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**FYSA- Media Monitoring Report for DR 4241 SC 01/22/16**

## *NEWS CLIPS*

### SOUTH CAROLINA-DR-4241

Friday, January 22, 2016

#### **Issues:**

- None

#### **Summary:**

- Community input will help the County develop a flood mitigation study, which will have strategies for lessening the effects of future flooding.
- U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham called Wednesday for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to release records of a 75-year-old dam that blew out last fall on Fort Jackson as a major storm socked the Columbia area.
- Open government advocates on Thursday joined U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham in calling for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to release records of a dam that failed on Fort Jackson during a major storm last fall.
- Earlier this week, several main thoroughfares and secondary roads in Eastover were closed simultaneously while crews worked to repair washed out railroad crossings and roadways.
- They say the scammers have been trying to prey on those hardest hit -- either by phone or in person.
- **FEMA** is switching gears to focus state-wide on long-term recovery, and it's chosen the City of Myrtle Beach to partner with in the effort.
- The **Federal Emergency Management Agency** is set provide the state about \$5 million to hire on-the-ground counselors who will start support groups, refer residents to mental health
- A final piece of historical trivia related to the Columbia Canal is that it was originally built as part of a network of canals that connected communities above the fall line (the furthest navigable point for freight ships on a river) to the ports in Charleston, and it was South Carolina's own Robert Mills who was the chief architect of this network.

#### **Analysis:**

- None

#### **Social Listening Analysis:**

- None

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## **Richland Co. wants input from flood victims on flood mitigation plan (WIS)**

By Michal Higdon

[WIS](#), Jan 19, 2016

COLUMBIA, SC (WIS) -

The road to recovery from October's historic flooding has been a long one. And Richland County leaders are trying to ensure the damage that occurred doesn't happen again.

Richland County leaders want to hear from residents about the damage experienced from October's flooding. Community input will help the County develop a flood mitigation study, which will have strategies for lessening the effects of future flooding.

The main areas officials know were hit the hardest and are focusing on are Lower Richland County, the Gills Creek Watershed and Stoop Creek Watershed. Residents are still in the cleanup and rebuilding process. While workers say the area will never be the same, the cleanup is said to be progressing for residents to return their homes.

"You can see it moving forward. We've been out here for three months, pretty much every day other than Sundays," says Cain Boozer, the owner of Boozer's Tree Service who has been cleaning up the area. "You can see people out and rebuilding. We've been cutting trees. Like I said, every day trying to get things squared away and getting the houses rebuilt."

The Community Input and Recovery Project is a series of six meetings to gather feedback from residents. The meetings are scheduled Jan. 19-23 throughout Richland County.

The community input meetings will include interactive mapping stations, questionnaires and opportunities for residents to submit comments and share information about their experiences. Residents are encouraged to take photographs and other information to document recent, as well as recurrent, flooding in their communities.

The first meeting Tuesday night is from 5:30PM-7:30PM at St. Andrews Park in Columbia, 920 Beatty Road. If you can't make it, [click here](#) for a link to other meeting dates and times.

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## **Graham seeks release of dam inspection records at fort (The State)**

By Sammy Fretwell

[The State](#), January 20, 2016

Senator wants "thorough accounting" of Fort Jackson dam failure

Corps of Engineers won't release records

Graham says records could clear up questions about Semmes Lake dam

Semmes Lake dam at Fort Jackson. The earthen structure blew out during the October floods in Columbia.

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham called Wednesday for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to release records of a 75-year-old dam that blew out last fall on Fort Jackson as a major storm socked the Columbia area.

The Corps has refused to release the records, arguing that terrorists or criminals could use the information against the public.

But Graham, one of the military's biggest boosters in Congress, said in a letter to the Corps that making the information public could clear up questions about whether the Army properly maintained the Semmes Lake dam.

The 22-foot-high earthen dam crumbled Oct. 4. Numerous homes and businesses near the base flooded that same day, raising questions about whether the Semmes Lake failure contributed to the problem.

"In order to remove any further speculation, I ask that you release all maintenance records, along with any additional pertinent information associated with the Semmes Lake dam to the public," Graham, R-S.C., said in his letter to Corps commanding general Thomas P. Bostic.

