



FEMA

Schoharie Relocation Project Flood Damage Avoided

Gilboa, New York – A major relocation of households, structures and a road in the Town of Gilboa is credited with avoiding subsequent flood damage, even during the early-April storms this year that led to Schoharie County’s inclusion in a federal disaster declaration.

Following a disaster in January 1996, the town embarked on a \$1.5 million project, aided by federal and state funding, to take people and facilities out of harm’s way in a perennial flooding area located in the Schoharie Creek floodplain. Several houses along Stryker Road that had been damaged in the 1996 flooding were purchased and demolished, an historic church and town hall were relocated to higher ground and the road itself was rerouted out of the floodplain.

Judy Cary, the county’s Director of Emergency Management, said the Stryker Road project clearly accomplished its purpose. “Even a heavy spring runoff would flood those areas,” she said. “We don’t have to worry about them any more.”

Major funding for the project came from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through programs administered by the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) - the Public Assistance Program that helps pay to repair disaster-damaged infrastructure. Funding also came from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), which assists state and local governments to reduce long-term risk to people and property from natural disasters.

Rather than merely repairing Stryker Road and the buildings on it following the 1996 flooding, the Town of Gilboa decided to relocate the road to higher ground. That required agreement by all property owners to accept a buyout, said Shane Nickle, Senior Planner with the Schoharie County Planning and Development Agency. Some 15 homes were purchased and then demolished and buried on site. A church and the old town hall were moved about half a mile to higher ground, and the road was realigned and rebuilt outside the flood plain.

The HMGP funded approximately \$900,000 for the purchase of the homes and the relocation of the town hall and church. The \$600,000 road reconstruction was funded through the Public Assistance Program. The federal share of the total project was about \$1.1 million. The remainder was paid with local resources and state reimbursement through Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act funds.

“In April 2005, flood waters once again went over old Stryker Road,” Nickle said. “There is no doubt that the original Stryker Road and some of the homes would have been damaged had the 1996 project not occurred.”



Schoharie County,
New York



Quick Facts

Sector:

Public/Private Partnership

Cost:

\$1,500,000.00 (Actual)

Primary Activity/Project:

Relocation

Primary Funding:

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)