

# Critical Levees

*“Our levees are critical to protecting Natomas,” said King. “But they are just one of several tools we implement to keep the basin dry.”*

Past levee repair in progress along Garden Highway near San Juan Road.



This article is part of an ongoing N magazine series about RD1000’s 4Natomas flood control education program and a proposed fee for investing in repairing and upgrading the flood-prevention infrastructure in the Natomas Region.

Last month, the District talked about how climate change will likely lead to mega-flooding for California, which is alarming news for us in Natomas. Our region rivals the greater New Orleans region as one of the most flood-prone urbanized communities in the United States.

So what does it take to create the type of flood protection system that will allow those in the Natomas community to sleep well at night knowing they are safe?

The first thing to know is that a sound flood protection system has numerous layers.

- **Perimeter Levees:** The purpose of perimeter levees is to prevent exterior floodwaters

from surrounding rivers to enter into the Natomas Basin. Without the perimeter levees, our entire region would be subjected to annual flooding. As was the case prior to the District’s formation in 1911.

- **Interior Drainage System:** The interior drainage system collects stormwater runoff and other drainage from within the Natomas Basin and directs it towards the District’s pump stations.
- **Pump Stations:** The District’s eight (8) interior pump stations safely “lift” or discharge the collected storm water and other drainage out of the Natomas Basin and back into the surrounding river systems.

Levees are the first line of defense; they are highly visible in our area, especially along Garden Highway. So it’s little surprise they are the first thing people think of when it comes to flood protection.

“We have 42 miles of perimeter levees in Natomas which fortify the District’s service area,” said Kevin King, General Manager of Reclamation District No. 1000. RD1000 has overseen the region’s flood protection for more than a century. “We’re

operation and maintenance of the perimeter levees as they are still vulnerable to damage and require constant attention.”

RD1000’s ongoing operation and maintenance levee work program includes:

- Trimming vegetation that impairs visibility of the levees and adjacent areas where boils, seepage, or other signs of levee distress can be observed;
- Rodent abatement;
- Erosion repairs to levees from high river stages, wind, wave effects, and runoff;
- Monitoring for potential adverse impacts that may compromise the integrity of the levees;
- Vegetative control measures to limit growth and reduce fire risk;
- Resurfacing levee access roads for all-weather access;
- Preparation for flood season;
- Routine levee inspections year-round
- 24-hour levee patrols during high river stages.

“Our levees are critical to protecting Natomas,” said King. “But they are just one of several tools we implement to keep the basin dry.”



Pump 4 repair on Garden Highway above San Juan Road directly on the river.

thankful for enormous federal, state, and local resources that have been allocated to strengthen our levees. Nevertheless, the District must be vigilant in our



## Learn More

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