

**LOWER PLATTE SOUTH
NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT**



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NRD Developing Levee Plan

LINCOLN (NE) March 16, 2015 – The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NRD) is developing a plan to ensure Lincoln’s Salt Creek flood control levees remain in safe and reliable condition. The Salt Creek Flood Control Project includes 13 miles of levees in Lincoln and ten upstream dams that have reduced the risk of flooding for the past 50 years. The project was built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) in the 1960s and the NRD is now responsible for maintaining the levees under federal regulation. The Corps estimates the levee system has prevented \$78 million in damage to Lincoln homes and businesses and that the ten upstream Corps dams have prevented another \$78 million in damages.

The Corps conducted a comprehensive inspection of the entire Salt Creek levee system in 2013 and issued results last April. NRD General Manager Glenn Johnson said, “The inspection identified many aspects of the system that need to be addressed after 50 years. The listed short and long term maintenance needs focus on vegetated cover, slope and channel stability, drainage structures, encroachments on the levees, flood preparedness and more.” In response, the NRD Board will consider hiring an engineering firm when it meets on March 18th. The firm would work with the NRD to develop a System Wide Improvement Framework Plan (SWIF). The SWIF is to include assessments of the risk of each needed levee upgrade, the prioritizing of those projects and the development of designs and cost estimates. In addition to detailing maintenance needs, the City of Lincoln and Lincoln-Lancaster County Emergency Management have agreed to help with updating the Emergency Action Plan, and developing an Interim Risk Reduction Measures Plan and a Communication Plan, which are required in the SWIF. The Corps has set December, 2016 as a deadline for the NRD to complete the SWIF.

Johnson said the SWIF and the resulting maintenance construction will not increase or decrease the current level of flood protection or move any land in or out of the existing floodplain. “These are routine operation, maintenance and replacement needs over the next decade that will result in a continued safe and reliable levee system,” Johnson said.

Proactively, the NRD replaced eight drainage pipes through the levee last year. “Those were all original pipes and we had already planned to replace them, so the NRD Board decided not to wait for the inspection results,” Johnson said. The estimated cost of completing the needed improvements to the levee system will be determined in the completed SWIF plan.