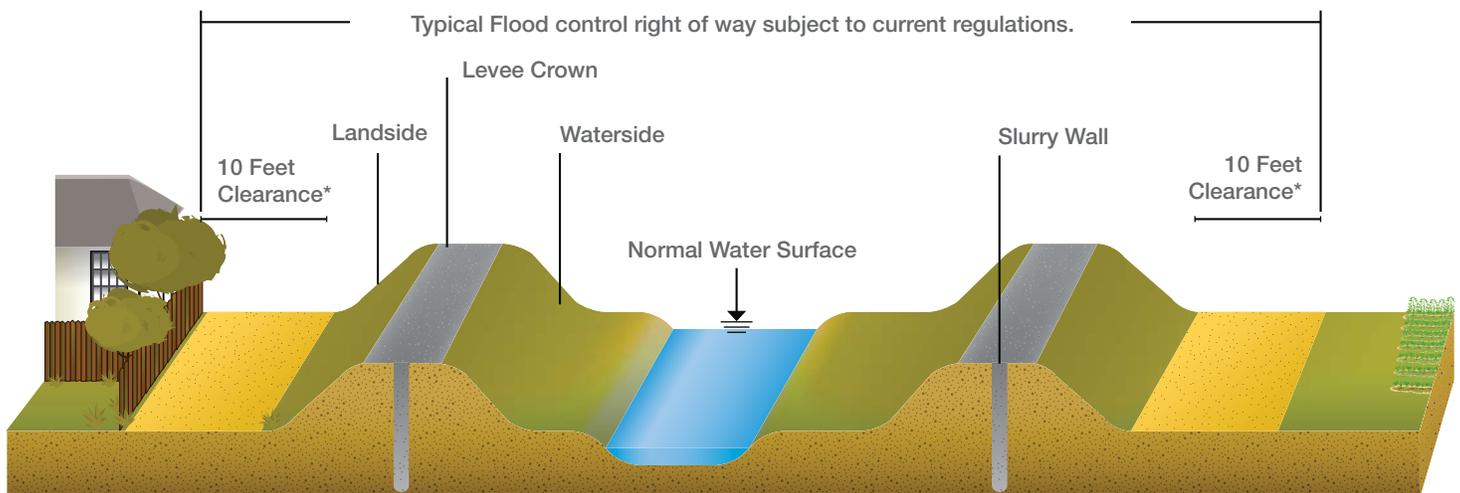
Characteristics of a Levee at Risk

A levee with structural issues may be more visually interesting because of things you see that shouldn't be there, such as:

- **Man-made additions**, such as unauthorized access paths, fences, walls, stairs, and other structures.
- **Squirrels moving in and out of holes that lead to labyrinth tunnels.**
- **Landscaping** plants and trees.

Signs of erosion, boils, seepage, slips, soughs, bulges, cracks, runoff channels, etc. are indications of real problems, many of which result from added structures, rodent holes, and landscaping.

The Picture Perfect Levee



**Easements vary by location and the right-of-way necessary may be greater than the typical clearance depicted here. Check all local land use records to ensure compliance, or review the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) at www.cvfpb.ca.gov for the latest standards. Copyright 2012 CVFPB. Modified and reproduced with permission.*

Outstanding Neighbor

River Bridge Apartments

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO RIVER BRIDGE APARTMENTS

for allowing us to remove an unpermitted cinder block dumpster enclosure situated at the landside levee toe. The structure blocked access for flood operations and maintenance and obstructed visibility during inspections and flood patrolling. The owner consented to demolishing the structure so we could restore the levee. During discussions, we learned of the problems created by pedestrian traffic accessing the levee and are researching how we can support River Bridge Apartments by better accommodating the high-volume traffic.



The street sign at Fair Oaks Blvd. and Howe Avenue is shown under several feet of water during the 1950 flood, which inundated the land Campus Commons now occupies.

Photo Courtesy of the Center for Sacramento History, Eugene Hepting Collection, 1985/024/1785.



Your American River Flood Control District Crew

From (L-R): David Diaz; Elvin Diaz; Michelle Wilder, Office Manager; Tim Kerr, General Manager; Sean O'Connor; Richard Marck, Superintendent; Ron Sundberg; Ross Kawamura; Roger Unruh; Eric Maculak.



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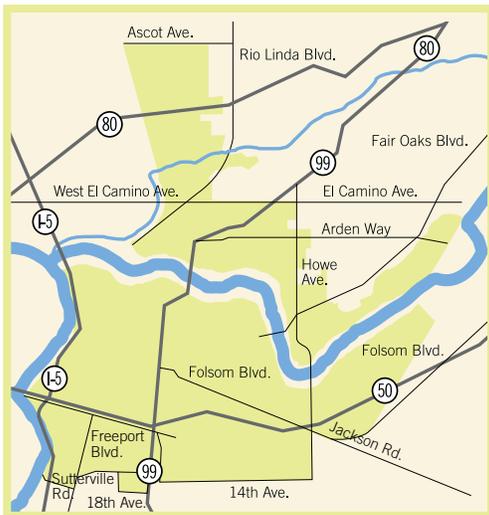
OFFICE MANAGER

Michelle M. Wilder

BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING

Open to the public.
 Second Friday of every month
 at 11:00 a.m.

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ARFCD BOUNDARY

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