

88-22



March 1, 1988

File: 1-4-22

Mel Davis, City Manager  
City of Sebastopol  
7120 Bodega Avenue  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

LAGUNA DE SANTA ROSA FLOOD ELEVATION

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (CORPS), San Francisco Office, Engineering Section is nearing completion of a floodplain study to remap areas of flooding in certain portions of Sonoma County. Their work is being done for the Flood Insurance Program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The remapping includes the Laguna de Santa Rosa as it is hydraulically connected to the Russian River and can be a critical element in reducing flood elevations along the Russian River downstream of Mirabel. The flood reducing effect of storage of Russian River water varies depending on a host of meteorological and hydraulic factors unique to each individual storm. However, in most Russian River flood events, the Laguna makes a significant contribution to lower flood elevations along the lower Russian River.

→ At a recent meeting with the CORPS and FEMA, the need to preserve the storage capacity of the Laguna was discussed in relation to how the floodplain of the Laguna was to be designated. It was our recommendation that the Laguna be designated as a "Floodway" on the revised maps and be subject to floodway criteria in the Flood Insurance Program Regulations. In a floodway, the regulations allow no fill or construction which will cause a rise in flood elevation. This does not preclude all construction in the Laguna. For instance, fill could be offset by excavation of an equivalent volume from the floodplain, thus preserving the flood storage capacity of the Laguna and avoiding any increase of flood elevation.

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FEMA regulations specify that when maps are revised in a local agency, such as Sonoma County, the FIRM maps of adjacent local agencies will also be revised. The FEMA representative, Ray Lenaburg, suggested that I write to you to advise you that FEMA will be issuing new flood insurance program maps which will include the portion of Sebastopol that falls within the Laguna de Santa Rosa floodplain to be designated "Floodway". In the event you want to discuss this with FEMA, Ray's phone number is (415) 923-7181. The Director of the San Francisco office of FEMA is Jack Eldridge. His phone number is (415) 923-7179.

  
W.R. STILLMAN  
Chief Engineer

WRS/ug

copies: Ray Lenaburg, FEMA  
Bill Brick, CORPS

corres:laguna.mel



**SONOMA COUNTY  
WATER AGENCY**

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March 3, 1988

FILE: 1-4-22


Mel Davis, City Manager  
City of Sebastopol  
7120 Bodega Avenue  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

SUBJECT: LAGUNA DE SANTA ROSA FLOOD ELEVATION

In a recent letter to you, I failed to discuss the revised 100-year flood elevation for the Laguna which will appear on the flood insurance program maps being drawn by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (CORPS) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The 100-year flood elevation of the Laguna on the revised maps will be 75 Mean Sea Level (MSL). The 100-year flood elevation shown on the current Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) is 76 MSL. The reduction takes into account the flood control benefits of Warm Springs Dam. However, the reduction from the dam was partially off-set by the unusual size of the 1986 flood which caused a re-evaluation of Russian River Basin hydrology. The result of re-evaluation was an increase in the size of the estimated 100-year flood over that which was used in the original flood plain mapping.

Until the revised flood insurance program maps are issued by FEMA and adopted by the county, the official 100-year flood elevation for the Laguna de Santa Rosa is 76 MSL.



W. R. STILLMAN, P.E.  
Chief Engineer

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