

Frequently Asked Questions

PROPOSED REPLACEMENT ASSESSMENT FOR LEVEE MAINTENANCE & CAPITAL SERVICES

What is Reclamation District 1608 (RD 1608)?

RD 1608 is the public agency that maintains 3.5 miles of levees along the waterways that nearly surround Lincoln Village West. These levees are Lincoln Village West's only defense against flooding from Fourteen Mile and Five Mile Sloughs.

Why is RD 1608 Proposing to Replace its Property Assessment?

About 45% of RD 1608's annual budget is funded by a property assessment that expires on June 30, 2025. That assessment was approved by property owners in 2010 and generates around \$300,000 per year. Because that assessment is expiring, RD 1608 will face a 45% reduction in its annual operating budget. Without replacement revenues, RD 1608 can't continue to provide a high level of flood protection for Lincoln Village West properties.

How Much Is the Proposed Replacement Assessment?

Over the past 15 years, RD 1608's property assessments have not increased from year to year, not even for inflation. Meanwhile, RD 1608's cost for doing business, including permitting, labor, supplies, and materials – have increased significantly during that time. Thus, the proposed replacement assessment will generate approximately \$330,000 per year (a \$30,000 increase) to account for inflation of costs over the past 15 years.

Why Should I Be Concerned with Flood Risk?

Levees are the only barrier between your property and the water in Fourteen Mile and Five Mile Sloughs. Those levees can fail (break) if they're not properly maintained. While just one inch of water can cause more than \$10,000 in damage to a 1,000 square foot home, a break in any of the levees that protect Lincoln Village West could potentially cause up to nine feet of flooding and \$2 billion in property damage. Homeowners insurance doesn't cover flood damage, and most properties in Lincoln Village West aren't covered by flood insurance. This means that Lincoln Village West property owners would suffer serious physical and economic consequences if it floods.

My Insurance Agent Told Me That I Don't Need Flood Insurance. Doesn't That Mean My Property Won't Flood?

No. Any property protected by levees is at risk of flooding. Flood risk can be reduced, but never eliminated, through levee maintenance and improvements. Thanks to RD 1608, Lincoln Village West levees meet the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) regulations for 100-year flood protection. So, property owners are not required to purchase high-risk, high-cost flood insurance. However, if RD 1608 can't properly maintain the levees because of serious budget cuts, then flood risk will increase as the levee breaks down over time. In that case, FEMA could "re-map" Lincoln Village West into a Special Flood Hazard Area (aka high-risk flood zone), triggering mandatory flood insurance for any property with a mortgage.

What Is "Levee Maintenance?"

Levees are typically made of earthen fill (dirt). Damage to levees caused by erosion, rodents and vegetation can lead to water finding its way under and through the levee, resulting in a levee failure (break) and uncontrolled flooding. Primary threats to RD 1608's levees include erosion from high tides and wave action from wind and/or boats, and damage from burrowing rodents. To prevent this type of damage from becoming flood emergencies, RD 1608 employs one full-time superintendent and four part-time maintenance workers. Their normal activities include:

- Routine inspection of levees and drainage facilities
- Removal of debris that obstructs flood flows, or otherwise damages levees
- Maintenance of channel depth to provide access to marine mounted equipment (material and crane barges)

- Vegetation removal and control
- Rodent removal and control
- 24/7 levee patrol during high water warning and flood stages
- Resurfacing of levee maintenance and patrol roads
- Construction of erosion repair and protection
- Repair of levee embankments
- Storing and maintaining emergency flood fight materials
- Inspection and repair of gates
- Placement and distribution of sandbags and riprap during high water events
- State and federal environmental permit application and compliance
- Identification of encroachments and coordination with property owners to remove any that threaten levee stability/integrity

RD 1608 also certifies levees for FEMA accreditation. FEMA accreditation prevents the community from being "mapped" into a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area and being subjected to mandatory flood insurance.

What Are "Capital Services?"

