

# San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District



## GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTING FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

State Of California Department of Water Resources  
Grant Agreement No. 4600004505  
December 30, 2009



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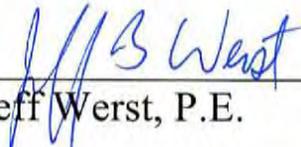
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### CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS:

Nola Engelskirger, P.E.  
Glen Priddy  
Paavo Ogren

Staff Engineer, Utilities Division  
Deputy Public Works Director  
Public Works Director

### PREPARED BY:

  
Jeff Werst, P.E.



Design Division Manager

  
Dean Benedix, P.E.



Utilities Division Manager

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# **SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTING FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS**

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**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTING  
FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS**

**Grant Agreement No. 4600004505**

## **I. Executive Summary**

The San Luis Obispo Flood Control and Water Conservation District (SLOFC&WCD or “District”) is a resource to help individuals and communities in San Luis Obispo County identify and address flooding problems. The District has historically not provided direct funding of community specific mitigation improvements. The District uses its general funding to identify flooding problems, recommend solutions, and help local areas implement recommended solutions. The District has identified a need to develop a model on how to approach these important water resource issues, including steps on how to integrate solutions for multiple benefits and community acceptance. The primary focus of this Guide to Implementing Flood Control Projects (“Guide”) is to identify several of the most significant constraints affecting the ability to implement flood control projects and to propose methods and strategies to address the challenges. As with most problems and especially with flooding, stakeholder involvement is essential. Therefore, the target audience for this report is the stakeholders themselves, those individual citizens and communities affected by flooding problems. The intent of the plan is to provide guidance in the process of implementing such methods and strategies to address these problems.

Critical tasks performed in preparing this Guide included:

- 1 Describe the process for implementing flood control projects
- 2 Identify and summarize the major constraints affecting project implementation
- 3 Summarize the significant flooding issues and proposed solutions for unincorporated communities in the County
- 4 Identify the characteristics that would describe a community’s readiness to implement flood control projects
- 5 Prepare a community “Report Card” that summarizes each community’s readiness to implement such projects
- 6 Use the “Report Card” to determine appropriate project strategies and evaluate if existing project strategies need to be revised.
- 7 Conduct stakeholder meetings to share project strategies and obtain stakeholder buy-in of proposed strategies.
- 8 Determine appropriate ways to implement project strategy
- 9 Prepare a final report summarizing the plan and recommendations

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## **II. Background**

### **a. Authority for Plan**

San Luis Obispo County is located within the area generally known as the Central Coast. It includes all of the unincorporated areas, specifically the communities of Cambria, Cayucos, Los Osos, Nipomo, Oceano, San Miguel, Santa Margarita, and Templeton. Flood control issues and concerns vary throughout the County of San Luis Obispo, though many of the constraints and challenges have common threads.

The San Luis Obispo Flood Control and Water Conservation District (SLOFC&WCD or "District") is a resource to help individuals and communities in San Luis Obispo County identify and address flooding problems. The District was established in 1945 with the purpose "to provide for control, disposition and distribution of the flood and storm waters of the district and of streams flowing into the district..." In 1968, Resolution No. 68-223 was adopted and defined the policy role of the District relating to the costs of planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance of drainage and flood control facilities. In accordance with resolution 68-223, the District cannot be responsible for direct funding of community specific mitigation improvements. The District uses its general funding to identify flooding problems, recommend solutions, and help local areas implement recommended solutions. The District has identified a need to develop a model on how to approach these important water resource issues, including steps on how to integrate solutions for multiple benefits and community acceptance.

### **b. Goal of Plan**

Flood control issues and concerns vary throughout the County of San Luis Obispo, though many of the constraints and challenges have common threads. Whether the specific flood control challenge relates to levees, such as they do on a grander scale in other regions of the State, or whether they result from antiquated subdivisions that predate current planning and development standards, the District has identified a need to develop a model on how to approach these important water resource issues, including steps on how to integrate solutions for multiple benefits and community acceptance. The ability to fund flood control projects and maintenance costs significantly declined with the passage of Proposition 218 by State voters. Thus, solicitation of stakeholder involvement in this process (especially benefiting property owners who will be responsible to pay for the improvements) is a key element of the work effort, and therefore it is intended that the primary audience for the Plan will be the stakeholders, rather than technical professionals or government officials.

The primary focus of this Guide to Implementing Flood Control Projects ("Guide") is to identify the most significant constraints and to propose methods and strategies to address the challenges. As with most problems and especially with

flooding, stakeholder involvement is essential. Therefore, the target audience for this report is the stakeholders themselves, those individual citizens and communities affected by flooding problems. The intent of the report is to provide guidance in the process of implementing such methods and strategies to address these problems. In the context of this report, progress towards the goal of resolving existing flooding problems can be expected to follow a process generally summarized as follows:

## **Preparation + Opportunity + Execution = Progress**

### Preparation

Many elements are needed in order to both identify and to be adequately prepared to take advantage of opportunities for resolving flood control problems. Preparation includes gaining a detailed knowledge of existing flooding conditions, policy, funding and permitting constraints, as well as access and right-of-way issues. Being adequately prepared requires the ability to balance the need for a project with consideration of funding and responsibility for short and long term maintenance. Becoming prepared usually requires the building of community support and cooperation for a project, including willingness on the part of the citizens to agree to new assessments or increased taxes to fund some or all of the construction and maintenance required. It is understood that some communities may currently be better prepared than others and will therefore be better positioned to take advantage of opportunities as they become available. Key criteria associated with a community's preparedness will be further developed in later sections of this report, as well as estimates of the current status of "preparedness" for various unincorporated communities in the county.

### Opportunity

Opportunities to develop flood control projects can come from a variety of sources. Recent media coverage of issues and events such as the collapse of the I-35W Bridge over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, the vulnerability of California's water supply, and the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina have focused the public's attention to the current condition of our national, state and local infrastructure, including flood control facilities. In California, this increased attention has resulted in both political will and support by the voting public to provide funding for infrastructure improvement. When approved, such funding can often come in the form of subsidized loan or grant programs, which typically require some amount of local match. In addition, regulatory agencies and non-profit conservation organizations often have access to grant programs for which flood control projects or portions of such projects can be competitive. In most instances, besides the local match requirement, such grant or loan programs require that a project have strong community support and a reasonable path for implementation in order for the project to be competitive with all of the other projects vying for the limited resources. In addition to public sector funding, proposed improvements associated with private development projects can often address existing flooding problems, provided there is a nexus for such

improvements. Private development can also be a potential resource for constructing or funding flood control projects through participation in the formation of assessment districts with neighboring properties, reimbursement agreements, drainage impact fees, etc. In each of these funding scenarios, adequate preparation, including development of community support and willingness to provide local match funding, is vital to positioning a project to be competitive.

### Execution

Execution involves a community being proactive in recognizing and then taking advantage of an opportunity that may present itself to implement a solution or partial solution to an identified flooding problem. Execution requires that the community:

- Be knowledgeable about the problem
- Have a clear understanding of the possible solutions to address the problem
- Have a realistic understanding of the challenges inherent in each solution
- Be willing to provide some or all of the required funding for the alternative solutions, including matching funds for grants
- Be committed to follow through to pursue and/or to participate in possible grant, developer funded or other project opportunities as they become available.

### Progress

There are numerous significant challenges to resolving flooding problems which are inherent in the nature of such problems, and the solutions are often complex, multi-pronged and long term. Such challenges most often portend opportunity. Progress towards resolving a community's flooding problems can be viewed as a direct result of the members of that community agreeing to the process described above of working together in recognizing the challenges, preparing for, seeking and recognizing the opportunities, and then following through to take advantage of such opportunities.

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### **III. Process for Implementing a Flood Control Project**

#### **a. General Comments**

This section identifies the steps that are generally required to implement a Flood Control Project. Additional detail for each of the steps is provided in later chapters of this report. It should be noted that stakeholder involvement and advocacy is recommended in the initial steps and critical in the subsequent steps. Though a willingness for financial commitment by stakeholders is often needed, equally important, if not more important is the support and advocacy for the project by the stakeholders throughout the process. Though there is some truth to the proverb that “the squeaky wheel gets the grease,” the history of developing infrastructure improvement projects has also shown the practical reality that it is easier to obtain funding for a project that is well defined, addresses a real need or problem, has a defensible cost/benefit ratio, has a reasonable cost and implementation schedule, and has broad support by the affected property owners. When each of these items is in place, a project can be considered “viable.”

#### **b. Project Implementation Steps**

The steps described below must be followed in implementing a Flood Control Project. The information was originally developed as part as a report given to the Board of Supervisors by the Department of Public Works (“SLO County Flood Protection and Drainage Policies, Programs, Permitting and Funding,” April 17, 2001, a portion of which is attached as Appendix C).

##### **Step 1: The project must be defined.**

This requires that an engineering feasibility analysis be performed. The situation that needs to be corrected must be defined, alternate solutions must be investigated, and options must be analyzed to determine the most feasible way to proceed in terms of engineering, financial and environmental considerations.

##### **Step 2: Formal project cost estimates must be made.**

##### **Step 3: A funding source must be identified, and then obtained.**

As noted elsewhere in this report, the Flood Control Act contemplates establishing Zones that cover the area benefited by the project that can then pay for the cost of the improvements. The process that is set up in the Act is for the Zones to pay through property taxes. With the more recent changes to the laws governing taxing, these funding sources require voter approval, and may be required to pass by a two thirds majority.

##### **Step 4: The project must be designed and constructed.**

Once the projects are defined and a funding source is established, the project must be designed, environmental procedures must be followed and required

permits or approvals obtained, and the project can then be constructed and operated. In most new projects, the environmental issues must be identified at the beginning of the process and kept in mind throughout implementation to insure that permits can be obtained and that any required mitigation measures are accounted for in the project work plan and budget.