Graham's letter, released after 6 p.m. Wednesday, said the failure to release the records has prevented a "thorough accounting" of deficiencies in the dam.

Corps emails obtained by The State newspaper under the Freedom of Information Act show that, in 2013, inspectors had rated the dam as a "serious hazard," one of the worst ratings that can be given. The newspaper reported on these problems Jan. 10.

The Corps, however, denied the newspaper's request for inspection reports, which would provide more detail about deficiencies noted in the emails. The Corps says the records should remain secret for security reasons. Fort Jackson also has not said whether it fixed problems cited by inspectors in 2013. In contrast to the Corps, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control has released records of dams it regulates in Columbia neighborhoods and other parts of South Carolina.

"I have serious concerns with the Corps' decision not to release the maintenance records of the dam to the public," Graham's letter said. "The decision to withhold these records has fueled speculation that the Army did not heed the

concerns of the Corps and did not take the necessary corrective measures to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the dam.’’

The State contacted the Corps’ Vicksburg, Miss., office this week to determine whether the agency would reconsider its decision to deny access to the records. Agency attorney Bill Woodard said the newspaper would have to formally challenge the decision with an appeal.

Late last year, Woodard denied access to the full inspection reports. “Terrorists or criminals could use that information to determine whether attacking a dam would be worthwhile,’’ Woodard said in a letter to The State.

Property owners in King’s Grant, a gated neighborhood next to the base, are considering whether to sue the fort. Property owners have said they suspect that a rapid rush of water the morning of Oct. 4 came from the Semmes Lake dam failure. That morning, water spilled over the banks of Wildcat Creek, which flows out of Semmes Lake, and flooded homes along the stream.

The Army could be liable for millions of dollars in damages if it is determined that the Semmes Lake dam failure contributed to flooding off the base.

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## **Outcry to provide records of failed dam grows in South Carolina** (The State)

By Sammy Fretwell

[The State](#), January 21, 2016

The Semmes Lake dam at Fort Jackson blew out Oct. 4, two years after Army dam inspectors rated it as a serious hazard.

Open government advocates on Thursday joined U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham in calling for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to release records of a dam that failed on Fort Jackson during a major storm last fall.

Adam Marshall, an attorney with the Reporters Committee For Freedom of the Press in Washington, called it “incredibly unfortunate’’ that the Corps has refused requests for the information. Releasing the records is in the public interest, he said.

Fort Jackson is upstream from hundreds of homes and businesses, many of which flooded the same day the fort’s Semmes Lake dam broke. Some neighbors question whether the Semmes Lake failure contributed to rising waters that flooded their homes during the Oct. 4 storm. King’s Grant, a gated community next to the fort, and commercial areas along lower Devine Street sustained flood damage that day.

“This is precisely the type of information that needs to be discussed and debated and analyzed, so the public can figure out what went wrong, if anything, so that fixes can be made in the future,’’ Marshall said. “These are not documents needed for some abstract academic purpose. This has to do with people’s futures.’’

Corps officials have said releasing the records could compromise security, allowing terrorists or criminals to use the information to help them determine whether to attack a dam. The Corps turned down a Freedom of Information Act request by The State newspaper for inspection reports of dams on the fort. The newspaper is appealing the decision to the Corps.

Columbia lawyer Jay Bender, a state Press Association attorney who also represents The State newspaper, said it’s hard to understand why the Corps would not provide the dam inspection records — particularly for the failed Semmes Lake dam.

“The dam is gone,’’ Bender said. “What is the problem with releasing information about it?’’

Graham, a South Carolina Republican who is one of the military’s biggest supporters, this week wrote the Corps’ commander in Washington, requesting the records’ release. Graham said the documents could help clear up questions about the performance of the Semmes Lake dam.

Emails the Corps did release to the newspaper show the 75-year-old dam was considered a “serious hazard,’’ one of the worst ratings that can be given to a dam. But without the inspection reports, it’s unknown what the problems were and what Fort Jackson was told to do to address the problems. The Fort has not responded to questions about what steps it took to address deficiencies in the 2013 inspection report.

