



Service and Operations Review Marietta Flood, September 2004 (October 14, 2004) Findings and Recommendations

1. Numerous people stated that they made arrangements and were prepared to take action as a result of the initial warning on Thursday based on forecast rainfall.

Charleston will develop a method to issue river flood warnings and forecasts based on rainfall forecasts and communicate the probability of uncertainty of the river stage forecast.

2. A NWR needs to be located such that a strong enough signal to trigger the alert feature will reach into Marietta. Since the EAS system is triggered by NWR, this will enable the business owners and interested parties living within the flood plain to be alerted to the issuance of the river flood warnings as they are being distributed to the EAS.

Charleston will boost the power of the Garfield NOAA Weather Radio, All Hazards (NWR) from 800 to 1000 watts to maximize reception throughout Marietta when license approval is received.

Charleston will work with cooperators to continue to pursue a NWR for the Marietta area.

3. River flood warnings reach the Washington County Sheriffs office and Marietta PD within minutes of being issued.

Charleston will work with Washington County and Marietta officials to improve receipt and dissemination of NWS forecasts and warnings.

4. Users have been encouraged to use the AHPS website for detailed river forecast information. However, the information on the website fluctuated during the event between preliminary guidance forecasts from the OHRFC and the official final forecasts.

Charleston will work with the Ohio River Forecast Center to ensure the latest official river forecast information is always available on the Advanced Hydrologic Prediction System web site.

5. The abundance of varying gage reports continues to be a source of confusion.

Since the Point gage in Marietta is not the official forecast location for Marietta, Charleston will work with Marietta emergency management, local media, and concerned citizens to remove any reference to this gage to end confusion. All forecasts for flooding in Marietta will be referenced to the Marietta 2SW gage.

6. Flood statements are issued periodically throughout flood events (at least every 6 hours) to update current and forecast conditions.

Charleston will include the time of issuance of the next update of conditions when statements are issued during a flood event.

7. This event demonstrates that the improvements made to the river computer model are providing the forecasters in the Ohio River Forecast Center with a quality forecast tool on the main stem rivers.

Training sessions will be conducted for the Charleston staff focusing on the Ohio River Forecast Center's capabilities to model the Ohio River and output from their river model. A formal forecaster exchange program will be implemented.