## IV. Summary of Flood Control Project Constraints

Assuming that a flooding problem has been identified and analyzed, and that a project to mitigate the problem has been subsequently scoped, in general there are five major constraints affecting the implementation of a typical flood control project:

- a. District Policy Constraints
- b. Funding Constraints and Opportunities
- c. Environmental Permitting
- d. Right of Way
- e. Stakeholder Support

This section will provide a description of the issues involved in each of the constraint categories and describe how they impact flood control projects in general, as well as point to community-specific impacts which will be further described in later sections. The information in this section was excerpted from the drainage and flood control studies prepared by RMC on behalf of the District in 2004. Additional general and community-specific information is provided in the individual reports which are available for downloading on the SLO County Public Works Department website at <http://www.slocountydrainagestudies.org/>.

### a. San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Policy Constraints

1. Overview of Responsibilities. The drainage and flood control responsibilities of the County are determined by State and County statutes and by County policy. The responsibilities for drainage are administered through the Road Division of the County Public Works Department and the District. The District is the designated County agency responsible for managing, planning, and maintaining drainage and flood control facilities in unincorporated public areas where no other agency has assumed an active role in such activities. The District has a regional role in the County and can work with individual cities or communities when requested. The sections below describe the limits of the jurisdiction of road maintenance and improvement, Road Fund administration, and how the District is administered to best leverage its powers by creating Zones of Benefit to oversee specific projects.
2. History. The San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District was established in 1945. The powers of the District include flood control, water supply, water conservation, water quality protection and the ability to study all aspects of water resources. The District also has power to form zones of benefit within its boundary to

implement water resource projects. The District is a special district that is governed by the County Board of Supervisors. The boundaries of the District are the same as the County boundaries, and the staff of the District is the same as the staff of the County. The District also includes all of the territory within the County's seven incorporated cities. The District budget is separate and distinct from all other County budgets. It has its own funding sources, legal responsibilities, legislative regulations, and its own expenditure plan.

3. Policy Direction: Resolution Number 68-223. The District is available to help communities deal with flood waters, and to study and develop water supplies and conservation opportunities. The District uses its general fund to:

- Identify water related issues
- Develop strategies and determine solutions to those problems
- Help those local areas implement recommended solutions

The District is not, however, responsible for paying for community-specific mitigation improvements. The specific property owners that benefit from these solutions must agree to pay for the construction and future maintenance of them. This District policy (Resolution 68-223, included in this report as Appendix F) was formally established by the Board of Supervisors in 1968, and was reviewed and reconfirmed in April 2001. The policy was adopted because there is not sufficient funding available for the District to fund construction and operation of facilities. This approach provides the best leveraging of the funds that are available on a countywide basis.

4. Funding Sources and Countywide Activities. The primary funding source for the District, which is the entire County, is a pre-Proposition 13 general property tax allocation, which provides approximately \$550,000 per year in General Flood Control revenue. In addition, the District receives about \$130,000 per year in interest income from current resources. Reserves from the County's General Fund, which is separate from the District fund, are normally not used for the construction of projects protecting private property, unless there is a significant general or roadway benefit. The District provides funding for flood control programming and planning of localized drainage issues.
5. Flood Control Zones. The District has the power to form Zones of Benefit to implement and operate facilities. Each Zone must have its own funding source. The following are the currently active operational projects and Zones of Benefit operating under the District:
  - a. Salinas Dam Project - This project operates the Salinas Dam and delivers water from Santa Margarita Lake to the City of San Luis

Obispo. The facilities operated by the District under this project are owned by the Federal Government and the City provides all of the funding.

- b. State Water Project -The District has had a water supply contract with the State since 1963. The project currently provides water to eleven subcontractors. The subcontractors pay for their share of the water supply, and a special tax funds the ongoing payments for the remainder of the District entitlement.
  - c. Zone 1/1A - Operates the levee system on the lower Arroyo Grande Creek (Zone 1) and the Los Berros bypass (Zone 1A) channels. The primary operational funding comes from an allocation of general property tax revenue. Additional funding comes from benefit assessments to the properties within the Zones.
  - d. Zone 3 - Owns and operates the Lopez Water Supply Project, which includes the Lopez Dam, Lopez Lake recreation area, treatment plant, and distribution system. It is financed through contractually obligated payments from the contracting agencies of the Cities of Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, Oceano CSD and CSA No. 12 (Avila Beach). Those agencies raise the funding to meet their contractual obligations through a combination of water service charges and special taxes.
  - e. Zone 4 - Provides funding for maintenance of the Santa Maria River levee system. The levees are maintained by Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. Zone 4 collects service charges from properties in San Luis Obispo County that receive flood protection from the levees, and reimburses the Santa Barbara Urban District for its maintenance services.
  - f. Zone 9 - Encompasses the watershed of San Luis Obispo Creek. It provides watershed and flood control planning, and performs limited creek maintenance. This zone receives funding through a general property tax allocation, and the annual expenditure programs are cooperatively developed with the City of San Luis Obispo.
  - g. Zone 16 - Provides maintenance service for several small drainage basins that serve various new developments, mainly in the Nipomo area. This zone receives its funding through service charges of the property owners in these new developments.
6. County Standards for Control of Drainage. The County's planning department establishes the land use policies and drainage ordinances for the County (the District has no land use ordinances). These standards aim to minimize the harmful effects of storm water runoff and to protect neighboring and downstream properties from drainage problems resulting from new development. Section 22.05.040 et. seq. of the County's Land Use Ordinance outlines the standards for the control of drainage and drainage facilities. These standards include:

- a. Requirements pertaining to the design and construction of drainage systems
- b. Requirements pertaining to the maintenance of offsite natural drainage patterns
- c. Restrictions on development in areas subject to flood hazards

Conditions of development in flood hazard areas must, at a minimum, enforce the current Federal floodplain management regulations as defined in the National Flood Insurance Program. The proponents of projects that may be subject to or cause flood hazards are required to prepare a drainage plan, subject to approval by the County Engineer.

Unincorporated areas of the county are also subject to flood hazard combining designations. The combining designation is a special land use category which requires detailed project review to minimize the adverse impacts associated with flood hazards. In addition, the County's land use ordinances contain development standards for areas with the Flood Hazard (FH) designation. The standards state that drainage plans for development in FH areas must include a normal depth analysis that determines whether the proposed development is in the floodway or the flood fringe. In addition, development in FH areas would be subject to construction practices that would not limit floodway capacity or increase flood heights above an allowable limit.

7. The Road Fund. The County provides some limited drainage improvements as a function of its road maintenance responsibilities. The Road Fund is a separate, distinct legal account and budget, from the District. It has numerous State statutes (primarily the Streets and Highways Code) that dictate how Road Fund monies may legally be expended. The Road Fund program operates the County Maintained Road System and is funded through a combination of restricted revenue sources that are primarily derived through taxes on gasoline that are apportioned to cities and counties by the State, as well as contributions from the County General Fund. These funding sources can only be spent on solving problems that directly relate to County maintained roads. As a function of operating the road system, the drainage issues related to the road system are addressed when such drainage work protects the County maintained road system in a cost beneficial way, or is directly related to County road improvement projects and is necessary to prevent property damage. This includes directing the flow of streams across the roads through culverts and bridges. In many cases, cost/benefit analyses preclude the expenditure of many hundreds of thousands (or millions) of dollars to prevent occasional flooding of certain roadways during periods of unusually intense rainfall. Some County roads will have standing water for short periods of time following rainfall events. This is especially true at various dry creek crossings in rural parts of the County.

8. Other Agencies with Drainage Responsibilities. There are several federal, state and local governmental agencies that have drainage responsibilities.
- a. Community Service Districts. Community Service Districts (CSD's) are locally controlled special districts that can also provide drainage and flood control services.
  - b. County Service Areas. County Service Areas (CSA's) can focus the powers of the County to provide specific services to specific areas, including drainage and flood control services. These special districts are governed by the County Board of Supervisors and receive their funding through the collection of voter approved service charges or benefit assessments from the residents or property owners of the specific area served.
  - c. Cities. Individual cities within the County exercise control over drainage issues within their city limits.
  - d. Corps of Engineers. At the Federal level, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) provides flood protection throughout the nation. However, the Corps has done very little work in San Luis Obispo County and operates no flood control facilities here.
  - e. California Department of Water Resources. The State of California also administers some flood control and drainage programs via the State Department of Water Resources' (DWR) flood control division. DWR has little presence in the County, and mainly gets involved in a consulting role during flood emergencies.
  - f. Caltrans. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) operates drainage facilities that are associated with the State Highway System.
  - g. Union Pacific Railroad. Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) has drainage facilities within its right-of-way (ROW) and is responsible for maintaining the drainage infrastructure within its ROW.

#### **b. Funding Constraints and Opportunities**

The District is restricted in the way it can fund needed projects or increase revenues for existing operations. It is generally limited to a Zone of Benefit or an assessment district procedure for obtaining financing for the construction of new projects. The District has the power to form such Zones of Benefit to implement and operate facilities, and each Zone must have its own funding source.

Due to the changes enacted with the passage of Proposition 218, the District must now also have all new benefit assessments, and increases to existing benefit assessments for maintenance and operations, approved through an election of affected property owners. The District provides a means of funding studies that define problems and can recommend technical solutions to those problems. A good example of this process was the development of the comprehensive drainage and flood control studies prepared for six

unincorporated communities that were completed in 2004. These studies provided detailed drainage analysis for each community and identified a number of potential projects to address flooding problems, with project cost estimates. In most cases, the critical next steps of constructing and maintaining such drainage facilities can normally only be completed with local benefiting property owners being willing to vote to assess themselves for these costs.