A Corps spokesman said Thursday the agency is reviewing the request by Graham to release maintenance records, but the review is not complete.

Both Marshall and Bender said the military’s hesitancy to provide the information follows changes in federal law after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the U.S. Those changes limited public access to some records of infrastructure, such as dams, that the government deemed vulnerable to terrorism.

In its response to the newspaper’s request for information, the Corps cited two sections of federal law that the agency says allows it to keep the information secret. Those sections relate to terrorist threats or potential compromises of security for infrastructure.

Marshall said one of those sections is a relatively new exemption, approved by Congress in 2012, that has had limited court challenges. Bender said the Corps might have legal grounds to deny some of the records — but it isn't right.

Bender noted the Corps' argument is weakened by the fact that state regulators in South Carolina have released dam inspection records for private dams they regulate. Those dams are in neighborhoods, where homeowners groups maintain the dams.

"Maybe the Corps is suggesting that security is better in those neighborhoods than at Fort Jackson," Bender said. "I think it is just the instinct of the Corps to keep the public out of its business."

Pete Strom, a former U.S. Attorney who is representing homeowners against the fort, said it appears the military is trying to "cover something up" by keeping the records secret.

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## **Watch: Road Closures Still A Problem In Some Areas After Floods (WOLO)**

Several roads in Eastover remain closed after the historic floods causing traffic for residents.

By Jennifer Ready

WOLO, January 21, 2016

Columbia, S.C. (WOLO) — More than 3 months after the historic floods, residents in Eastover are still feeling the impact with several road closures across the region.

"Now, I have to drive all the way up Garners Ferry, make a left turn on Reese Road, go all the way by G-mart then come back down so it's a thirty minute ride," explained resident Paulette Cunningham.

Cunningham explained her new route to Gadsden since the historic floods damaged several roads.

"There's a big breach that still exists in Highway 48," said Cunningham.

Earlier this week, several main thoroughfares and secondary roads in Eastover were closed simultaneously while crews worked to repair washed out railroad crossings and roadways. Eastover residents said the closures created an influx of traffic in their small town.

"It was real crowded," said resident Thomas Scott. "You saw a lot of trucks yesterday, they used to come down the main highway but somewhere they can't get through so it's kind of been rough."

According to SCDOT, roughly 20 roads and bridges remain closed in Richland County. Officials said several of the closures are under contract for repair, while the roads damaged by dam breaches may take some time.

"There are roads across dams and the responsibility of the DOT for the road across a dam is just for the road itself and not for the dam and if the dam has breached it's really the responsibility of the owner of the dam to make repairs," explained SCDOT maintenance engineer Robert Dickinson.

Aside from roads across dams, officials expect all the roads in Richland County to be back up and running by mid-summer

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## **Scammers target Upstate flood victims (WTOC-FOX Carolina)**

FOX Carolina, Jan 14, 2016

GREENWOOD, SC -- It's been months since flood waters tore through parts of Greenwood County.

There been more rain since then and residents there are trying to clean up. Deputies there say they're also trying to do some cleaning up of their own and get scammers off the streets.

They say the scammers have been trying to prey on those hardest hit -- either by phone or in person.

"That event we had in October was bad, but we've had three other flooding events here in greenwood county," said George McKinney, Greenwood County Emergency Management Coordinator.

The flooding is now a distant nightmare for many, but not those who want to bilk those hit hardest out of their money.

Captain Dale Kittles with the Greenwood County Sheriff's Office says the hits just keep coming for those affected by the recent floods.

"It started with a lot of calls. It was getting to where I was getting eight or nine an hour, I mean that's how much it was," Kittles said.

Deputies say that now that **FEMA** relief deadlines have passed, scammers are making another round to target the vulnerable - trying to get whatever they can, whether they call or knock at the door.

Deputies tell FOX Carolina that while the calls are coming, they don't have any victims. But they believe some may be too embarrassed to come forward. They say scammers have flooded the Upstate.

Deputies say if you need help, reach out to law enforcement, state officials or **FEMA**.

