



Many Agencies ...

One Solution ...

Reducing Risk

The Silver Jackets Program

“Silver Jackets allows the State and Federal partners to work seamlessly...and anticipate needs during disaster events. The Silver Jackets program maximizes the funding available... and allows the team members to work together in a synergistic manner, tapping into one another's needs and capabilities, thus creating... services that otherwise would not be available. The program allows the partner agencies to look ahead and identify potential challenges and identify solutions to address those challenges before they happen.”

Manuela Johnson, Indiana Dept of Homeland Security

Silver Jackets teams are continuously operating, state-led, interagency collaboratives working together to reduce flood risk at the state level. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is teaming with states, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and other federal, state and local agencies to provide a unified approach to addressing a state's priorities. No single agency has the 100 percent solution -- each has one or more pieces, similar to squares in a patchwork quilt. The Silver Jackets program can be viewed as the quilting bee, the place where all agencies come together with the state to put their squares together and implement a solution.

The primary goals of the Silver Jackets program are to:

- Facilitate strategic **life-cycle** flood risk reduction,
- Create or supplement a **continuous** mechanism to **collaboratively** solve state-prioritized issues and implement or recommend those solutions,
- Improve processes, identifying gaps and counteractive programs,
- Leverage resources and information, learn about programs and how to combine,
- Improve and increase **flood risk communication** and present a unified interagency message, and
- Establish close relationships to facilitate **integrated post-disaster recovery** solutions.

Pilot teams initiated in Ohio in 2005 and Indiana in 2006 have been very successful. Coordination through the Ohio team enabled a community to acquire detailed mapping of its community by tapping into an ongoing regional watershed study. By integrating the USACE Planning Assistance to States program and FEMA's Flood Mitigation Assistance program, the town gained eligibility for FEMA flood mitigation funds. By bringing together multiple agencies, the Indiana team was able to pair technologies not often used together to identify when specific flood areas will be impacted. Through the use of real time river gage data, the city now knows when to take protective actions and can identify where those actions will be needed. Citizens can monitor flood progression and be more responsible for their own safety.

Efforts are underway to establish a Silver Jackets team in at least one state in every Corps division across the United States this year, with the ultimate goal of offering an interagency team to every state. The intent is not to duplicate existing teams, but to supplement and strengthen current efforts, and establish relationships where they do not yet exist.

For further information, contact Jennifer Dunn, the Program Manager at Jennifer.K.Dunn@usace.army.mil. A Silver Jackets website is under construction; look for it as soon as August 2009 at www.iwr.usace.army.mil/nfrmp/state.