

PENNSYLVANIA SENATE
SUB-COMMITTEE HEARING
ON FLOOD MITIGATION

Prepared By:
Eugene J. Dziak, Coordinator
Wyoming County Emergency Management

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I would like to thank the Pennsylvania Senate sub-committee for the opportunity to appear before you today and testify on behalf of Wyoming County on the need for flood mitigation. My name is Eugene J. Dziak and I am presently serving as the Emergency Management Coordinator for Wyoming County. As you are well aware Wyoming County was subjected to the wrath of Mother Nature three times from the end of August to the end of September. We felt the impacts of Hurricane Irene, Tropical Depression Lee and a rain event that dumped upward to 8 inches of precipitation on the mountainous terrain of our county and flooded rivers, streams, homes, businesses and did extensive property damage.

Since 2006 Wyoming County has been significantly impacted by small stream and river flooding. Wyoming County encompasses 405 square miles, with 809 linear miles of creeks and streams that includes the Susquehanna River basin.

Wyoming County's creeks and streams have been redirecting themselves due to gravel bar deposits and tree and root balls that significantly re-direct the route of the streams. Since this situation has occurred, Wyoming County has been fortunate enough to report zero deaths from these events. However, as a county we have spent millions of dollar to recreate infrastructure throughout the area. Impact on homes and property has been well into the millions of dollar range.

Wyoming County is presently looking to the Army Corp of Engineers, NRCS and FEMA's Hazard Mitigation program to repair creeks and streams and help alleviate the problems they have created.

Extensive work needs to be initiated to remove 6 to 10 foot gravel bars that have been created and the streams need to be re-routed back to their original travels in order to alleviate the problem.

DEP has issued many emergency permits to remove some of this debris to protect homes and businesses. However, if the streams are not corrected these problems will re-occur in future storms.

We would appreciate any type of direction and help that this Senate sub-committee could provide.

Thank you for taking the time to hear our testimony today.