

**VILLAGE OF OTTAWA, PUTNAM COUNTY, OHIO  
ARROWHEAD MOBILE HOME PARK  
DR-1720-OH**

---

On the night of August 20, 2007, Putnam County received nine inches of rain in less than eighteen hours, which ultimately resulted in severe flooding throughout the Village. Many homes in the community had their entire first floor totally inundated with flood water. On August 27, 2007 the State of Ohio received presidential declaration DR-1720. As a result, mitigation funds would be available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

The Arrowhead Mobile Home Park acquisition/demolition project was one of the first “expedited” mitigation projects undertaken by the Ohio EMA mitigation branch. The project involved the acquisition/demolition of 17 substantially damaged mobile homes and 10.33 acres located in the floodway of the Blanchard River.

The mobile homes were declared substantially damaged by the Ohio Department of Health and therefore automatically considered cost effect. This saved the community time and effort to gather the data needed to perform a detailed benefit cost analysis. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Ohio EMA worked together to expedite the project development, gathering all necessary data and photos. The environmental review was completed and the project submitted to FEMA in April 2008. The project was approved in May 2008. The standard mitigation project development process can take up to 18 months. As a result of the “expedited process” two projects within the Village of Ottawa were developed and submitted within 9 months of the flood event.

Ms Denise Balbaugh, Building/Zoning Coordinator for the village was the local project manager. As a result of Denise’s commitment, the project is complete and in the final closeout process. The area where the manufactured homes once sat is now a grassy open space. The Village would like to use the land as a future park site for the residents of the community. Denise is currently implementing two additional projects in the Village of Ottawa.

Federal Amount Contributed: \$236,192.10  
State Amount Contributed: \$ 23,436.00  
Local Amount Contributed: \$ 57,525.48

**TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$317,153.58**

**Ms Denise Balbaugh, Building/Zoning Coordinator for the Village of Ottawa developed the following success story for the Arrowhead Mobile Home Park acquisition project.**

**VILLAGE OF OTTAWA, PUTNAM COUNTY, OHIO**  
**ARROWHEAD MOBILE HOME PARK**  
**DR-1720-OH**

Mobile home parks are often developed in areas where land has little other use value, very near railroad tracks, near industrial areas or in the floodplain. Arrowhead Mobile Home Park was no different. Developed long before the Village of Ottawa had a flood ordinance, this park was located in the floodway adjacent to the Blanchard River.

At the time of the August 2007 flood, Arrowhead housed 17 older mobile homes with seventeen families who made up their own little neighborhood. One resident, sometimes referred to as the “mayor” of Arrowhead, kept a close eye on park activity, including flooding. He was well known for his strong views against motorists driving through flood waters and creating wakes that rippled through the front lots at the park.

Throughout the years Arrowhead had been flooded many times.

- During the June 1981 flood, some of the mobile homes were removed from their sites and relocated to a higher point on a nearby highway bridge.
- The January 2005 flooding was severe enough for the local gas company to cut off service until the waters receded. Residents were advised to evacuate; but, not all did.
- December 2006 through January 2007 the park area flooded three separate times. Though not severe enough to require evacuation or utility disconnection, these floods did limit residents’ access to and from their mobile homes.
- In August 2007, severe flooding substantially damaged all mobile homes at the park and displaced all seventeen families.
- February 2008, the vacant mobile homes once again sat surrounded by flood waters.
- By the March 2009 flood, the mobile homes had been removed; but, the area which was once Arrowhead Mobile Home Park was again under water.

There is no doubt, after the 2007 flood, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provided former Arrowhead residents with an option they otherwise would not have had. Many felt burdened by the thoughts of what to do with their flood-ruined mobile homes. None possessed funds to demolish their mobile homes and properly dispose of them on their own. [Unless, they used their FEMA assistance money; which, they needed for daily living expenses.] Although it was difficult for some residents to reconcile the fact they would not be returning to Arrowhead [especially the “mayor”], in the long run, all bettered themselves by moving to safety and areas outside the floodplain.

Two former park residents took the HMGP buyout opportunity to purchase a home [as opposed to a mobile home]. Several moved to apartments, and most of the others moved to different mobile home parks in Putnam County.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the cooperation of the mobile home park owner. Her level-headed view of the future helped her to realize an HMGP buyout was also in her best interest. The fair price offered for her floodway property gave her the opportunity to retire as a landlord. She no longer had to worry about her tenants when the river started rising. She no longer had to worry about post-flood clean-up. She no longer had to worry if the next flood [and everyone knew there would be a “next flood”] would be worse than the massive August 2007 flood. She no longer had to worry. She could take care of herself knowing acceptance of the HMGP buyout for her mobile home park set the wheels in motion to give her former tenants the “leg-up” to move to a safer area.

**VILLAGE OF OTTAWA, OHIO  
PUTNAM COUNTY  
ARROWHEAD MOBILE HOME PARK**

Photos of the June 1981 Flood  
Arrowhead mobile homes are in the background



**VILLAGE OF OTTAWA, OHIO  
PUTNAM COUNTY  
ARROWHEAD MOBILE HOME PARK**

Aerial Views August 2007 Flood



**VILLAGE OF OTTAWA, OHIO  
PUTNAM COUNTY  
ARROWHEAD MOBILE HOME PARK**

Aerial Views February 2008 Flood



**VILLAGE OF OTTAWA, OHIO  
PUTNAM COUNTY  
ARROWHEAD MOBILE HOME PARK**

Aerial View March 2009 Flood

[mobile homes have been removed]