Grant and low interest loan programs exist and may be available for projects, depending on the type and location of the proposed project, population and median income of the community, etc. In most instances, grant programs will require additional sources of funding, in the form of a local match, up-front costs for application and processing, etc. Further discussion of funding opportunities is included in the appendix of this report. As is a recurrent theme of this report, the communities in the best position to recognize and take advantage of such funding opportunities are those that have strong local stakeholder involvement, have educated themselves regarding flooding problems, constraints and project alternatives, have built positive working relationships with appropriate governmental and nonprofit agencies with stakeholder interest, and are actively researching and pursuing such opportunities.

### **c. Environmental Permitting Constraints**

General Discussion, Key Dates & Changes in the Permit Process. Since they convey stormwater runoff, portions of natural and manmade channels critical to the control of flood flows are quite often critical habitat for a variety of important biological resources, including many endangered species. Therefore, improvements to such channels and certain maintenance activities, including sediment or debris removal, vegetation management, slope repair, etc. could potentially affect (adversely or beneficially) critical habitat and are therefore potentially subject to an extensive review and permitting process by a variety of local, state and/or federal agencies, depending on the proposed activity, as well as the nature and location of the facility. In order to provide an appreciation and context for the environmental constraints affecting flood control projects, a list of key dates and changes in the environmental permit process is provided below.

#### Key Permitting Statutes

1890 - Federal Rivers and Harbors Act. Regulates dredging and filling in navigable waterways

1969 - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Requires all federal agencies to prepare environmental analyses and document the environmental effects of their projects and activities.

1970 - California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Requires all state and local agencies in California to prepare environmental analyses, document the

environmental effects of their projects and activities, and reduce the impacts of their projects and activities to the greatest extent feasible.

1972 - Proposition 20/Coastal Conservation Initiative. Establishes the California Coastal Zone and the Coastal Commission

1972 - Amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Section 404). Directs the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to regulate the dredging and filling of "Waters of the U.S."

1973 - Federal Endangered Species Act. Establishes a listing process for endangered plants and animals and gives the protection and recovery of endangered species the highest priority.

Key Changes in the Permit Process

May 1996 - California red-legged frog listed a federal threatened species

August 1997 - Steelhead trout listed a federal threatened species (endangered in Santa Maria River watershed south)

May 1999 - California Department of Fish & Game required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act for Streambed Alteration Agreements (permits)

June 2000 - Substantial revisions in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Nationwide Permit Process

June 2000 - Regional Water Quality Control Board no longer issues waivers for 401 consistency determinations

March 2000 - Steelhead critical habitat designated

March 2001 - Red-legged frog critical habitat designated

Summary of Permit Requirements. All projects, whether they are constructed by a public agency or by private parties are required by Federal, State and local law to comply with environmental regulations. The regulations that most often affect flood protection projects are general environmental protection, protection of endangered species, protection of water quality, and protection of coastal resources. The following table briefly describes some of the permits that must be acquired to do work within or near a stream channel. It should be noted that the permit requirements will be virtually the same whether the work is being done by the County Flood Control District or by a rancher protecting his rangeland:

<b>If the project...</b>	<b>Then a permit or approval is necessary from...</b>
Qualifies as a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)	San Luis Obispo County Department of Planning and Building, Environmental Division
Qualifies as a project under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)	San Luis Obispo County Department of Planning and Building Environmental Division

Disturbs the bed or bank of a stream	California Department of Fish and Game
Involves work below the ordinary high water mark of a stream	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Involves disturbance of wetlands or other "waters of the U.S."	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Requires a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under the Clean Water Act	State Regional WaterQuality Control Board
Has the potential to impact sensitive species, marine mammals, migratory birds or their habitat	California Department of Fish and Game, National Marine Fisheries Service, and/or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Located in the Coastal Zone or in streams that feed into the Coastal Zone	California Coastal Commission and/or San Luis Obispo County Department of Planning and Building Environmental Division

**d. Right of Way Constraints**

Under-maintained facilities reduce their design capacity and inhibit their ability to convey runoff, and county staff typically receive complaints from alert private citizens who report existing storm drain facilities filled with sediment and vegetation. However, based on follow up field investigations, it is often difficult determining who is responsible for maintaining the facilities, most especially in the case of manmade and natural drainage ditches and creeks or drainage basins on private property. In most cases, the District does not possess flood control or drainage easements for natural or manmade creeks and channels or drainage basins on private property. In the absence of maintenance responsibility being assumed by a separate entity (such as a homeowners association), the owner whose parcel line extends into the drainage channel or upon whose property the drainage basin exists is responsible for maintaining the channel or basin's capacity. If a property owner does not maintain the facilities, then these structures will go unattended because the District is not responsible for maintaining facilities on private property or on property within the jurisdiction of other public agencies (e.g. Caltrans, UPRR, incorporated city, etc.) or homeowners associations.

**e. Stakeholder Support**

As has been mentioned previously in this report, the input and support of stakeholders is critical to the success of most if not all flood control projects. The range of entities potentially impacted by a proposed project extends far beyond those that are directly impacted by flooding problems. For example, increasing

the capacity of a channel to mitigate flooding problems in one location could potentially move the problem further downstream. Project construction may require the acquisition of temporary or permanent easements from private property owners or encroachment permits from other agencies. The long term viability of the project may depend on maintenance efforts outside the project limits by other entities, such as erosion or sediment control in tributary areas upstream in the watershed, or vegetation or debris management on channel reaches up or downstream located on private property. Given the context of the other constraints described above, it is crucial that key and potential stakeholders be identified and brought into the process of project development as early as possible. With the understanding that many stakeholders will have conflicting interests and/or goals for the same project, communication, negotiation and compromise are often key components for seeing a project through to completion, and the risk to the viability of a project is greatly reduced the earlier in the process these efforts are initiated. Needing to change the limits or scope of a project at the end of the final design phase due to a failure to maintain adequate coordination with a critical stakeholder could lead to compounding adverse impacts to the preparation of environmental documents, permit acquisition, project timelines, funding, etc., potentially killing a project.

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## **V. Summary of Significant Flooding Issues and Proposed Solutions by Community**

### **a. General**

All the communities within the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County to some extent lack formal drainage systems. Localized low spots in each community collect storm runoff and cause flooding in many areas. A significant amount of the drainage problems throughout the county are minor ponding and flooding at poorly drained or undrained locations. Along with these localized problems, where drainage facilities do exist, facilities are not maintained or undersized and cause additional flooding problems. Solutions to the flooding problems described in this section generally fall into the following general categories: construction of drainage facilities; maintenance of existing drainage facilities; and improvement of drainage design standards. With the exception of the Arroyo Grande Creek Channel – Flood Control Zone 1/1A, the San Luis Obispo Creek Channel – Flood Control Zone 9, and the communities of Los Osos, Shandon and Templeton, detailed discussions of the problems and proposed solutions are contained in extensive drainage study reports prepared for each of the unincorporated communities listed below. The Executive Summaries for the six reports are provided in the appendix of this report, and excerpts from the document are briefly summarized below. The complete reports are available for download in Adobe Acrobat format on the County's website: <http://www.slocountydrainagestudies.org/>.

### **b. Arroyo Grande Creek Channel – Flood Control Zone 1/1A**

Flooding Issues. Zone 1/1A includes a flood control channel and levee system through coastal low-lying farmlands and the communities of Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach and Oceano. The present configuration of the channel was “state of the art” when it was designed almost 50 years ago, but requires periodic sediment removal. Due to a combination of increased erosion and decreased maintenance, the flood control channel is now clogged with sediment. The US Army Corps of Engineers estimates the system currently has 15% of its design capacity and can only carry runoff from a 2-year to 5-year storm event. Larger storms would cause flooding (USACoE, 2001). On March 5, 2001, the levee system broke on the south side during a moderately large storm event, flooding hundreds of acres of farmland and several residences. Luckily, the northern levee did not breach. Otherwise, the regional wastewater treatment plant that services the communities of Arroyo Grande, Oceano and Grover Beach, and many more homes would have been flooded. Today's regulatory requirements will make any attempt to restore the flood capacity of the channel to its original design a very lengthy and extremely expensive proposition.

Proposed Solutions. A detailed discussion of the flooding issues and analysis of alternative mitigation solutions are discussed in the recently completed “Arroyo

Grande Creek Erosion, Sedimentation and Flooding Alternatives Study,” prepared by Swanson Hydrology and Geomorphology in January 2006. Critical improvements recommended as Alternative 3C in the Swanson Study include raising the levee, vegetation management, sediment removal and raising of a bridge structure to remove impediments to streamflow. Total project cost is estimated to be \$15.0 million. As a first step towards implementing the recommendations in the Swanson Study, the District has recently initiated the preparation of a Floodway Management Plan, a multi-year effort estimated to cost approximately \$575,000. The complete Swanson Study report is available for download in Adobe Acrobat format on the San Luis Coastal Resource Conservation District’s website:

[http://www.coastalrcd.org/Zone1-1A\\_Alternatives\\_Study\\_TOC.html](http://www.coastalrcd.org/Zone1-1A_Alternatives_Study_TOC.html)

**c. Cambria**

Flooding Issues. The combination of the area’s steep topography, lack of underground drainage facilities, and location of residential parcels below the street grade has resulted in localized poor drainage and/or flooding around some residences, buildings, and roadways. The magnitude of flooding varies by the districts in Cambria and by location in each district. Drainage from a number of uphill lots flows along the edge of street pavement and drains onto lower lots, creating flooding and erosion problems. Drainage problems also exist where curbs are present, but the topography creates conditions where lots adjacent to the roadway are much lower than the roadway surface. This allows street drainage flowing at the curbside to enter the residential lots at the lowered curb section along the driveway entrance. Many unpaved roads are also subject to sheet and rill erosion during storm events. Flooding problems along Santa Rosa Creek in the West Village have been addressed by the construction of a bypass channel for Santa Rosa Creek, as the first component of the three-part Cambria Flood Control Project. The bypass channel provides for overflows to move slowly through the by-pass channel and then rejoin the Santa Rosa Creek downstream without overtopping Cambria Drive or Santa Rosa Creek. The second component, a gravity pressure stormdrain system, will collect runoff from the central residential area and divert it directly into Santa Rosa Creek. This project restores controlled flooding to the historic floodplain of Santa Rosa Creek while protecting the West Village from overflows of Santa Rosa Creek.

