



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore District

PUBLIC NOTICE

Upper Susquehanna River Basin, New York Comprehensive Flood Damage Reduction Feasibility Study

ALL INTERESTED PARTIES: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) conducted a feasibility study under a resolution of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, adopted September 24, 2008, for the Upper Susquehanna River Basin, New York. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) was the non-federal sponsor and partner for this study. The study was initiated on July 8, 2016. Based on findings from economic, engineering, and environmental analyses, no viable flood risk management (FRM) alternatives in the federal interest were identified at this time under the aforementioned authority. USACE and local communities identified various smaller-scale projects that may be viable under other USACE authorities, or through the authorities and programs of other state and federal agencies. Therefore, USACE, Baltimore District, has terminated the Upper Susquehanna River Basin, New York, Comprehensive Flood Damage Reduction Feasibility Study (USRB Study). The final Study Completion Report will be posted on the Baltimore District website after the date of this notice at https://www.nab.usace.army.mil/USRB_Feasibility_Study/.

The USRB Study investigated the feasibility of structural and non-structural FRM measures to manage flooding in areas with high relative flood risk throughout the 4,520 square-mile watershed. The study activities were aimed at addressing flood risk to populations, infrastructure, and property with the end goal of identifying one or more areas for the implementation of a potential USACE FRM project. USACE conducted preliminary analyses of FRM alternatives for 17 areas with high relative flood risk identified during a watershed-level screening. USACE completed extensive modeling of the USRB using the Hydrologic Engineering Center's River Analysis System (HEC-RAS) to support the evaluation of problems and alternative plans to address flood risk. Following a meeting with local stakeholders in March 2018 and a field investigation by USACE, USACE developed potential viable alternatives for four high relative flood risk areas (Binghamton, Endicott-Johnson City-Vestal, Oneonta, and Owego). Additionally, USACE completed preliminary analyses of non-structural FRM measures for all 17 areas.

The economic evaluation resulted in no benefit-to-cost ratios greater than 1.0, the criterion that must be met in a USACE feasibility study, for the primary structural alternatives examined including raising of the existing Binghamton FRM project and the Endicott-Johnson City-Vestal FRM project. This means the cost to construct and maintain the project(s) outweighed the national economic development benefits the project(s) would provide if implemented.

USACE has concluded that the criteria for a FRM project has not been met and construction of a federal FRM project is not recommended under this study authority at this time. However, USACE has compiled a list of recommendations for potential work through other authorities and programs, such as technical assistance via USACE Floodplain Management Services or Planning Assistance to States, as well as by other federal or non-federal stakeholders. The USRB HEC-RAS model and floodplain mapping completed in the study are also available to enhance future FRM efforts in the watershed. (Past USACE technical assistance has supported FRM in the watershed and included the Flood Risk Management Analysis for the Village of Sidney). In addition, six potential local projects and one general regional need were identified in the USRB Study for potential further action as follows:



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1. Village of Owego - further analyze the feasibility of proposed levee, floodwall, and berm raising.
2. City of Oneonta - address the need for a closure at Main Street and an automatic check valves along Interstate 88 to prevent backflow issues.
3. Village of Endicott – address issues with a drainage structure that is part of a federal FRM project.
4. Village/Town of Bainbridge – address stream bank erosion issues at Clinton Park along the Susquehanna River and shoaling at the confluence of Yaleville Creek.
5. Village of Afton – assist with culvert evaluation and design.
6. Village of Greene – address stream stabilization and issues related to shoaling downstream of the existing federal FRM project, along Birdsall Creek.
7. Perform additional analysis and evaluation of non-structural measures in relative high flood risk areas preliminarily identified as having significant potential for implementation: Binghamton, Conklin, Endicott, Greene, Johnson City, Kirkwood, Norwich, Owego, Union, and Vestal. Non-structural measures can be evaluated under USACE’s technical service programs and have the potential to be implemented through existing programs including the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and USACE’s Continuing Authorities Program.

More information on technical assistance programs can be found at <https://www.nab.usace.army.mil/technical-services/>. If community officials are interested in exploring solutions through other USACE programs, please contact the undersigned at 410-962-6139 or daniel.m.bierly@usace.army.mil.

If the USB Study receives no additional funding for a period of five years, the Secretary of the Army will include it on the list of incomplete studies provided to Congress in accordance with Section 710 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986. Each study in the list will no longer be authorized if it is not funded within 90 days after the list is provided to Congress.

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