Executive Order 13690
Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS)

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Overview

• President Obama signed the new Executive Order 13690 on January 30, 2015. Published in the Federal Register on February 4, 2015.

• Executive Order 13690 modifies floodplain management guidelines developed by Federal agencies as a result of Executive Order 11988 signed on May 24, 1977.

• This new Standard is intended to increase safety, reduce flood losses, and preserve natural floodplain functions.
FFRMS
Noble intent but as written many concerns have arisen.

For instance...
FFRMS
Establishes 3 Options for Building/Rebuilding in Floodplains

- **Climate-Informed Science Approach** – Use the best-available actionable hydrologic and hydraulic data and methods that use current and future changes in flooding based on climate science.

- **Freeboard Value Approach** – Use a freeboard above the 100-year flood of +2 ft for non-critical structures and +3 for critical structures such as hospital and evacuation centers.

- **500-Year Elevation Approach** – Use the 500-year flood elevation as the build height.
FFRMS

Concern

• Which of the 3 options apply?

• Does this vary across Federal agencies?
ONE OF THE GREAT MISTAKES IS TO JUDGE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS BY THEIR INTENTIONS RATHER THAN THEIR RESULTS.

Milton Friedman, Author / Economist
Capitalism and Freedom, 1962
FFRMS

Other Concerns

• Floodplain
• Critical Action
• Facility
• Etc.
Applying the Standard

- Federal agencies will continue to implement Executive Order 11988, but replace the 100-year base flood elevation with the elevation component and corresponding horizontal floodplain of the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard for projects that use Federal funding for new construction, substantial improvement, or to address substantial damage to a structure or facility.
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SUMMARY

Beware of Unintended Consequences
The Cuyahoga River - 1969
The Santa Ana River
Thank You!