Proposed Solutions. The improvements proposed include construction of a bypass channel, storm drains and pumping system to address regional flooding problems along Santa Rosa Creek in the West Village of Cambria, an area inundated with up to eight feet of water in the storms of 1995, as well as culverts, curbs and drainage inlets to address localized flooding. SLOFCWCD has earmarked over \$500,000 to fund one of the projects, has obtained funding assistance from the local community totaling \$1.1 million and obtained a FEMA HMGP (Hazard Mitigation Grant Program) grant of \$3.5 million towards regional flood improvements. Total cost for the unfunded projects is estimated to be \$11.0 million.

**d. Cayucos**

Flooding Issues. The combination of the area's steep topography, lack of underground drainage facilities, and location of residential parcels below the street grade has resulted in localized poor drainage and/or flooding around some residences, buildings, and roadways. The most serious flooding in the community takes place in the floodplain of Cayucos Creek west of Highway 1, bounded by the mobile home park on the north and Cayucos Drive on the south. Extensive flooding occurs due to flows from the creek overtopping the banks, and the inability of the local drainage to enter the creek due to high water levels. A number of nuisance drainage and flooding problems occur throughout Cayucos due to the topography and the lack of a consistent, organized network of drainage facilities within the community. Drainage from a number of uphill lots flows along the edge of street pavement and drains onto lower lots, creating flooding and erosion problems. However, drainage problems also exist where curbs are present, but the topography creates conditions where lots adjacent to the roadway are much lower than the roadway surface. This allows street drainage flowing at the curbside to enter the residential lots at the lowered curb section along the driveway entrance. A lack of suitable conveyance facilities for storm water runoff has led to frequent flooding problems in the coastal community of Cayucos, including serious flooding adjacent to Cayucos Creek.

Proposed Solutions. Proposed projects include construction of diversion pipelines, levee and pump station, storm drains, inlets and outfall structures. SLOFCWCD has earmarked \$482,000 for construction of a diversion pipe. Total cost for the projects is estimated to be \$6.25 million.

**e. Los Osos**

Flooding Issues. Information provided in this section was excerpted from the report "Preliminary Engineering Evaluation, Los Osos/Baywood Park Community Drainage Project for San Luis Obispo County Service Area No. 9J" by Engineering Development Associates, December 1997 ("EDA Report"). The most significant residential flooding problems experienced by the Los Osos and Baywood Park communities are from natural sumps. The communities are situated adjacent to the Morro Bay estuary upon a sandy terrain which has approximately two major, and numerous other localized natural sumps. Historically they drained relatively quickly without flooding because of the high permeability of the soil and ample distance to groundwater. However, development has led to a reduction of the permeability of these sump areas, and groundwater levels have risen reducing the amount of immediate subsurface storage available and resulting in several areas becoming flood prone during storms. In addition, the community experienced increased levels of nuisance flooding problems, including residential and street flooding documented from the mid 1970's that can be attributed to increased growth within the community. The increase in flooding has resulted from the paving of open space and the subsequent reduction of allowable infiltration area, construction within natural (topographic) drainage courses without provisions for rerouting surface drainage,

and development of properties without containment of onsite drainage. Primary areas of flooding concern are Los Osos Valley Road in the town of Los Osos, and east of town near its intersection with Cimarron Road. These areas are of concern since Los Osos Valley Road provides the community one of only two access routes into, and out of the community.

Proposed Solutions. Projects proposed in the EDA Report to address flooding and localized drainage problems in Los Osos / Baywood Park include construction of storm drains, retention basins, regrading of roadways, and construction of cross gutters and swales. The recommended projects included a total estimated construction cost of approximately \$14.2 million, in 1997 dollars.

**f. Nipomo**

Flooding Issues - Mesa. The Mesa's flooding and drainage problems reported by residents are primarily due to standing water along County roadways, although some reports of runoff from the roadway on private property were made. The standing water appears to be the result of the undulating terrain of the Mesa, lack of maintenance of the existing drainage infrastructure, and development grading which blocks previously existing runoff flow paths. The Mesa's undulating topography creates numerous depressions, including low spots having no outflow drainage paths, which lead to a high incidence of localized ponding. To prevent the ponding, the current drainage infrastructure is primarily based on individual parcel runoff retention and infiltration, which prevents runoff from leaving each developed site. However, the gradual loss of individual basin retention capacity over time has increased basin overflow frequency and runoff from the individual sites. Current County Drainage Policies and Standards lack sufficient enforcement provisions to ensure that the drainage and infiltration infrastructure is maintained. In some areas, the regrading of land during development cause previously existing flow paths to become blocked, causing ponding in areas which had previously been drained.

Flooding Issues – Olde Towne. Much of Olde Towne is located within a 100-year flood hazard zone. These areas have been identified by FEMA as subject to flooding during a 100-year rainfall event. The lower lying areas near the creek and tributary channels may also be subject to flooding from more frequent rainfall events due to inadequate local drainage facilities to convey urban runoff from homes and streets to the creeks. The major flooding problems in Olde Towne result from flood flows breaking out of one of the five creeks flowing through the urban areas of Olde Towne. A majority of the culvert crossings in Olde Towne do not meet the current minimum County standard. The culverts within Olde Town are generally not sufficient to pass the 10-year flow rate without surcharge, although some can pass higher return period storms with surcharge. The culverts and crossings along Haystack Creek, with exception of the newly installed arch at the Tefft Street crossing, are generally insufficient to carry the 10-year flow, when the minimum standard requires sufficient capacity to pass the 25-year flow. If the channels and culverts were designed per the County's standards for Major

and Secondary waterways, then the threat and frequency of flooding from large storms would be reduced because the facilities would have sufficient capacity to convey the peak storms. Maintenance of existing drainage structures is lacking in Olde Towne. The creek channels, culvert crossings, and roadside ditches need restorative and periodic annual vegetation management and sediment removal. Conducting necessary maintenance on creeks in Olde Towne is complicated not only by the regulatory permit approval process, but also by the location of most creeks within private property. The County was not granted a drainage easement on any of the creeks in Olde Towne and therefore cannot perform routine maintenance or channel clearing on any reach of creek outside of public right-of-way.

Proposed Solutions. As described above, a significant portion of the low-lying areas in Olde Towne Nipomo are subject to frequent inundation from adjacent streams and undulating terrain contributes to several areas of localized flooding on the Nipomo Mesa. Projects proposed to address these problems include construction of detention/infiltration facilities, culverts and/or underground storm drain facilities, as well as raising local roads. SLOCFCWCD has earmarked approximately \$1.8 million for key localized drainage improvements. Total cost for the projects is estimated to be \$8.0 million.

**g. Oceano**

Flooding Issues. In Oceano, flood control facilities are limited because in its early stages of urbanization, storm water conveyance and flood control infrastructure were not incorporated into the community because the high infiltration rate of the underlying sands was sufficient to naturally dispose of runoff. With an increase in urbanization came an increase in impervious surfaces and a decrease in the capability of the underlying soil to adequately absorb urban runoff. This has resulted in several areas becoming flood prone, causing public and private property damage during storms. The combination of the area's geology, shallow topography, construction within natural drainage courses without provisions for rerouting surface drainage, and inadequate drainage facilities has resulted in localized poor drainage and/or flooding around some residences, buildings, and roadways. The most serious flooding in the community takes place along Highway 1. Extensive ponding can occur for several days after significant rainfall, causing damage to nearby businesses and creating driving hazards. This problem is generally caused by relatively flat topography and lack of capacity in the drainage facilities to convey runoff south towards the Arroyo Grande Creek Channel. The two main locations of the flooding occur at the intersection of 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets with Highway 1 (also known as the Cienaga and Front Street intersection) and the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Paso Robles Street with Highway 1. In addition to localized drainage problems in the community of Oceano, low lying, flood-prone areas contain critical regional infrastructure, including Highway 1, UPRR, the Oceano Airport and the South County Sanitation District wastewater plant.

Proposed Solutions. Projects proposed to address chronic flooding problems in Oceano include construction of regional detention/infiltration facilities, diversion pipeline at Highway 1, curbs and gutters, as well as underground storm drain/infiltration facilities. SLOCFCWCD has earmarked \$100,000 for key localized drainage improvements. Total cost for the projects is estimated to be \$14.0 million.

#### **h. San Luis Obispo Creek – Flood Control Zone 9**

Flooding Issues. Flood Control Zone 9 encompasses the entire San Luis Obispo Creek watershed. There is a long history of flooding in the SLO Creek Watershed. Damaging floods have occurred in 1868-62, 1884, 1897, 1911, 1948, 1952, 1962, 1969, 1973, 1995, and 1998. The most recent damaging floods occurred during January and March 1995, with a lesser flooding problem in 1998. Within San Luis Obispo, flow during these events overtopped streambanks near the intersection of Marsh and Higuera Streets and remained out of the channel for nearly three miles downstream, with damage estimated at nearly \$2.3 million (ACOE, 2000). The City and Zone 9 also spent approximately \$1 million to repair bank erosion caused during the winter of 1995. Damage occurred near the town of Avila during both the January and March 1995 events, where high flow and debris blockages caused extensive damage to several bridges across the creek. Historically, the 1969 and 1973 events were more damaging than the 1995 floods, in present day dollars. According to ACOE estimates (in year 2000 dollars), the 1969 storm caused approximately \$6.92 million damage within the SLO Creek watershed, and the 1973 storm caused \$13.6 million (of which \$899,000 occurred along Stenner Creek, \$161,000 along Brizziolari Creek, \$3.6 million along Prefumo Creek, and \$241,000 along See Canyon Creek).

