

— The Proposal —

- Project Description

The project will essentially be a three mile long combination of earthen levee and concrete floodwall. It will begin at Railroad Street, parallel Fishing Creek, then proceed across the Bloomsburg Fairground parking lot before reaching the railroad tracks. From that point it will proceed east, providing protection from the Susquehanna River. It will end at West Eleventh Street. On the Fernville side of Fishing Creek, a combination of floodwall and levee will provide protection.

- Why was the proposed location chosen for the flood protection system?

Before the federal government begins major flood protection projects, it must be sure the amount spent on protection will protect property valued at, at least, the same amount. This is how it determines the ratio of costs compared to benefits. That “cost/benefit” ratio must be at least one-to-one—every dollar’s worth of protection safeguards at least a dollar’s worth of property. Based on that formula, a floodwall or levee around the entire Town of Bloomsburg is not economically feasible.

This project is intended to protect the western end of Bloomsburg where Magee Rieter Automotive Systems, Bernardi Italian Foods, and the Bloomsburg Fair are located, as well as many homes and additional, smaller businesses. In the future, when the flood control system is expanded, direct protection for additional areas of the community will be provided. However, if Magee, Bernardi, and the Fair are not protected, the Town and surrounding area may lose millions of dollars in wages, taxes, and revenue. Protecting these businesses now will keep our taxes lower later.

- Why is a flood protection system preferable to dredging?

Dredging can sometimes be an effective means to reduce flood damages. In the case of Bloomsburg and the surrounding area, however, dredging would neither be effective nor economically justified. Channel improvements to Fishing Creek were considered, however much of the Creek flows over bedrock which would have to be blasted before any excavation could begin. Environmental mitigation costs would be extremely high, as would the annual operations and maintenance costs. For the Town of Bloomsburg, 4.5 miles of the Susquehanna River would have to be dredged 10 feet deep in order to significantly reduce the level of water. The initial cost was estimated at \$35 per cubic yard, or \$350 million. Annual maintenance costs were estimated at \$17 million to \$20 million to remove redeposited sediment.

Bloomsburg Area Flood Control Project

