Reducing flood risk in the Metro East is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District's top priority. In recent months, some leaders in the Metro East community have expressed frustration with the processes inherent in rehabilitating the Metro East levees and protecting public interest.

Permission for the first phase of construction to begin was delivered to our partners in the Metro East Sanitary District May 1, ahead of schedule. As the Commander and District Engineer, I want to express my commitment to the Metro East, and the Corps' commitment to helping the Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District (FPD) Council achieve their goals of reducing flood risk quickly and establishing conditions that promote economic development in the Metro East.

I recognize and support the FPD's goal of getting FEMA Accreditation for the Metro East Levees by 2015. The delivery of the first 408 permission ahead of the FPD's schedule is a result of tremendous efforts by our engineers and regulators to meet the needs of our partners. We understand their sense of urgency, and continue to make every effort within our authority to ensure their construction schedule can be met.

As we work with the FPD Council and their engineering firm, the safety of the people living and working behind the levees must remain our top priority. The Corps of Engineers has a long term commitment to the lives, economy and communities behind the levees, and a responsibility to make sure any work on the levees will meet that commitment.

To date, the Corps of Engineers has met the FPD's schedule requirements and in the future we will meet our obligations for both safety and timeliness. This is Corps of Engineers' commitment to the Metro East.

For more than 80 years, the Corps of Engineers has worked in partnership with the city...
Pump station construction begins on Chain of Rocks levee

By Mary Markos
St. Louis District Public Affairs

Seven grueling hours in the sun, 32 trucks of material, and 265-cubic yards of concrete marked the start of construction on the Chain of Rocks Pump Station April 18 along the Chain of Rocks Levee near Granite City, Ill.

The pump station is one feature of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District’s project to correct design deficiencies and provide the Chain of Rocks levee with the authorized level of protection of 54-feet on the St. Louis gage.

Located in Madison County, the federally owned and operated levee is one segment of the Metro East Sanitary District Levee System.

The construction of the pump station marks another milestone in the completion of the Corps’ project to reduce risk to those living and working in the Metro East.

The project includes the construction of North and South seepage berms, as well as 37 relief wells.

Project features became necessary after the 1993 flood when sand boils developed along large portions of the levee. Sand boils form when water traveling under the levee carries with it sediments necessary for the longevity and stability of the levee.

This project highlights the Corps’ commitment to reduce risk to the more than 250,000 residents and workers, and $4.5 billion in property assets behind the Metro East Sanitary District Levee System.

In total, the Corps has allocated more than $45.8M in construction to the Chain of Rocks Levee.

The foundation is poured for a pump station on the Chain of Rocks levee April 18. The pump station is part of the federal project to restore the Metro East levees to their original authorized level of protection.

From the District Commander
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zens of the Metro East to manage flood risks. Our shared efforts include constructing the levee systems, working in tandem during flood events, repairing system damages from those floods, and rehabilitating the systems as they showed signs of age and wear.

In total, more than $120 million has been allocated toward projects rehabilitating the levees in the Metro East in recent years.

I would like to personally affirm that we are working through our required permitting and review processes in advance of the FPD’s final design submission to help our partners meet their aggressive construction schedule. We are also working with the FPD’s designers to maximize how their modifications can be integrated into the larger federal effort to restore the levees. This integration will save time and reduce cost to the taxpayer as we continue the federal projects toward the full, Congressionally-authorized level of protection – greater than the level required for FEMA Accreditation.

By Federal law, the Corps of Engineers must ensure that levee system alterations will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work. Our review processes ensure the safety of residents behind the levees.

The Corps of Engineers and our Metro East partners have been vigilant in reducing flood risks to the Metro East, and that vigilance has paid great dividends by keeping the people of the Metro East safe through all of the flood events of the last 50 years, including the Great Flood of 1993. We continue to share the responsibility and common goal to reduce flood risk, and we feel they remain strong partners today.

The St. Louis District is committed to and will continue working closely as partners to the levee districts, FPD Council and communities in rehabilitating the Metro East Levee System and improving the quality of life of those we serve. We understand their construction schedule, and will continue to meet our commitments in support of that schedule. Through all we do as engineers, regulators and levee owners, the safety of the Metro East remains our first concern.

Col. Chris Hall
St. Louis District Commander

To receive the Metro East Update monthly newsletter electronically, or for more information, e-mail St. Louis District Public Affairs at TeamSTL-PAO@usace.army.mil.