The Zone 9 Advisory Committee was formed to assist the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors on policy decisions relating to Zone 9. The Advisory Committee assists in determining the needs, desires, and financial capabilities of property owners in Zone 9. The Advisory Committee also recommends specific programs to alleviate and control flood damage, with recognition of the ecological and aesthetic values of the programs. The Zone 9 Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives from the City of San Luis Obispo, CalPoly, CalTrans, members of the Avila Beach community and agricultural community, and citizens-at-large; there are eight members and eight alternates.

Proposed Solutions. A detailed discussion of the flooding issues and analysis of alternative mitigation solutions are discussed in the recently completed "Waterway Management Plan, San Luis Obispo Creek Watershed," (WMP) prepared by consultants under the direction of the City of San Luis Obispo and SLOCFCWCD Zone 9. The purpose of the WMP was to "develop an approach and schematic plans to address flooding, erosion, water quality, and ecological issues in the SLO Creek Watershed that can be implemented with approvals from various regulatory agencies." The objectives of the WMP, as developed by

the Zone 9 Advisory Committee in consultation with the Regulatory Agencies are as follows:

### Objectives

- 1) Identify and prioritize the amount and extent of flooding, erosion, water quality, and ecological issues in the SLO Watershed.
- 2) Identify and develop programs to address flooding, erosion, water quality, and ecological issues in the SLO Watershed.
- 3) Develop guidelines for design of future development or reconstructed developments in the SLO Watershed.
- 4) Develop a programmatic environmental and permitting review process for implementation of Objectives 2 and 3, as applicable.
- 5) Develop an Implementation Program.

The complete WMP is available for download in Adobe Acrobat format on the City of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department's website:

<http://www.slocity.org/publicworks/documents.asp>

#### **i. San Miguel**

Flooding Issues. The community of San Miguel lacks a formal drainage system. Local runoff generally follows the gentle northeasterly slope of the community and either flows to the Salinas River or infiltrates into the historic flood plain. Low spots or depressions cause frequent ponding and shallow flooding at several locations. Localized flooding is particularly extensive along Mission Street and N Street between 11th and 14th Streets, and north of 14th Street between Mission and N Streets. Caltrans culverts convey stormwater onto road surfaces of 10th, 12th, 14th and 16th Streets from the undeveloped area and possibly developed portions of Highway 101. The primary cause of flooding in San Miguel is due to the absence of a continuous positive slope and drainage conveyance path from L Street to the Salinas River. The railroad serves as a barrier to storm runoff flowing from west of Mission Street to the Salinas River. Also, the absence of continuous curb and gutter system has lead to the concentration of street runoff in areas that do not have curbs or gutters and generally represent local low spots within a neighborhood block. The most serious flooding in the community takes place along the western side of the railroad since runoff from residential neighborhoods collects in this area. The overall drainage issues identified in San Miguel include:

- Ponding of storm water west of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, and the subsequent flooding in the vicinity of Mission Street between 11th and 16th Streets
- Continued flooding and drainage problems in some residential areas
- Drainage from Highway 101

Proposed Solutions. Flooding problems in San Miguel are exacerbated by the Union Pacific railroad which runs north and south, bisecting the community and

impeding westside flows from reaching the Salinas River on the eastside. Critical improvements include storm drain pipes, jack and bore operations under the railroad, drainage ditches and outfall structures. SLOCFCWCD has earmarked \$250,000 for the project and \$600,000 in Community Development Block Grants have been obtained on behalf of this low income community. Total cost for the projects is estimated to be \$6.75 million.

**j. Santa Margarita**

Flooding Issues. Flooding problems in Santa Margarita are caused by a number of items. Inadequate channel and bridge capacities, lost and restricted floodplain area due to development, lack of flood protected homes, inadequate or non-existent local drainage facilities, and high peak runoff all contribute to the area's high occurrence of flooding. There are two categories of flooding problems in Santa Margarita: 1) major creek flooding and 2) localized street and property flooding. The major flooding problems in Santa Margarita are caused by a combination of inadequate culverts and bridges, and inadequate channel capacity in Yerba Buena Creek. When the creek's flow exceeds the capacity of the channel and bridge/culvert crossings, water overtops the banks and floods adjacent low topographic areas of Santa Margarita. The second category of flooding, localized street and nuisance flooding, is caused by the lack of sufficient capacity in the local drainage ditches, driveway culverts, and storm drains. These facilities are often under maintained and filled with sediment or other debris. These factors prevent the local drainage system from adequately conveying urban runoff to Yerba Buena and Santa Margarita Creeks. The lack of gutters and underground storm drains, undersized and under maintained drainage facilities, and location of homes below the street grade have resulted in localized poor drainage and/or flooding around some residences, buildings, and roadways.

Proposed Solutions. Proposed improvements include construction of a levee and major retention basins to address frequently recurring regional and localized flooding problems, and expansion of existing storm drain facilities. The local CSA 23 advisory group has been active in mobilizing community support for the projects and pursuing an easement for the levee and retention basins from the owners of adjacent Santa Margarita Ranch. Total cost for the projects is estimated to be \$7.25 million.

**k. Shandon**

Flooding Issues. Shandon is an unincorporated community situated approximately 15 miles east of Paso Robles, just south of Highway 46 East. Highway 41 bisects the town running east to west. Within the urban reserve line, Shandon is comprised of older and newly constructed neighborhoods, a community park, elementary school, junior/senior high school, post office, church, fire station, library, community center, senior center, two small grocery stores, and a supply store. The area outside of the urban reserve line is comprised mostly of scattered residential development and agricultural land.

Estrella River is located at the northerly boundary of the community and flows east to west. San Juan Creek flows north through the eastern portion of the community into the Estrella River. At the time of the writing of this report, it does not appear that a detailed drainage study has been performed for the community. However, a long time resident of the community provided anecdotal information about flooding of properties on the side of and adjacent to Highway 41 near the community park in the center of town.

Proposed Solutions. Caltrans has expressed interest in improving their drainage facilities on Highway 41 in Shandon. Such improvements would require additional downstream drainage improvements on the northerly of Highway 41 to accommodate the increased capacity of the Caltrans facilities. The SLOCFCWCD and Caltrans are in the initial stages of scoping for a project, though no local stakeholders have been involved at this time.

## **I. Templeton**

Flooding Issues. While the Templeton Community Services District (TCSD) has authority to operate and maintain drainage facilities, their current responsibility is limited to developing and maintaining a regional detention facility at Bethel Park on the west side of the town and a retention basin at Gibson Park on the east side of town. For the most part, the unincorporated community of Templeton lacks formal drainage and flood control infrastructure on a community-wide basis. Tributaries of Toad Creek collect drainage from the west side and convey them under Highway 101 through densely developed residential neighborhoods on the east side of the community. According to County Roads Maintenance crews, flooding in these neighborhoods has increased dramatically in the past several years. This is due in part to increased development and subsequent increased runoff from the Westside and the lack of capacity in the existing meandering stream channel on the Westside.

Proposed Solutions. The SLOCFCWCD has recently commissioned an initial phase of a community wide master drainage study for Templeton. The initial and subsequent phases of the study are intended to characterize existing drainage patterns, analyze flood problems and identify proposed near and short term solutions.

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## **VI. Community Readiness Report Card**

### **a. General.**

The goal of this section is to develop a community “Report Card” that summarizes each community’s current “readiness status” for implementing flood control projects benefiting the community. It should be noted that the intent is not necessarily to grade or rate a community according to the level of need for such projects, but rather to evaluate the current readiness of the community to pursue and implement such projects using the criteria discussed in this report, and to gauge the community’s progress towards project delivery. Included in this section are a discussion of the methodology for preparing the report cards and assigning grades, a generic scoring criteria sheet which illustrates the maximum points possible for each category and grouping, and the detailed scoring sheets for each of the communities discussed in the previous section of this report.

### **b. Development of Report Card Grades.**

The flow chart included in this section “Local Flood Control Project Implementation Strategy” provides a graphic illustration of the general steps involved in bringing flood control projects to fruition, based upon concepts discussed in earlier sections of this report. The chart identifies division of primary responsibility for each step between the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (SLOCFC&WCD) and the Local Stakeholders, though this is not intended to be definitive. Status and/or progress in these steps will be the basis for developing a report card grade for each of the communities identified earlier in the previous section. The steps will be grouped under the general progress phases described earlier in this report as follows:

#### **Preparation**

1. Establish & Maintain Contacts - SLOCFC&WCD
2. Organize Drainage Committee - Local Stakeholders
3. Identify Community Needs - SLOCFC&WCD
4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives - SLOCFC&WCD
5. Become Educated / Prepare - Local Stakeholders

#### **Opportunity**

6. Develop Short List of Projects/Programs – SLOCFC&WCD / Local Stakeholders
7. Identify Funding Programs - SLOCFC&WCD
8. Obtain Funding - SLOCFC&WCD / Local Stakeholders

#### **Execution**

9. Pursue Implementation - SLOCFC&WCD / Local Stakeholders
10. Project Delivery - SLOCFC&WCD / Local Stakeholders

Thus, in developing Report Card Grades, the following questions were asked for each community under the main grouping of the three fundamental steps:

**Preparation** – Have local and agency stakeholders been identified? Have contacts been made and/or relationships been established? Have local stakeholders become organized? Have flooding problems been identified? Have drainage characteristics and flooding problems been analyzed? Have mitigating projects been identified? Are the local stakeholders becoming educated?

**Opportunity** – Have SLOFCWCD staff, local and agency stakeholders developed and agreed to a short list of projects? Have potential sources of funding been identified? Are SLOFCWCD staff, local and agency stakeholders actively researching funding opportunities? Are local stakeholders being proactive in communicating goals and vision to the local property owners?

