

Scientists to report on New Orleans levees

November 2 2005

A multi-institution research team is scheduled Wednesday to release its preliminary findings from a study of the New Orleans levee system.

The team, led by geotechnical engineer Raymond Seed of the University of California-Berkeley, has been compiling physical evidence and observations to understand the levee breaches that occurred following Hurricane Katrina, along with subsequent repairs and the implications of the findings for future storm-management efforts across the nation.

The scientists said the New Orleans levee systems are not unique; with similar systems and risks existing in California's freshwater levee system, the Mississippi River and Ohio River basins and elsewhere in the United States.

The UC Berkeley-led investigation is one of 32 rapid-response projects supported by the National Science Foundation Directorate for Engineering to study the impacts of Katrina before evidence is lost to erosion, rebuilding or decay.

The NSF expects to make as many as 51 Katrina-related awards totaling \$5 million.

The National Science Foundation is an independent federal agency that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering, with an annual budget of nearly \$5.47 billion.

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Citation: Scientists to report on New Orleans levees (2005, November 2) retrieved 22 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2005-11-scientists-orleans-levees.html>

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