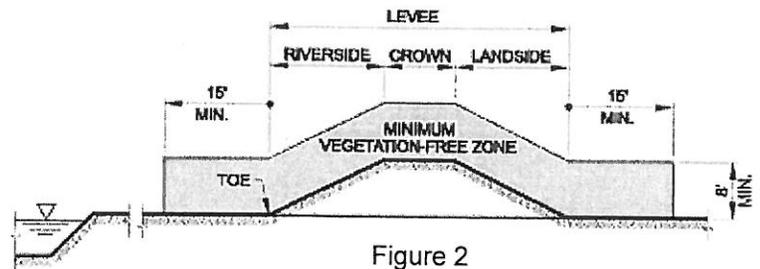


UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS VEGETATED LEVEE POLICY FACT SHEET

United States Army Corps of Engineers Policy

- This governmental agency certifies all levees in the United States to ensure they provide the proper amount of safety
- If a levee does not pass this certification process, the “flood zone” will increase surrounding the levee
- April 2007 the Corps issued a draft report stating that all levees would need to be vegetation free
- April 2009 Corps created and defined the Minimum Vegetation Free Zone which extends 15 feet on either side from the toe of the levee and includes everything in between (see Figure 2)
- Current policy does not take into account the differences between Corps study area and Southern California
 - Streams not always flowing
 - Most levees improved



Impacts of Proposed Policy on Existing Levees

- Once this policy is enforced, all current vegetated levees may lose their certification
- This will create much larger flood zones around the levee systems that are decertified, which may require many more homeowners to pay for flood insurance or for those that are currently paying, their rates will increase
- A variance must be applied for to ensure levees will not be decertified because of vegetation
 - This will be a money and time intensive process that could cause levees to become decertified before completed
- The only other option is to remove all of the existing vegetation on levees
 - Vegetated levees may have been previously approved by the USACoE
 - In order to remove the vegetation, many permits will need to be applied for and approved by other Federal Agencies (United States Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Fish and Game, etc...)

Variance Process

- Requires in depth engineering analysis to show existing vegetation will not impact functionality of levee
- 1 variance application has been processed in California and took 4 months and over \$350,00