**Execution** – Are steps being taken to pursue, fund and/or implement particular short list projects? Are projects being delivered?

### **Weighting Factor**

As illustrated in the “Scoring Criteria” table below, the largest point weighting is assigned to the “Preparation” phase component. This is consistent with the discussion from earlier sections of this Report, since project delivery requires that the community be knowledgeable about the problem, have a clear understanding of the possible solutions to address the problem, have a realistic understanding of the challenges inherent in each solution, be willing to provide some or all of the required funding for the alternative solutions, and then be committed to follow through to pursue and/or to participate in possible grant, developer funded or other project opportunities as they become available. If adequate preparation is in place, the community as a whole is better positioned to take advantage of opportunities and/or willing to take the necessary steps to see a project through to delivery.

### **Grading Criteria**

The Community Readiness Report Card follows the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) national infrastructure report card’s approach of issued letter grades based on the criteria used to analyze the various categories to be evaluated. The national report card grades were based on the following scale:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 61-69%

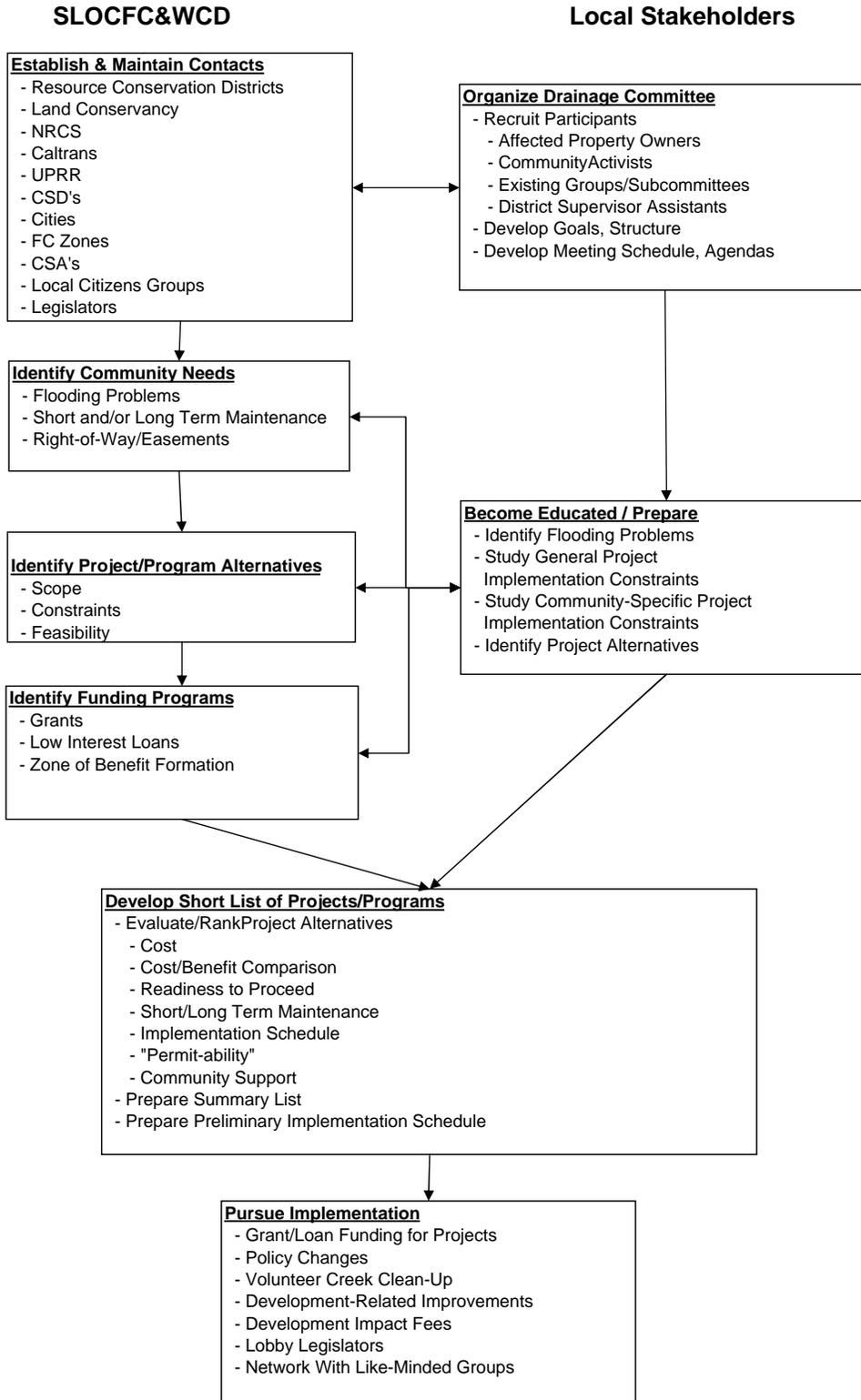
F = 40% or lower

**San Luis Obispo County Flood Control  
and Water Conservation District**



**Flood Management Plan**

**Local Flood Control Project Implementation Strategy**



**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Scoring Criteria**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	Local and agency stakeholders identified; initial contacts made.	5 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Participants recruited; structure and goals identified; meetings scheduled.	5 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary drainage analysis performed; preliminary identification of constraints.	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	Mitigating project and/or program alternatives identified, analyzed; constraints and cost estimates developed.	15 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Local and agency stakeholders involved in review of problems and alternatives and providing input	5 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	General consensus reached by stakeholders on project/program alternatives to be pursued.	5 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	Local and agency stakeholders actively researching, evaluating funding alternatives; community being apprised of status and/or progress.	10 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	Grant or loan applications, assessment district formation, etc.	20 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	Select projects/programs from short list and pursue	10 pts
	10. Project Delivery	Funding approval, creek cleanup/vegetation management, project construction, etc.	10 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>

**Total Points Possible 100 pts**

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Arroyo Grande Creek Channel – Flood Control Zone 1/1A**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	Zone 1/1A Advisory Group; NRCS; OCSD; CSLRCD; Local stakeholders	5 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Regular Zone 1/1A Advisory Group meetings	5 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary analysis and identification of constraints.	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	“AG Creek Flooding Alternatives” study by Swanson; specific details to be fleshed out	10 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Agencies and local stakeholders heavily involved in preparation of Swanson study and followup	5 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>40 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>B</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	Swanson study alternatives identified and actively being pursued by SLOFC&WCD and local stakeholders	5 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	Tax assessment increase; SWRCB and OHV grant opportunities	10 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	Local stakeholders voted for assessment increase; pursuing grant opportunities; large funding gap	10 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>25 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	Assessments approved; initiated environmental process for capital improvement and long term maintenance; OHV grant	8 pts
	10. Project Delivery	Vegetation management; flood maintenance projects.	8 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>16 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>B</b>	

**Total Points Possible 100 pts  
Actual Total Score 81 pts  
Overall Letter Grade B**

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Cambria**

Major Grouping	Category Description	Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading	Scoring
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	CCSD; some North Coast Advisory Council involvement	3 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Apparently not currently in place; some North Coast Advisory Council involvement	2 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary drainage analysis performed; preliminary identification of constraints.	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD	15 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Property owner input for Flood Study; apparently additional limited involvement	3 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>38 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>B</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; some input/consensus by stakeholders	4 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	County pursued FEMA funds for major project; some input/consensus by stakeholders	7 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	Local stakeholders voted for tax assessment; pursuing grant opportunities; large funding gap	15 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>26 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	County obtained FEMA funds for major project; some input & consensus by stakeholders; localized projects needed.	6 pts
	10. Project Delivery	Major flood control project under construction with FEMA funding.	8 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>14 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>B</b>	

**Total Points Possible** 100 pts  
**Actual Total Score** 78 pts  
**Overall Letter Grade** C

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Cayucos**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	CCAC; limited contacts	2 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Apparently not currently in place	0 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary drainage analysis performed; preliminary identification of constraints.	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; details to be fleshed out	12 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Local stakeholder interest in preparation of “Drainage and Flood Control Study;” limited followup	4 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>33 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; input/interest by stakeholders	2 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	County pursuing road drainage project; some input/consensus by stakeholders	5 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	County pursuing road drainage project; limited stakeholder involvement; large funding gap	10 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>17 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>D</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	County pursuing road drainage project; limited stakeholder involvement; large funding gap	5 pts
	10. Project Delivery	County drainage project pending.	3 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>8 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>F</b>	

**Total Points Possible 100 pts**  
**Actual Total Score 58 pts**  
**Overall Letter Grade D**

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Los Osos**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	Stakeholders identified and have coordinated on various drainage issues	4 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	LOCSD drainage committee duties currently performed by Water Operations Committee	4 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	1998 Drainage Master Plan (DMP) prepared; follow up study prepared for CSD	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	Identified in 1998 DMP; needs to be updated	13 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	History of stakeholder involvement; current input lacking	3 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>39 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>B</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	Consensus on needs and project areas, though consensus on remedies not yet reached	3 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	Some grant funds identified and pursued	7 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	Community passed local drainage special tax; National Estuary Program grant obtained	15 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>25 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	Several isolated projects implemented	7 pts
	10. Project Delivery	Several isolated projects constructed and being operated by LOCSD	7 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>14 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	

**Total Points Possible 100 pts  
Actual Total Score 78 pts  
Overall Letter Grade C**

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Nipomo**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	NCSD; Land Conservancy; NCAC	4 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Not currently in place; Land Conservancy active	3 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary drainage analysis performed; preliminary identification of constraints.	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; details to be fleshed out	12 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Agencies and local stakeholders involved in preparation of “Drainage and Flood Control Study”; some followup	3 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>37 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>B</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; some input/consensus by stakeholders	5 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	County implemented road drainage project; some input/consensus by stakeholders	6 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	Limited stakeholder involvement; large funding gap	8 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>19 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>D</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	County implemented road drainage project; some input/consensus by stakeholders	6 pts
	10. Project Delivery	Local Creek Cleanup; County implemented drainage projects.	8 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>14 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	

