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COUNTY COMMITTED TO LEVEE PRESERVATION

RIGBY, ID, May 16, 2018 – Persistent high flows on the Snake River have caused damage to the levee near Lorenzo, prompting Jefferson County Commissioners to declare an emergency. The declaration enables the County to assist Flood Control District No. 1 in protecting the levee from further damage and potential breach.

“The damage to the levee is significant, and could lead to flooding if it is not addressed,” said Commissioner Scott Hancock. “We are committed to the protection of life and property and are working diligently with the flood control district to address this issue.”

About 400 feet of levee have been severely impacted. Although flows have decreased somewhat since springtime highs, additional high flows are expected as the Palisades Reservoir fills with additional snowmelt. The County and Flood District have a shared goal of stabilizing the levee before flows necessarily increase. If a levee breach did occur, approximately 65 Jefferson County homes could be affected.

“We want the public to know that we are monitoring the situation very closely, and working very hard to stabilize the levee before we see higher flows. We want the public to be aware of the threat, and that actions are being taken to mitigate it,” Hancock said.

Crews have been on scene since the damage was discovered May 12. Work includes diverting strong river currents away from the bank, stabilizing the bank with large rocks, and improving access to the site in preparation for long-term repair and restoration. Jefferson County has committed equipment, materials, and manpower to the project.

In addition to the emergency declaration, Jefferson County and Flood Control District No. 1 have been working with the State of Idaho to request additional assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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