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NFWF West Seneca Study on Flooding Impacts

What- Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (BNW) received funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to conduct a study on using innovative, nature-based solutions to combat flooding impacts in Lexington Green and surrounding neighborhoods by reconnecting Buffalo Creek to its historic floodplain.

Goal- Complete a study to inform best path forward to curb flooding in the Town of West Seneca - identify parcels to be bought/donated/put into conservation easement to create a floodplain bench to slow the flow of the creek and provide storage for high flows, therefore alleviating downstream flooding in the Lexington Green neighborhood.

Why-

- Lexington Green has a strong history of **flooding** – Timeline
  - **1960's** - Lexington Green Neighborhood built in mid-1960's
  - **1971, 1979** – Ice jam flooding occurred in Lexington Green neighborhood
  - **2014 (January 11th and February 21st)** – Two, 100-year flood events with total damages amounting to $1.2 million
  - **2019 (February 4th and 5th)** – Ice-jam flooding occurred that caused the evacuation of the School Street neighborhood along the south side of Buffalo Creek
- West Seneca is 21.41 square miles and is transected by 9 major highways, including the NY State Thruway, making it an ideal location for residential and commercial **development**.
- In New York State and West Seneca**, climate change** is expected to exacerbate flooding due to projected increases of 1-8% in total annual precipitation coupled with increase in the frequency, intensity, and duration of extreme precipitation events (events with more than 1, 2, or 4 inches of rainfall) (Rosenzweig et al. 2011).

Project Scope - May 2021 – April 2022

1. Connect with partners/stakeholders in West Seneca
2. Establish a technical advisory committee
3. Put a Request for Proposals out to bid for a consultant to assess proposed project area for floodplain bench creation opportunities
4. Gauge interest in landowner participation in project by conducting outreach through public meetings/outreach to parcel landowners
5. Evaluation of parcels, by consultant, to decide which are suitable to advance into design phase
6. Hold a community meeting to present the findings of the consultant's work
7. Complete preliminary design providing cost estimates and modeling allowing the Team/Community to make a decision on whether or not to advance the project

Result of project –

The preliminary design for a project to provide flood mitigation and ecosystem benefits researched and completed. BNW and the Town of West Seneca can submit additional grant applications to federal, state and private agencies to advance the designs through to completion, providing funding for the projects. The end goal is to alleviate future flooding in Lexington Green Neighborhood in West Seneca.

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