

Broome County has experienced catastrophic flooding in 2006 and 2011. Also during that time frame we have also experienced minor flooding periodically.

When the flood of 2006 hit us, Broome County did take the lead in bringing our communities together not only to "weather the storm" but to become a team and stand together to address this part of our nature. This team has continued on through the current administration. Our appreciation to both the Fiala administration and the Preston administration. This team of Broome County municipalities continue to meet appropriately.

With this all being said, where are we today since 2006? Have we made progress? Are our citizens safer? How much remediation has there been?

When all this started in 2006 and it was such a shock to all of us, we not only had the attention of our local government but also our federal government. Then Senator Clinton and current Senator Schumer became quite involved and actually sponsored an appropriation of \$30,000,000 to study the Susquehanna River Basin. I think we all were excited about this. Unfortunately this went nowhere.

We, in the years after 2006, attempted to keep the pressure on to have a continued priority to our situation. Unfortunately Senator Clinton left us and Senator Schumer's office was the one we centered on for help and continued priority.

Even if we were able to get funding to do the study it would take some time. The study itself would take several years and several years before implementation. We knew this up front but here we are 9 years later and we are still at ground zero.

All that has happened is a Reconnaissance Study for approximately \$100,000 to study our local portion of the Susquehanna River. This is a far cry from \$30,000,000 and could not possibly address the vital sections of the Susquehanna River experiencing flooding.

Kirkwood struck out on our own to study within our boundaries if there was anything that we could do with remediation. This study was conducted by Woidt Engineering at a cost of \$13,000. We received a grant from Broome County Soil and Conservation Department in the amount of \$7,500 that went towards the cost. Unfortunately there is little that we could do with our local streams as the real enemy is the Susquehanna River.

As a result Woidt Engineering did contract with Broome County with the help of a grant of \$50,000 to do the same study as an expanded version to review remediation possibilities. The question is while this is another effort appreciated by all of us what can we do with this without the dollars and resources to remedy?

There is no place in our great country where there is not a risk of weather related catastrophes. There are hurricanes in the south and to our eastern borders, tornadoes throughout the mid-west, earthquakes to the west, and blizzards and flooding to the north. One solution is to move elsewhere, move to higher ground if you are in a flood endangered area. Who would buy your home if you are in a flood plain?

There is not a whole lot going on! Are we at a time when we say to our people, this is where you live? This is the risk that you take? There is little that can or will be done to the mighty Susquehanna.

When we are flooded, first thought is those poor people. Yes, that is so, but there is so much more hurting. All of a sudden they have no place to live. They miss work. Because of their misfortune, there is loss of income and months of hardships ahead of them. Can we really feel their pain?

We know for sure, when the next flood comes there will be emotion, there will be sorrow expressed, and there will be help on the way. But we also know as time fades so do the emotions and the remembrances.

It is now the conclusion by many due to the changing weather patterns and the environment that we who were once known as the Valley of Opportunity are now known as the Valley of the Floods.

Gordi Kniffen