Flood of 1913 - A Coordinated Agency Public Awareness Campaign

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Buffalo District
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ASFPM Conference
What was the flood of 1913?

• Greatest national disaster to hit Ohio River Valley
• Warm winter coupled with three days and nights of rain
• Rare combination of meteorological events
After the rains stopped...

• 600 deaths
• Destroyed homes and property
• Red Cross provided relief and continues in that mission today
• MCD formed – designed and constructed flood control project
• Resulted in the Flood Control Act of 1917
Purpose of Outreach Campaign

1. Remind the public of the dangers of flooding through images and stories
2. Inform the public of what is being done at local, state and Federal levels to protect and mitigate from future events
3. Raise awareness of the team approach for solving issues related to flood risks.
Agency Participation
Ohio & Indiana
Event Timing.....

- Events were planned to coincide with Flood Awareness Week
  &
- 100-year anniversary of Flood of 1913
Time Line

Prior 18 Months
Initial discussion on flood of 1913 campaign

August 2012 - December 2012
Monthly conference calls

January 2013
In-person meeting

March 2013
Events
Game Plan

- Monthly conference calls
- Agenda prepared
- Assignments made
- Notes distributed
  - Additional people added as needed
  - Added expertise of PAO’s and PIO’s
What was planned....

- Press Event
- Outreach materials
- Presentations – to occur over multiple months
- Table-top exercise
- Social Media
- Webpage
What actually occurred.....

- OSU Weather Symposium participation
- Silver Jackets Press Event at OSU Weather Symposium
- Website
- Media Interviews
- Press releases by multiple agencies
- Facebook - 1913 Flood page by Miami Conservancy District & others
- Twitter - 1913 Flood video (USGS)
- Business cards with QR codes
Facebook

- General Information
  Populated after typing “Flood of 1913”
- Likes increased after site embedded in cleveland.com article
Facebook - Miami Conservancy District

- 919 “likes”
Articles/Press releases

- At least 5 dozen news stories
- 5 radio events (NPR, local radio stations)
- Most stories included the safety/preparedness messaging theme that Silver Jackets was trying to promote through the event.
- All asked who the Silver Jackets were (raise SJ awareness)
Technological Advancements

- The Primary Question: *How are we better able to handle a storm of its might today?*
  - Advance notice (Forecasts)
  - Better preparation (evacuations, sandbagging, levees, channel improvements)
  - Coordinated emergency response during
  - Programs to help flood survivors recover from a flood

Mobile Alerts
New Tools - USGS

New Tools - NWS

Dual Pol Radar: 2011-2013

Ensemble River Forecasts
Silver Jacket Team Members

Team Members at OSU Symposium holding Proclamation by Ohio Governor John Kasich
Website

- http://mrcc.isws.illinois.edu/1913Flood/index.shtml

- Hits increased after embedded in cleveland.com story
In late March of 1913 rain fell in such an excess over the Ohio Valley that no river in Ohio and most of Indiana remained in its banks. Bridges, roads, railways, dams, and property were washed away. In its wake, at least 600 lost their lives, a quarter million people were left homeless, and damages were estimated in the hundreds of millions, making it at that time one of the worst natural disasters the United States had witnessed.

"The flood was second only to Noah's"

— Bishop Milton Wright, father of Orville and Wilbur and Dayton flood survivor

When disaster struck this part of the U.S. starting Easter Sunday, 1913 and lasting for weeks, it had a ripple effect across the entire nation. The damage to roads, railways, telephone and electrical lines paralyzed commerce in and out of the region. This affected people across the country, unlike previous disasters where impacts were primarily localized. As a result, there was national outcry for state and federal governments to reevaluate their role in flood control.

An era of flood awareness followed immediately after the flood. Out of the chaos grew the demand for more protection ultimately resulting in new dams, levees, and floodwalls along communities hardest hit, mostly spearheaded by the Miami Conservancy District in Ohio.

This and future floods continued to expand the nation’s interest and investments into flood control. Today those in emergency response realize how critical flood awareness and preparedness can be in reducing our threat to life and property in the face of future floods.

