



OREGON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OREGON SILVER JACKETS FLOOD MITIGATION SUB-COMMITTEE RECEIVES TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD (PHOTO)

News Release from **Oregon Office of Emergency Management**

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The Oregon Silver Jackets Team, a sub-committee of the State Interagency Hazard Mitigation Team, chaired by the Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM), has been awarded the 2015 Silver Jackets Team of the Year by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for its flood risk management work in Oregon.

With flooding expected in many parts of Oregon this week, we get to see how mitigation projects can protect valuable property, said Oregon Office of Emergency Management State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Dennis Sigrist.

"Current projects like the Mill Creek Flood Warning System in Marion County and residential floodplain home elevations and acquisitions around the state have helped to reduce the extent of flood risk damage in many parts of the state," Sigrist explained. "Water flows downhill, and too much water eventually rises, which causes flooding. We know that in Oregon we need to be acutely aware of that."

In the award it states that information gathered by the Oregon Silver Jackets team has been used to prioritize emergency preparedness and post-disaster activities that are being expanded to incorporate several neighboring states.

"The team has collaboratively developed a Rapid Assessment of Flooding Tool to combine data available from multiple sources to estimate flood frequencies of both recent and forecasted events across the state," said Karen Durham-Aguilera, director of contingency operations and homeland security for USACE.

The collaborative team included contributions by OEM, Department of Land Conservation and Development, Department of Water Resources, Department of Geology and Mineral Industries along with FEMA, the USGS, National Weather Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service and USACE Districts.

Furthermore, OEM is reminding Oregonians to stay safe this week during the heavy rain. Here are a few tips:

- * Turn Around, Don't Drown! Don't drive into flooded areas as it only takes a few inches of moving water to carry away a vehicle.
- * Stay up to date on the flood watches and warnings for your area from US National Weather Service.

* Before traveling this week use Oregon Department of Transportation's TripCheck for the latest on road conditions and closures.

PHOTO CAPTION:

From left to right: Dennis Sigrist, state hazard mitigation officer for Oregon; Cindy Thrush, section chief, river and hydrologic engineer, UACE-Portland District; Karen Durham-Aguilera, director of contingency operations and homeland security for USACE; Andy Bryant, service hydrologist NOAA's National Weather Service, Portland office; and Ryan Cahill, hydraulic engineer, USACE-Portland District; pause for a photo with the 2015 Silver Jackets State Team of the Year award, Dec. 3, at the South Bridge Conference Center in South Bridge, Mass., during the 2015 Flood Risk Management national workshop.
(USACE photo by Brian Murphy)