**Total Points Possible 100 pts**  
**Actual Total Score 70 pts**  
**Overall Letter Grade C**

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Oceano**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	OCSD; limited contacts	3 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Apparently not currently in place	0 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary drainage analysis performed; preliminary identification of constraints.	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD	15 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	OCSD and local stakeholders involved in preparation of “Drainage and Flood Control Study”; limited followup	2pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>35 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; input/consensus by stakeholders; limited followup	4 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	County implemented road drainage project; limited input/consensus by stakeholders	5 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	Limited stakeholder involvement; large funding gap	8 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>17 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>D</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	County implemented road drainage project; limited input/consensus by stakeholders	5 pts
	10. Project Delivery	County implemented road drainage project.	7 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>12 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>D</b>	

**Total Points Possible 100 pts**  
**Actual Total Score 64 pts**  
**Overall Letter Grade D**

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
San Luis Obispo Creek – Flood Control Zone 9**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	Zone 9 Advisory Group; City of SLO; CSLRCD; Local stakeholders	5 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Regular Zone 9 Advisory Group meetings	5 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary analysis and identification of constraints.	12 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	“SLO Creek Waterway Management Plan ” prepared by Questa; details to be fleshed out	10 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Agencies and local stakeholders involved in preparation of Questa study and followup	4 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>36 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>B</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	Agencies and local stakeholders involved in preparation of Questa study and followup; limited focus outside SLO City limits	4 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	Zone 9 assessments; grants	8 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	Zone 9 assessments in place; pursuing grant opportunities; large funding gap	15 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>27 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	Pursuing projects in SLO City limits; CSLRCD performing outreach to unincorporated areas; stakeholder involvement; large funding gap	7 pts
	10. Project Delivery	Vegetation management; some flood maintenance projects.	6 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>13 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	

**Total Points Possible** 100 pts  
**Actual Total Score** 76 pts  
**Overall Letter Grade** C

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
San Miguel**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	SMCSD; limited contacts	2 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Apparently not currently in place	0 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary drainage analysis performed; preliminary identification of constraints.	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD	15 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Apparently limited involvement in preparation of “Drainage and Flood Control Study”	2 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>34 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; limited input/consensus by stakeholders	5 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	CDBG funding, drainage impact development fees; limited input/consensus by stakeholders	5 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	County pursuing drainage impact development fees; limited input/consensus by stakeholders	10 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>20 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>D</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	County pursuing drainage impact development fees; limited input/consensus by stakeholders	5 pts
	10. Project Delivery	River Road stormdrain under construction with CDBG funds.	8 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>13 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>D</b>	

**Total Points Possible 100 pts**  
**Actual Total Score 67 pts**  
**Overall Letter Grade D**

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Santa Margarita**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	CSA 23 Advisory Group meets regularly and involved	5 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	CSA 23 Adv Group has drainage committee	5 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Flood problems identified; preliminary drainage analysis performed; preliminary identification of constraints.	15 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; details to be fleshed out	10 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Community involved in preparation of “Drainage and Flood Control Study”	5 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>40 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>B</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	“Drainage and Flood Control Study” prepared by SLOFC&WCD; input/consensus by stakeholders	5 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	County pursued SWRCB LID grant; input/consensus by stakeholders	8 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	Local stakeholders voted against tax assessment; pursuing project opportunities; large funding gap	12 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>25 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	Pursuing storm drain easement; community participates in creek cleanup; large funding gap	6 pts
	10. Project Delivery	LID bioswale and wetland/basin project funded and constructed.	7 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>13 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	

**Total Points Possible 100 pts**  
**Actual Total Score 78 pts**  
**Overall Letter Grade C**

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Shandon**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	CSA 16 Advisory Committee; Caltrans; little contact	2 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Apparently not currently in place	0 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Some flood problems identified; no drainage analysis performed. at this time	5 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	No analysis or alternatives identified; contact with Caltrans	5 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Local stakeholders not currently involved in flood control issues; town plan and EIR in process	2 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>14 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>F</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	Potential cooperative project with Caltrans; no stakeholder involvement	2 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	Possible CDBG, USDA grant funding; no stakeholder involvement currently	2 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	County discussed potential grant funding with USDA; no stakeholder involvement currently; large funding gap	5 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>9 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>F</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	No current projects currently	2 pts
	10. Project Delivery	No current projects	0 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>2 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>F</b>	

**Total Points Possible** 100 pts  
**Actual Total Score** 25 pts  
**Overall Letter Grade** F

**Flood Control Project Implementation  
Community Readiness Report Card  
Templeton**

<b>Major Grouping</b>	<b>Category Description</b>	<b>Basis for Evaluation/ Criteria for Grading</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	1. Establish and Maintain Contacts	TCSD; limited contacts	2 pts
	2. Organize Drainage Committee	Apparently not currently in place	0 pts
	3. Identify community Needs	Some flood problems identified; very preliminary drainage analysis performed.	10 pts
	4. Identify Project / Program Alternatives	Initial analysis performed; alternatives not identified	10 pts
	5. Become Educated / Prepare	Local stakeholders not currently involved	5 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>45 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>27 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>D</b>	
<b>Opportunity</b>	6. Develop a Short List of Projects / Programs	Initial analysis performed; alternatives not identified; no stakeholder involvement	2 pts
	7. Identify Funding Programs	Drainage impact fees; no stakeholder involvement currently	2 pts
	8. Obtain Funding	County pursuing drainage impact fees; limited stakeholder involvement; large funding gap	5 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>35 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>9 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>F</b>	
<b>Execution</b>	9. Pursue Implementation	County pursuing drainage and flood study; will seek stakeholder involvement; no current projects	2 pts
	10. Project Delivery	No current projects	0 pts
		<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>20 pts</b>
	<b>Actual Score</b>	<b>2 pts</b>	
	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>F</b>	

**Total Points Possible 100 pts**  
**Actual Total Score 38 pts**  
**Overall Letter Grade F**

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## **VII. Proposed Project Strategy by Community**

### **a. General.**

As was noted in the previous section, the intent of the report card is not necessarily to grade or rate a community according to the level of need for flood control projects, but rather to evaluate the current involvement of local stakeholders and readiness of the community to pursue and implement such projects, using the criteria discussed in this report. In general, the report cards showed that those communities that scored highest (i.e. most ready to implement projects) were those that were viewed as having in place a “critical mass” of interested, educated and involved stakeholders, identification of flooding problems with clear mitigation alternatives backed up by suitable analysis to identify the constraints and budget costs associated with each alternative. Following is a brief discussion of the results with comments regarding a proposed strategy for moving each community towards “critical mass” for project implementation.

### **b. Arroyo Grande Creek Channel – FC Zone 1/1A**

Report Card Results. The residents and stakeholders associated with Flood Control Zone 1/1A were assigned letter grade of “B,” using the criteria and methodology included in this study. Improving and maintaining the conveyance capacity of the Zone 1/1A creek channel is certainly as daunting a challenge as any other flood control issue in the County, given its location in the coastal zone, environmental constraints, number of jurisdictional agencies involved, broad and varied local and agency stakeholders, magnitude of project costs, etc. However, the level of participation and proactive involvement and coordination of the stakeholders in general and Zone 1/1A committee members in particular can in some measure provide a model and example for other communities. Factors positively affecting the grade include the recent initiation of preparing a Floodway Management Plan and Programmatic EIR, a multi-year effort estimated to cost approximately \$575,000, and a recently conducted “tabletop” flood emergency “evacuation” exercise. The exercise included coordination and input from various emergency agencies and management staff, and will aid in providing a plan and procedure to follow in the event a levee breach occurs before reasonable mitigation measures can be implemented to accommodate future high storm runoff events which could threaten to exceed the channel capacity. The efforts at organizing, educating and grassroots efforts of outreach to stakeholders has facilitated local funding via a Proposition 218 assessment district formation recently approved by the property owners to increase assessments, which will fund the Floodway Management Plan and provide a local match for access to additional outside funding, putting the stakeholders in a favorable position to take advantage of other such funding opportunities as they arise.

Recommended Strategy. The stakeholders should continue the current efforts of coordination and cooperation with SLOCFWCD and agency staff and continue

pursuing grant and other funding opportunities. The District and stakeholders should continue following efforts of implementation toward floodway management as identified and approved based on permits acquired through the Floodway Management Plan EIR process. In addition, the USDA has indicated potential funding support based on guaranteed reimbursement revenue from the assessment district. Such funding should be evaluated and pursued if favorable.

**c. Cambria**

Report Card Results. The community of Cambria had an overall assigned letter grade of “C.” Factors positively affecting the grade include the fact that a detailed “Drainage and Flood Control Study” was recently prepared by the SLOFCWCD on behalf of the community, the community voted to assess themselves for implementation of a West Village Flood Control Project, and FEMA funds have been obtained and major project alternatives are under construction. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current large funding gap for other projects throughout the community and an apparent lack of current local stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the process of pursuing additional flood mitigation programs and projects.

Recommended Strategy. Community outreach by County staff would be recommended. Such outreach efforts might include presentations at North Coast Advisory Council meetings, CCSD meetings, coordination with the District 2 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage stakeholder involvement.

**d. Cayucos**

Report Card Results. The community of Cayucos had an overall assigned letter grade of “D.” Factors positively affecting the grade include the fact that a detailed “Drainage and Flood Control Study” was recently prepared by the SLOFCWCD on behalf of the community, local stakeholders were involved in the Flood Control Study, and one of the mitigation project alternatives recommended in the study has been pursued to a limited extent. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current large funding gap for projects throughout the community and the current lack of local stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the process of pursuing flood mitigation programs and projects.