FOX Carolina is told those agencies will never actively seek you out unless you have already contacted them.

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## FEMA, City Of Myrtle Beach Partner On Statewide Disaster Recover

By Mandy Noell

WMBF-TV Myrtle Beach (SC), January 21, 2016

MYRTLE BEACH, SC (WMBF) – As many people are still getting back to normal life following October’s flooding, **FEMA** is switching gears to focus state-wide on long-term recovery, and it’s chosen the City of Myrtle Beach to partner with in the effort.

Many people affected by the flood have gotten grants from **FEMA**. They have reopened businesses or moved back into their homes. **FEMA**’s Disaster Recovery Centers are closing because fewer people still need help. That is why **FEMA**’s focus is moving to long-term recovery. It’s the next phase of handling disaster; transitioning from dealing with an immediate emergency, to looking back on it and learning.

**FEMA** is looking to the City of Myrtle Beach, and specifically City Planner Allison Hardin, for long term recovery efforts.

“We’ll talk about the national disaster recovery framework, which are the guiding principles **FEMA** uses to help guide communities through recovery after disaster,” Hardin said. “We hope that by introducing these principles and guidelines, that the community will take them and incorporate them into their operations. So that the next event they’ll have fewer damaged area, they’ll have less time down after the event and they’ll be able to recover sooner.”

Myrtle Beach is a city that has to be prepared for anything, from hurricanes and floods, to tornadoes and ice storms, and Hardin will train, receive a certification, then travel across the state to help the efforts.

“We’re trying to share that expertise through the **FEMA** courses, with others, so others will have the knowledge that we have coming back after a storm, and how to make your community more resilient before the next one.”

Being resilient, Hardin said, is more than just coming back from a storm. It means growing from it.

“It’s not just enough for us to be able to come right back to business immediately after. We want to be able to come back better than we were before.”

The opportunity will give the city a closer look at how disaster recovery works.

“Pairing with **FEMA** gives us an opportunity to learn how **FEMA** works, and how the state recovery works so that we are more prepared as a staff, down the road, for the next time on that end of things.”

She, along with a team of other officials and **FEMA** representatives will go to areas that don’t have staff with extensive recovery planning experience.

“So that the next event they’ll have fewer damages,” according to Hardin. “It’s vital to learn from past mistakes. Because you could lose more lives, you could lose money and property.”

Hardin’s training with **FEMA** continues at the end of January. She’ll travel to different communities which ask for help through the months of February and March.

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## Millions In Federal Dollars Expected For SC’s Mental Health Recovery After Flooding

By Avery G. Wilks

Columbia (SC) State, January 21, 2016

State mental health officials expect to receive millions of federal grant dollars to help residents left with emotional or mental problems after the historic Oct. 4 storm.

The **Federal Emergency Management Agency** is set provide the state about \$5 million to hire on-the-ground counselors who will start support groups, refer residents to mental health or substance abuse centers and pass out materials that explain mental health symptoms and where help is available after a disaster, according to William Wells, disaster response coordinator at the S.C. Department of Mental Health.

Wells said state officials hope the grant for the nine-month program will be approved by early March. Once the money is in hand, he said, the department will hire up to 80 more para-professional counselors who will work in counties hit hard by the storm.

The state’s mental health department currently has more than two dozen field workers in disaster-stricken counties, paid for by an earlier, roughly \$660,000 **FEMA** grant, he said.

Stress, grief and depression can plague disaster survivors for years. And often accompanying those ailments are physical ones, such increased headaches, inability to sleep and weight gain or loss.

For people who have turned to drinking or drugs as coping mechanisms in the past, Wells said, “it’s easy for

people to fall back into those patterns of behavior again.”

“We know that after disasters, people experience a great deal of stress and a great deal of grief,” Wells said. “Many people are not able to get their lives back in order. The longer those needs go unmet, the greater the stress, the greater the impact.”

The program’s counselors, who will wear official badges and special T-shirts, will set up locations at shopping centers, knock on doors and attend public meetings to reach as many residents as possible, Wells said.

“Anywhere there are gatherings of people, they are going to try to have some sort of presence,” Wells said.