Capital services are bigger projects that don't fall under routine levee maintenance. A good example is RD 1608's Rock Slope Protection Project that was completed in 2023. RD 1608's five-year capital project plan includes major dredging of waterways. This project is needed to maintain barge access to levees during a flood, when roadways may not be passable.

Isn't the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Planning To Improve The Fourteen Mile Slough Levee?

The USACE is implementing the \$1.4 billion Lower San Joaquin River Project (LSJRP), which includes levee improvements along Fourteen Mile Slough. The USACE and CA Department of Water Resources are paying for 90% of the project cost. The LSJRP improvements will increase the existing level of flood protection for Lincoln Village West. However, levee maintenance will remain the responsibility of RD 1608. Regardless of the Federal project, RD 1608 requires adequate funding to continue its current level of levee maintenance and complete other necessary capital projects.

How Are Proposed Replacement Assessments Calculated?

Under CA Proposition 218 law, RD 1608 can only assess properties that receive benefit from its Levee Maintenance and Capital Services (projects). The benefit to each property is the avoidance of flood damage to land and structures due to proper levee maintenance and capital projects. Each property's assessment is unique based upon the following industry-standard factors:

- Land use type (e.g., Single-family residential; Commercial; Industrial)
- Parcel size (acreage)
- Structure square footage
- Average depth of flooding

The proposed assessment also updates how assessments are calculated to comply with CA Proposition 218 law. About 45% of the existing property assessments will decrease and about 55% will increase because of these changes. Visit <https://rd1608.com/about-us-2/proposed-property-assessment> and use the Assessment Calculator to see the factors being used for your property, and to compare your existing and proposed replacement assessments.

Is the Proposed Replacement Assessment an Annual Cost?

The assessment will be included each year on property tax bills, if approved by property owners. The assessment will continue so long as RD 1608 provides levee maintenance and capital services.

Continued from reverse

Will the Proposed Replacement Assessment Increase Over Time?

If approved by property owners, the assessment can increase each year based upon cost of living (Consumer Price Index), but no more than 4 percent (whichever is less). Cost of living adjustments are not automatic. Any annual increase must be approved by the RD 1608 Board as part of its annual budget process.

Who Gets to Vote on The Proposed Replacement Assessment?

As per state law, only owners of property within the RD 1608 boundary are eligible to vote. Ballots will be sent by mail on February 6, 2025, and must be returned by mail, or in person, before the end of the public hearing on March 25, 2025. Instructions for completing and returning the ballot will be included with the ballot package.

What Happens If the Proposed Replacement Assessment Is Approved by Property Owners?

If approved, replacement assessments will first appear on property tax bills in fall 2025. RD 1608 will invest 100 percent of assessment revenues into Levee Maintenance and Capital Services (projects). The levees will continue to meet state and federal regulations, and flood insurance will not become mandatory. RD 1608 will be able to sign maintenance agreements for the USACE's improvements to Fourteen Mile Slough, as needed.

What Happens If the Proposed Replacement Assessment Is Not Approved by Property Owners?

The existing assessment will expire in June 2025, cutting RD 1608's operating budget by 45 percent. Levee maintenance and capital services will be significantly reduced. As a result, levees will degrade more quickly, increasing the likelihood of a flood. Ultimately, levees won't meet state and federal regulations for flood protection. In that case, the community will be at risk of being "mapped" into a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area. Any property with a mortgage would be required to purchase high-cost flood insurance.

Watch your mailbox after February 6 for an official ballot!



P.O. Box 4857
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Proposed Replacement Assessment
For Levee Maintenance & Capital Services**

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Where Can I Get More Information?

Contact us at (209) 475-7861, info@rd1608.com or visit our website at www.rd1608.com. Online resources include an Assessment Calculator, the Preliminary Engineer's Report for the proposed assessment, the district boundary map, annual budgets, and more. You're also invited to attend one of two upcoming community meetings listed at the right.

Upcoming Community Meetings

6:30 P.M., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Mable Barron Elementary Multi-Purpose Room
6835 Cumberland Place, Stockton

6:30 P.M., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Mable Barron Elementary Multi-Purpose Room
6835 Cumberland Place, Stockton