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News Release

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Corps of Engineers, Springettsbury Township partner to enforce off-road vehicle ban at Codorus Creek levees

Baltimore – To stop damage caused by off-road vehicles to the levee embankments along Codorus Creek, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, has contracted with the Springettsbury Township Police Department for increased law enforcement presence. The additional policing has already begun.

“The integrity of the levees is sound,” said Don Snyder of the Corps’ Operations Division in Baltimore, “but we are concerned about the effects of off-road vehicle use on the levees. There is a very real potential that, if allowed to continue, they will erode the levee system’s ability to protect the downstream communities from flooding.”

According to Corps officials, off-road vehicles cut trails onto the grass-covered levees. The trails and ruts contribute to serious erosion problems. They also make mowing the levee embankments very difficult. In the past there have been problems that went unnoticed until they became pronounced, because they were obscured by high grass. Dam operators routinely inspect for rodent burrows, erosion and other problems that could undermine the levees’ flood control effectiveness.

“It is almost impossible to mow anymore,” said Steve Young, the Corps’ assistant dam operator at Indian Rock. “If we can’t mow, we can’t see what is underneath.” According to Young, the problem with dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles, commonly called ATVs, has existed as long as he has been there, since 1981, and has been getting progressively worse. It has persisted despite the presence of highly visible no-trespassing signs and the best efforts of the dam operators to dissuade off-road vehicle operators.

“It is unfortunate that we need to go to these lengths,” Young said. “We hope that we can get the cooperation of the off-road vehicle users without them being fined, but the flood control integrity of the levees must be maintained.”

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