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## Columbia Canal: History Unearthed

By Sean Stucker, Director of Facilities

[Columbia \(SC\) Star](#), January 22, 2016

When the historic rains came to South Carolina last fall, one of the many casualties of the floodwaters included the historic Columbia Canal that runs alongside the east bank of the Congaree River in downtown Columbia. On October 4, the levee separating the canal from the Congaree was breached, opening up a 60-foot tear in the earthen dike; three days later, on October 7, a second breach occurred, causing even more problems for the crews working around the clock to repair the first failure.

Over the following week, workers constructed a temporary dam just north of the second rupture, restoring functionality to the supply system for much of Columbia’s drinking water. Both breaches, however, still remain as budgets and designs for repairing the levee are being considered.

Taking a closer look at the broken levee itself reveals an interesting array of historic artifacts, as well as insight into why the embankment failed in the first place. In the week following the flood, staff from Historic Columbia joined representatives from the S.C. State Historic Preservation Office, the City of Columbia Planning and Engineering Departments, and **FEMA** to examine the damage first hand and up close. With the canal water having escaped to the river, we were able to walk down onto newly formed “beaches” on the river side of the levee and gaze back up at the history the floodwaters had revealed.

What had been exposed were massive slabs of granite—the footings of the original 1891 Columbia waterworks building—stacked 30 to 40 feet high, with the remnants of a building foundation at the top; in addition, wooden piers that would have supported the piping connecting the waterworks to the river could be seen sticking out of the water, like the ruins of a dock swept away by a hurricane. These piers terminate into the base of the granite stack at a large circular opening through which the piping would have carried water into the pump house itself. The original waterworks was abandoned after only five years when the 1896 waterworks—currently still in operation—was built about a half mile upriver.

As to the insights revealed, the primary breach occurred precisely where the permeable earthworks met the solid granite footings. Water always finds a way, and, in this case, it found its way into tiny fissures at this junction of building materials, and these small gaps increased in size until the berm essentially imploded.

In considering the design of the new levee, officials would be wise to avoid these engineering errors a second time around. Moreover, preservationists hope that the design considers ways to preserve and interpret the now-exposed historic artifacts, perhaps by incorporating them into the historical offerings already available at Riverfront Park.

A final piece of historical trivia related to the Columbia Canal is that it was originally built as part of a network of canals that connected communities above the fall line (the furthest navigable point for freight ships on a river) to the ports in Charleston, and it was South Carolina’s own Robert Mills who was the chief architect of this network. Appointed as acting commissioner of the South Carolina Board of Public Works in 1820 and then to serve as superintendent of public buildings in 1823, Mills oversaw the design and early stages of construction, and the Columbia Canal opened to shipping traffic in 1824.

Of note is that this was the same time period during which Mills designed and oversaw the construction of a home on Blanding Street for Columbia merchant Ainsley Hall and his wife, Sarah. Of course, this property is known today as the Robert Mills House and Gardens and is open six days a week to anyone interested in learning more about architecture and about Columbia’s history.

For more reasons why #preservationiscool, check us out online at [historiccolumbia.org](http://historiccolumbia.org).

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## TV/Radio Clips

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[FEMA on WMBF \(NBC\) - Myrtle Beach, SC](#)

01/21/2016 16:34:55

WMBF News at 4:30 (News)

... back to normal life following october's flooding. FEMA is switching gears to focus state-wide on long-term recovery. mandy noell found the agency chose representatives from ...

(click thumbnail to play)



[FEMA on WMBF \(NBC\) - Myrtle Beach, SC](#)

01/21/2016 16:35:59

WMBF News at 4:30 (News)

... the national disaster recovery framework, which are the guiding principles FEMA uses to help guide communities through recovery after disaster. we hope that by introducing these principles and ...

(click thumbnail to play)



[FEMA on WMBF \(NBC\) - Myrtle Beach, SC](#)

01/21/2016 17:25:53

WMBF News at 5 (News)

... after the october floods-- myrtle beach city officials are teaming up with FEMA. next on wmbf news at 5:30-- how this could help in with long term recovery plans for our area. ...

(click thumbnail to play)