



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Risk
Management
Agency

1400
Independence
Avenue, SW
Stop 0801
Washington, DC
20250-0801

BULLETIN NO.: MGR-11-005

TO: All Approved Insurance Providers
All Risk Management Agency Field Offices
All Other Interested Parties

FROM: William J. Murphy /s/ *William J. Murphy* 5/19/2011
Administrator

SUBJECT: Flooding of the Morganza Floodway and the Atchafalaya Basin

BACKGROUND:

The Morganza Floodway is part of the Mississippi River Valley Project located about 20 miles south of Natchez, Mississippi. The Morganza Spillway is intended to operate during emergency flooding to divert excess floodwater from the Mississippi River into the Morganza Floodway and Atchafalaya Basin.

Prior to opening the Morganza Spillway, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) extensively reviewed the situation and determined a series of scenarios likely to result from a decision to open the Morganza Spillway at 50 percent and a decision not to open the Morganza Spillway. Under each of those scenarios, a significant amount of cropland would have flooded, even if USACE elected not to open the Morganza Spillway, at points west of the Mississippi River between Morganza and Baton Rouge, Louisiana and points north of the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Louisiana. However, according to the scenarios, if the Morganza Spillway was not opened, there would have been additional flooding of cropland northwest of the Morganza Spillway. Thus, opening the Morganza Spillway effectively mitigates flooding of certain prime cropland that would otherwise have occurred.

Section 508(a)(1) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act specifies that coverage is provided for flood, drought or other natural disasters. This is reflected in section 12 of the Common Crop Insurance Policy Basic Provisions (11-BR) (Basic Provisions), which states:

“Insurance is provided only to protect against unavoidable, naturally occurring events.”



The Risk Management Agency Administers
And Oversees All Programs Authorized Under
The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

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ACTION:

In scenarios presented by the USACE, flooding of significant amounts of cropland was inevitable with or without operation of the Morganza Spillway due to the severity of this flood event.

Therefore, crop losses resulting from such flooding is caused by unavoidable, naturally occurring events and is insurable under the Basic Provisions and the individual Crop Provisions for crop programs applicable to this area.

DISPOSAL DATE: December 31, 2011