

From: Pritchett, Deisy <deisy.pritchett@fema.dhs.gov>
To: Pritchett, Deisydeisy.pritchett@fema.dhs.gov
CC: valentemickie@gmail.comvalentemickie@gmail.com
a williamsawilliams@eda.gov
Alexander, Robertrobert.alexander1@fema.dhs.gov
allen fountaina.fountain@emd.sc.gov
Barker, MelanieMelanie.Barker@fema.dhs.gov
Becker, Derrec (SCEMD PIO)dbecker@emd.sc.gov
Symmes, BrianBrianSymmes@gov.sc.gov
Adams, ChaneyChaneyAdams@gov.sc.gov
Worth, CharlesCharles.Worth@fema.dhs.gov
colton bowlescolton.b.bowles@usace.army.mil
Courtney Brockingtoncbrockington@emd.sc.gov
Pritchett, Deisydeisy.pritchett@fema.dhs.gov
Elizabeth robertseroberts@emd.sc.gov
elizabeth ryaneryan@emd.sc.gov
Farmer, Joe (SCEMD)jrfarmer@emd.sc.gov
Godfrey, Robrgodfrey@gov.sc.gov
Guerrero, RangelRangel.Guerrero@fema.dhs.gov
Harper, MarkMark.Harper@fema.dhs.gov
Homstad, JimJim.Homstad@fema.dhs.gov
Smith, JamesJames.Smith2@fema.dhs.gov
Mitchell, JessicaJessica.Mitchell@fema.dhs.gov
Johnson, DanielDaniel.Johnson4@fema.dhs.gov
Jowers, MalcolmMalcolm.Jowers@fema.dhs.gov
McKay, KathyKathy.McKay@fema.dhs.gov
katie norrisknorris@emd.sc.gov
ken braddockkbraddock@emd.sc.gov
Lopez-de-Victoria, MayraMayra.Lopez-de-Victoria@fema.dhs.gov
Toro, Manny JManny.Toro@fema.dhs.gov
melissa pottermpotter@emd.sc.gov
Phillips, MichaelMichael.Phillips2@fema.dhs.gov
Moore, Mike (FCO)Mike.Moore@fema.dhs.gov
morgan mo dennymdenny@emd.sc.gov
Nelson, JasonJason.Nelson2@fema.dhs.gov
Perez, VirgilioVirgilio.Perez@fema.dhs.gov
Stone Jr, PricePrice.StoneJr@fema.dhs.gov
R4-EAR4-EA@fema.dhs.gov
Guerrero, RangelRangel.Guerrero@fema.dhs.gov
Schimsa, RebeccaRebeccaSchimsa@gov.sc.gov

Riddle, JanJan.Riddle@fema.dhs.gov
scott brownsbrown@emd.sc.gov
Stenson, Kim (SCEMD Director)kstenson@emd.sc.gov
steve batsonsbatson@emd.sc.gov
Patel, SwatiSwatiPatel@gov.sc.gov
Szczecz, GraciaGracia.Szczecz@fema.dhs.gov
Loy, TheolynTheolyn.Loy@fema.dhs.gov
Townsend, JamesJames.Townsend@fema.dhs.gov
Bolton, Warrenwarren.bolton@fema.dhs.gov
Wilson, BettyBetty.Wilson@fema.dhs.gov
Smith, Yolanda MYolanda.Smith2@fema.dhs.gov
Pippin, ZachZachPippin@gov.sc.gov
Zuniga, RicardoRicardo.Zuniga@fema.dhs.gov

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FYSA- Media Monitoring Report for DR 4241 SC 02/18/16

NEWS CLIPS

SOUTH CAROLINA-DR-4241

Thursday, February 18, 2016

Issues:

- None.

Summary:

- A proposal to toughen the state's dam safety law is being criticized by property owners who think the revision could be an undue burden for the average citizen.
- A long-term recovery workshop, encouraging participation by the faith-based community, is scheduled for tomorrow morning in Orangeburg County.
- A Columbia-based nonprofit is helping elderly and disadvantaged flood survivors with home repair.

Floods

Plan for tighter dam safety law draws questions, criticism (The State)

Agencies, Faith Groups Discuss Flood Relief (The Times and Democrat)

Flood Recovery Continues With Local Partnerships (South Carolina Public Radio)

Floods

Plan for tighter dam safety law draws questions, criticism (The State)

By SAMMY FRETWELL

February 17, 2016 7:56 PM

COLUMBIA, SC - Farmers and other property owners didn't have much good to say at a hearing Wednesday about a proposal to tighten South Carolina's dam safety law.

Despite questions about the law's effectiveness, some of those who spoke said they fear a bill to toughen the

rules could be an undue burden on average citizens. A new law could cost them money and focus too heavily on dams that don't need improvements, a House committee was told.

Laurens County farmer Carroll Thompson said he's already having problems with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control over a dam on his Upstate property.

Since last fall's flood, DHEC has reclassified his low hazard dam to a high hazard dam, he said. Thompson said he had to spend about \$1,000 on an engineer to help him comply with tougher requirements.

But Thompson said his dam is in a rural area and does not threaten homes or property downstream. And it's always been that way, he said.

"We jumped the gun," Thompson said, noting tougher state regulation should not be "a one-size-fits-all deal."

Others questioning the bill Wednesday included homeowners from Greenville and Richland counties.

The bill, introduced by House Speaker Jay Lucas, R-Darlington, is intended to improve a state dam safety program criticized by dam experts for years as being deficient and underfunded. The state's regulation of dams came into focus after many of the structures burst following the October downpour.

Lucas' bill would, among other things, mandate more detailed inspections of hundreds of dams in heavily populated areas, require some dam owners to post bonds to remove structures if the dams endanger lives, and increase fines for violations. South Carolina has about 2,400 regulated dams.

Some groups, such as American Rivers, contend a tighter law will better protect the landscape and people downstream, but it was clear Wednesday the legislation has a long way to go.

The House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs subcommittee made no decision Wednesday and will meet on the bill again next week.

"If we are going to legislate something like this, we need to make sure that it's fair," agriculture committee chairman Davy Hiott, R-Pickens, said. "We are reacting to an issue that happened in October."

Agencies, Faith Groups Discuss Flood Relief (The Times and Democrat)

[Orangeburg \(SC\) Times and Democrat](#), February 17, 2016

The Orangeburg County Emergency Services Office is hosting a long-term flood recovery workshop with faith-based organizations Friday morning in Santee.

The purpose of the workshop is to bring the faith-based community into the long-term flood recovery process, Orangeburg County Emergency Services Director Billy Staley said.

"We know we have people in the county who have unmet needs from the flood," Staley said.

The workshop is free and open to all any faith-based organization.

The event begins at 9:30 a.m. and will run until 11:30 a.m. It is going to be held at the Santee Conference Center.

The workshop will be attended by county, state and Federal Emergency Management Agency officials.

Flood Recovery Continues With Local Partnerships (South Carolina Public Radio)

By [Mike Switzer](#)

Feb. 18, 2016

Repairs and recovery from the Great Flood of 2015 are still going on and probably will be for some time. Our next guest's organization recently announced a partnership with the Building Industry Association of Central South Carolina and several others to step up those efforts.

Mike Switzer interviews Jim Powell, executive director of Home Works of America, a Columbia, SC-based non-profit that focuses on home repair for the elderly and disadvantaged.

[Listen](#)

5:49