Recommended Strategy. Community outreach by County staff would be recommended. Such outreach efforts might include presentations at Cayucos Citizens’ Advisory Council meetings and coordination with the District 2 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage stakeholder involvement.

**e. Los Osos**

Report Card Results. The community of Los Osos had an overall assigned letter grade of “C.” Factors positively affecting the grade include the fact that a

detailed Drainage Master Plan had been prepared for the community in 1998, and that the local stakeholders were actively involved pursuing some of the projects, including passing a drainage special tax assessment and voting to approve formation of a Community Services District in part to address local drainage issues. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current large funding gap for projects throughout the community and the current apparent lack of local stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the process of pursuing flood mitigation programs and projects.

Recommended Strategy. Though the LOCSD has assumed a more prominent role in community drainage issues since its formation in 1998, outreach by County staff would be beneficial to foster communication and coordination regarding common concerns, such as roadway drainage. Such outreach efforts might include presentations at Los Osos Community Advisory Council meetings, LOCSD meetings, coordination with the District 2 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage stakeholder involvement.

**f. Nipomo**

Report Card Results. The community of Nipomo had an overall assigned letter grade of “C.” Factors positively affecting the grade include the fact that a detailed “Drainage and Flood Control Study” was recently prepared by the SLOCFCWCD on behalf of the community, NCSD and local stakeholders were actively involved in the Flood Control Study, the Land Conservancy has been an active advocate in the community supporting the program, some follow-up contact and coordination has occurred between local stakeholders and SLOCFCWCD staff, and several of the mitigation project alternatives mentioned in the study have been implemented. In addition to advocacy efforts, the Land Conservancy has been involved in outreach to the community, resulting in educational activities and assistance in coordinating annual creek cleanup days, including vegetation management to maintain channel capacity. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current large funding gap for projects throughout the community, and the current level of local stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the process of pursuing flood mitigation programs and projects.

Recommended Strategy. Community outreach by County staff would be recommended. Such outreach efforts might include presentations at South County Advisory Council meetings, NCSD meetings, further cooperation with Land Conservancy staff, and coordination with the District 4 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage additional stakeholder involvement.

**g. Oceano**

Report Card Results. The community of Oceano had an overall assigned letter grade of “D.” Factors positively affecting the grade include the fact that a detailed “Drainage and Flood Control Study” was recently prepared by the

SLOCFCWCD on behalf of the community, OCSD and local stakeholders were involved in the Flood Control Study, and minor mitigation project alternatives mentioned in the study have been implemented. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current large funding gap for projects throughout the community, the current lack of local stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the process of pursuing flood mitigation programs and projects, community reluctance to participate in pursuit of such programs and projects, and a general lack of positive advocacy.

Recommended Strategy. Community outreach by County staff would be recommended, with a goal of developing a partnership between OCSD, District staff and sponsoring or supporting advocate agencies, such as the SLCRCD. Such outreach efforts might include presentations at Oceano Advisory Council meetings, OCSD meetings, coordination with the District 4 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage stakeholder involvement.

**h. San Luis Obispo Creek Watershed – FC Zone 9**

Report Card Results. The residents and stakeholders associated with Flood Control Zone 9 were assigned a letter grade of “C” using the criteria and methodology included in this study. Zone 9 faces similar challenges in Improving and maintaining the conveyance capacity as those faced by Zone 1/1A, given its location in the coastal zone, environmental constraints, number of jurisdictional agencies involved, broad and varied local and agency stakeholders, etc. As with Zone 1/1A, there is a relatively high level of participation and proactive involvement and coordination of the stakeholders in through the Zone 9 advisory group, which helped facilitate the preparation of a comprehensive “SLO Creek Waterway Management Plan” and follow-up hydraulic modeling and project alternative refinement. The advisory group has been successful in efforts at organizing and outreach to stakeholders, mostly to residents within the SLO city limits. Some outreach to property owners in the unincorporated areas downstream of the City of SLO has occurred in recent years, through cooperative efforts of the SLCRCD. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current lack of involvement and cooperation in the process on the part of those stakeholders within the unincorporated areas of the Zone 9 watershed, and while funding is available due to the Zone 9 tax base, floodway and watershed project and program demands significantly exceed the current funding capability.

Recommended Strategy. The stakeholders should continue the current efforts of coordination and cooperation with SLOCFCWCD and agency staff and continue pursuing grant and other funding opportunities. Efforts at outreach to stakeholders in the unincorporated areas of Zone 9 should be continued, including coordination with the Avila Valley Advisory Council and the District 3 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage stakeholder involvement. Research and pursuit of grant opportunities should also be continued, as such programs are available.

**i. San Miguel**

Report Card Results. The community of San Miguel had an overall assigned letter grade of “D.” Factors positively affecting the grade include the fact that a detailed “Drainage and Flood Control Study” was recently prepared by the SLOFCWCD on behalf of the community and that steps have been taken to construct some of the alternatives included in the study. In addition, San Miguel is one of the few communities in the county currently qualifying for CDBG grant funds, according to existing median household income levels. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current large funding gap for projects throughout the community, and the current lack of local stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the process of pursuing flood mitigation projects.

Recommended Strategy. Community outreach by County staff would be recommended. Such outreach efforts might include presentations at San Miguel Advisory Council meetings, SMCS D meetings, coordination with the District 1 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage stakeholder involvement.

**j. Santa Margarita**

Report Card Results. The residents and stakeholders associated with Santa Margarita were assigned letter grade of “C,” using the criteria and methodology included in this study. Like Zone 1/1A, the level of participation and proactive involvement and coordination of the local stakeholders is quite high, through regular participation in the CSA 23 advisory group, community outreach, etc. Such efforts have resulted in annual creek cleanup days, including vegetation management to maintain channel capacity, and have helped facilitate the recent construction of major drainage projects in the community. As with Zone 1/1A, the stakeholders are well positioned to take advantage of project and funding opportunities as they arise. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current large funding gap for projects throughout the community, and the historic lack of voter support for establishing a drainage tax assessment.

Recommended Strategy. The stakeholders should continue the current efforts of coordination and cooperation with SLOFCWCD and agency staff and continue pursuing grant and other funding opportunities. In addition, the USDA has indicated potential funding support if a guaranteed reimbursement from the community could be established. Such funding should be evaluated and pursued if the community response is favorable.

**k. Shandon**

Report Card Results. The community of Shandon had an overall assigned letter grade of “F.” Factors positively affecting the grade include the fact that the SLOFCWCD has had contact with Caltrans for a potential cooperative drainage mitigation project in the middle of the community, and that the County Planning Department is in the process of developing a town plan for the Shandon which

will involve a series of public meetings in the community, providing opportunities for outreach concerning flood and drainage issues. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current lack of local stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the process of pursuing flood mitigation programs and projects, and the lack of a drainage master plan for the community.

Recommended Strategy. Community outreach by County staff would be recommended. Such outreach efforts might include presentations at Shandon Advisory Council meetings and coordination with the District 1 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage stakeholder involvement. The current process of developing a town plan for Shandon should provide opportunity for outreach to stakeholders.

## **I. Templeton**

Report Card Results. The community of Templeton had an overall assigned letter grade of "F." Factors positively affecting the grade include the fact that the SLOFCWCD has recently commissioned the preliminary phase of what will ultimately become a master drainage report for the community, and is pursuing a program to develop drainage impact fees to fund drainage mitigation projects in Templeton, depending on the results of the drainage study. Factors negatively affecting the grade include the current lack of local stakeholder involvement and cooperation in the process of pursuing flood mitigation programs and projects.

Recommended Strategy. Community outreach by County staff would be recommended. Such outreach efforts might include presentations at Templeton Area Advisory Council meetings and coordination with the District 1 Supervisor and his/her legislative assistant to facilitate and encourage stakeholder involvement.

## **VIII. Implementation of Project Strategy**

### **a. General**

Outreach to local and agency stakeholders and development of communication, cooperation and participation is fundamental to the successful implementation of local projects. District staff conducted numerous informational and communication meetings with many of the community representatives and agencies during the process of preparing the Six Community Drainage and Flood Control studies. District staff also participated in a flood preparedness forum with stakeholders in one of the target communities in November of 2006 and lessons learned in preparing for the meeting and responding to questions and comments from the public have been used in the preparation of this Flood Management Plan report. Since the forum, there have been several public meetings with advisory groups discussing flooding and drainage issues for three of the target communities. Questions and input from the public and advisory group members have been used to create a detailed list of “frequently asked questions” (FAQ’s) which have been grouped into various categories including policy, funding, environmental constraints and emergency response. The questions and responses are included in the appendix of this report. In addition, the FAQ’s will be featured on a website that is currently being developed for the District for disseminating information and educating the public pursuant to the common goals of implementing flood mitigation projects and programs. It is recommended that this report also be posted on the website and distributed to interested parties as part of the outreach program.

### **b. Next Steps**

It is recommended that the following steps be taken to implement the strategies discussed in this report, with activities tailored to the individual needs of the communities as described in earlier sections of the report:

1. Publish this report and make available for distribution to interested stakeholders.
2. Meet with individual District Supervisors and their legislative assistants to discuss the report findings and facilitate outreach to key stakeholders in their districts.
3. In cooperation with the pertinent Supervisor and legislative assistant, schedule an agenda item at a regular meeting of individual advisory groups to present the report findings and solicit stakeholder involvement.
4. Distribute copies of the report to stakeholder groups, such as the San Luis Coastal RCD, Upper Las Tablas RCD, NRCS, Land Conservancy, etc.
5. In conjunction with community advocates, develop a list of priority projects which can be the focus of efforts to implement by available District staff as opportunities and resources allow.
6. Finalize the District website as an outreach and educational tool, and include contact information for interested parties.
7. Post a copy of the report for download on the website.