In the one hundred years since the Great Flood of 1913 there have been great strides in reducing the threat to life and property from floods. Some of these strategies include:

- Prevention measures (building, zoning, storm water management, floodplain regulations)
- Property protection measures (acquisition, elevation, relocation, flood insurance)
- Natural resource protection (wetland protection, erosion/sediment control)
Community Profiles

Click on a city name to see that page, or see list below.
Outreach Materials

Flood Awareness - Presentations and Other Material

Presentations
- Flood Fight - Silver Jackets (Online Flash Presentation)
- Lessons from 1913 Flood (Online Flash Presentation)
- The Great Ohio Valley Flood of 1913 (Online Flash Presentation)
- Presentation to Media 3-13-2013 (Video - wmv, 52 MB)

Pamphlets and Brochures
- Great Flood 100th Anniversary Brochure (11 pages, pdf)
- Great Flood 100th Anniversary Talking Points (2 pages, pdf)
- Ohio DNR Floodplain Management 1913 Flood Commemoration Brochure (3 pages, pdf)
- Watershed Stewardship - Cuyahoga Valley National Park (2 pages, pdf)

Handouts/Posters
- End of the Canals (1 page, pdf)
- States in Ruin (1 page, pdf)
- Silver Jackets Flood Fight - Wright Brothers (1 page, pdf)
- The Great Ohio Valley Flood of 1913 - 100 Years Later (all are pdf)
  - Are you in a Flood Zone?
  - The Community Rating System
  - FEMA Mitigation Assistance
  - National Flood Insurance Program
  - Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources Assistance in Floodplain Management
  - Ohio Emergency Management Agency
  - Silver Jackets Flood Mitigation
  - Silver Jackets Goals
  - Storm-Wise Tips
  - Turn Around Don't Drown

Data
- Daily River Stage Readings for March 21 - April 16, 1913 (Excel 2010, .xlsx)
On-going and specific events

**Flood Awareness - 1913 Flood Commemoration Events**

### Ongoing Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>City, State</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>now-4/30</td>
<td>Noblesville, IN</td>
<td>Exhibit of 1913 flood in Noblesville at Hamilton East Public Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>now-4/30</td>
<td>Hamilton, OH</td>
<td>Exhibit &quot;The Destruction of Industrial Hamilton During the 1913 Flood&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now-4/28</td>
<td>Coshocton, OH</td>
<td>Special exhibit &quot;The Flood of 1913&quot; at the Johnson-Humrickhouse Museum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/23-5/5</td>
<td>Dayton, OH</td>
<td>Storm, Watershed &amp; Riverbank: Three exhibitions commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1913 flood at the Dayton Art Institute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/1-4/30</td>
<td>West Lafayette, IN</td>
<td>Exhibit &quot;100th Anniversary Commemoration of the 1913 Great Flood and its Destruction in Tippecanoe County.&quot; West Lafayette Public Library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/26-12/31</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>Exhibit: &quot;1913: A City Under Water&quot; at the Indiana Historical Society. This is the ninth &quot;You are There&quot; experience presented by the IHS.</td>
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</table>
Business Cards with QR Code

The Great Flood of 1913
Historical and Flood-Awareness Information

http://mrcc.isws.illinois.edu/1913Flood/

Silver Jackets
Many Agencies, One Solution

Silver Jackets is an interagency program for planning and implementing measures to reduce the risks associated with flooding and other natural hazards.

http://www.nfrmp.us/state/
Benefit of Business Cards

- The Flood of 1913 was the drawing point; the business cards provided a link for the media and others to obtain information which provided accurate news stories and information for flood awareness and mitigation.
Agency Participants

“Many hands make light work”
- Without the vision and perseverance of the NWS, this campaign would have not have occurred
- Agencies came together with limited resources
- True interagency effort
Core Group

- NWS
- USGS
- USACE
- OEMA
- ODNR
- MCD
Silver Jackets

- Interagency program for planning and implementing measures to reduce the risks associated with flooding and other natural hazards
- Contact state POC if you wish to get involved
- http://www.nfrmp.us/state/
QUESTIONS?