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Sent: Tuesday, September 13, 2005 8:40 PM
Subject: RE: Emailing: 13tue1

Ann, you send periodic "zingers" that for some reason drive me to respond. I probably shouldn't. But I am concerned for the environment. And I am particularly concerned about how you "connect the dots" on discrete pieces of information, taken out of context.

FEMA has, legitimately, been concerned about development in floodplains, because they end up having to provide emergency services when that development is flooded. And the federal government does underwrite flood insurance, which may become very costly to the in the aftermath of floods.

After the floods in the midwest in the early 1990s, Carol Browner (EPA Administrator) and I think Jimmy Lee Whit, approached the Corps to add floodplain restrictions to its regulatory program. I remember there was a LOT of discussion. The Corps did include floodplain development restrictions in its nationwide permits. They required engineer certification that such development would not change existing storage or flows, as I recall.

We in Jacksonville did try to do this. But we found that about 1/3d of Florida didn't have up to date flood maps, or ANY flood maps, as I recall. And those that were available, were not very current.

We then got a letter from FEMA asking that we meet with them to discuss using our regulatory program to discourage floodplain development. We responded by telling them we were forwarding their comments to our HQs, from which the proposed NWP's came.

I also called FEMA's regional office, to see if we could discuss the agencies concerns. In looking back through my Staff Notes (important issues we wanted to bring to the District Engineer's attention) I find an item that indicates that on 4 April 02, we had a conference call with Mr. Straw, regional environmental officer for FEMA in Atlanta, relative to the Corps regulatory program in federal region IV. FEMA wanted to enter into an interagency agreement with our Division on how we could best interact with FEMA. Mr. Straw indicated he was trying to arrange the meeting fairly soon, but indicated it might have to wait until after the current hurricane season.

To the best of my recollection, we never heard from FEMA again, from a programmatic level.

Now, those are the FACTS as best I can recollect them. I feel very comfortable that we in the Jacksonville District Regulatory Program, tried to work with FEMA.

I hope this helps. But, I suspect that just like every other thing you lash onto in this environmental protection area, your mind is made up, despite the facts. That is your right in a free society. And thank goodness for that. BUT, despite our common goals, I will NEVER feel guilty for my record!!!