

# ***RECLAMATION DISTRICT No. 537***

---

*Post Office Box 655, Woodland, CA 95776*

March 1, 2022

Dear Landowner,

**Subject: Important Levee Encroachment Meeting on March 21, 2022**

As the Local Maintaining Agency responsible for the stewardship of the levees in your area, Reclamation District No. 537 (RD 537) is writing to inform you of a meeting to discuss the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) inspection results for the Sacramento River and Yolo Bypass levees. Part of the meeting will include identifying areas along the Sacramento River and the Yolo Bypass levees where there are encroachments by private landowners. All landowners within RD 537 and Reclamation District No. 1600 (RD1600) are invited to attend the meeting so all can be informed about the inspection results.

USACE performs periodic inspections of levees to ensure that levees are maintained and provide proper flood protection to the communities they protect. The results of the last Periodic Inspection Report in 2013 identified a number of items rated "Unacceptable" along the levee and deemed the levee system "inactive" for assistance through the program commonly referred to USACE PL 84-99.

Being inactive means that in the event of a flood emergency, instead of receiving federal assistance, flood damage to the levee must be paid for by the LMA and the state. For this reason, the state and the reclamation districts must maintain active status in the PL 84-99 program.

To regain active status RD 1600, RD 537 and the California Department of Water Resources applied to regain eligibility by submitting a Letter of Intent to the Central Valley Flood Protection Board and the USACE. In the letter, RD537 and RD1600 stated that they plan to correct or work with the property owners to correct all Unacceptable items. Active status was granted in 2020 with the caveat that a System-wide Improvement Framework (an in-depth plan for correcting Unacceptable items), had to be developed and followed. If RD537 and RD1600 can't show progress in correcting Unacceptable items, this status will be revoked.

The Unacceptable items that effect eligibility within RD 537 include: erosion, slope stability, animal control, and encroachments. RD 537 will address erosion, slope stability, animal control and District-owned encroachments. Encroachments not owned by RD 537 will need to be addressed by the property owner. Encroachments are structures on the levee or within the levee right-of-way. Types of encroachments include pipes, poles, retaining walls, fences, sheds, stairs, debris, and ditches, but there are many other categories of encroachments.

RD 537 is committed to bringing the levees back into compliance for the important reasons described above and will be reaching out to property owners to notify them regarding the Unacceptable items on their property. If these items are not corrected, the Central Valley Flood Protection Board has the authority to pursue enforcement actions and the right to recover their costs and seek financial penalties from the property owner. Additionally, if the RD537 and RD1600 don't show progress and retain active status, the state will consider taking over the LMAs area and charge the landowner for operation and maintenance of the levee, typically charging considerably more than an LMA.

# **RECLAMATION DISTRICT No. 537**

*Post Office Box 655, Woodland, CA 95776*

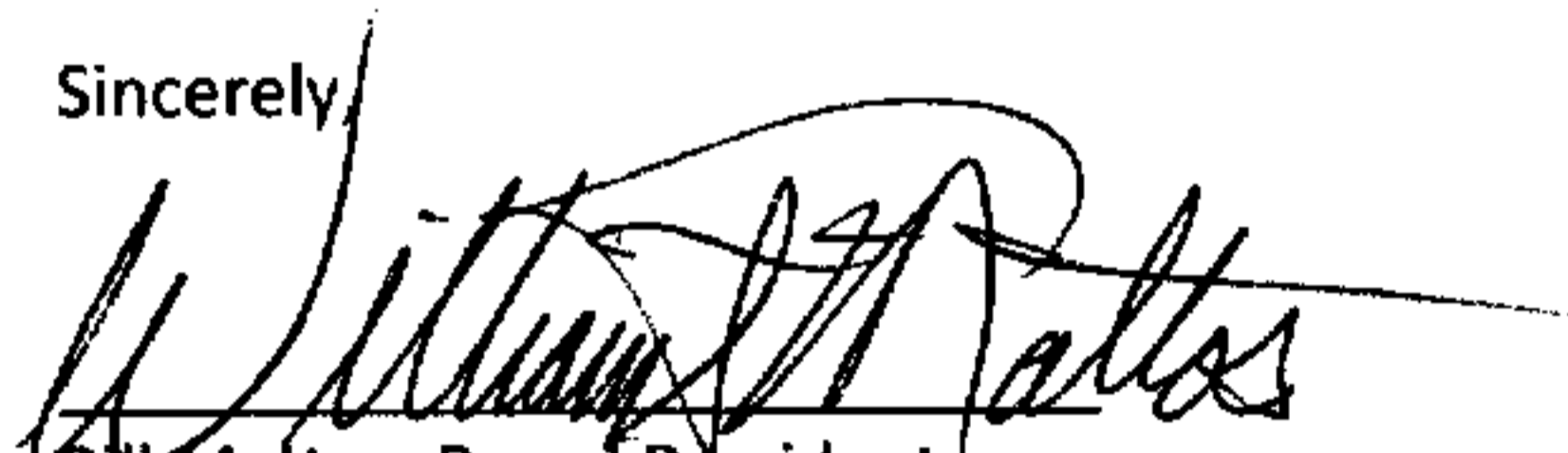
As part of our outreach, we will be hosting a public meeting to discuss the levee inspections and provide more detail on permitting, maintaining and removal requirements for encroachments as well as the general costs to come into compliance.

**The meeting will take place March 21, 2022, 5:30 P.M., Elkhorn Fire Protection District located at 19857 Old River Road.**

Questions or comments can be directed to Tina Anderson, MBK Engineers, 916.943.5222 or Kyle Lang, District Manager, 916.716.3703.

We look forward to working together to accomplish these important goals.

Sincerely,



Bill Mattos, Board President