

La Ceiba

General

The City of La Ceiba is located on the north (Caribbean) coast of Honduras in the Atlantida Department. In 1997 the Department reported a population of 313,187, with about 35% of that in the capital city of La Ceiba.

Landslides

This area of the Rio Cangrejal near La Ceiba has not been observed from airphotos, overflights, or from the ground. Landslides have been reported from this area, and, without additional information, we include the same cost estimate of \$ 250,000 as for the other site areas that have significant landslide hazard potential. La Ceiba has 150 families that need to be relocated. Most are being housed in schools and classes are scheduled to start back in early February.

Flooding

The primary source of flooding at La Ceiba is from the Rio Cangrejal. During Hurricane Mitch, La Ceiba received 875 mm (35 inches) of rainfall from 25 – 31 October 1998. It is estimated that 1,650 houses were destroyed and 2,475 houses damaged by Hurricane Mitch.

Evaluation of Proposed Housing Sites

The following site evaluations were based on meetings between the Corps of Engineers, Mayor Govzan Rivera, Tourism director Robert Hernon Leva, Community Development staff members Ligia Cerrato and Marco Aurelio Orellano, and Kent Forte, a local Businessman.

The city will furnish the land for the relocation and some materials and the tenant will have to construct his own house. The city has three locations to be used for the relocation; Colonia Canelas, Bomberos and Bufalo. The area is in the coastal plain so landslides are not a concern at any of the sites.

Colonia Canelas is just south of town in the hills. The site is an open area, previously deforested, with existing housing all around the area. Electricity and water are available adjacent to the site and the surrounding homes use septic tanks for wastewater disposal. Lots will be 8 meters by 16 meters and 53 lots are available at the site. While the land is steeply sloping, the surrounding housing is on the same terrain. Flooding is not a concern at this site.

Bomberos is a community Southeast of town along the Rio Congrejal. The flooding completely destroyed 11 homes and a textile factory to completely disappear. Additional homes have various

degrees of damage. Some have been renovated and are in use. The flooding created a cutoff through the area and also cut the access road to the site. The new cutoff allows moderate flows to flood the area and re-cut the access road. The cutoff would need to be closed and the area adjacent to the river diked to keep the river from flowing through the area. The access road would need a new culvert and fill to provide local drainage at the site. This is the poorest of the three sites but the flooding history is not known at the site.

The third site is the Bufalo community. This is an existing housing area with 95 existing homes and a total of 309 lots. Electricity and water are available at the site and again wastewater treatment is by septic tanks. Plans are for 12 foot by 14-foot houses and a model home is on site. Flooding will not be a problem and there is a good access road to the site.

Representatives of the Corps later met with Narciso Hernandez, Mayor of Por Venoir, Patrick Blake and Hector Medina of Standard Fruit, Peter Silverman and Greg Cruger of CEDA. Standard Fruit will donate the land to the city for the housing area. The company has previously built employee housing at adjacent sites so roads, water and electricity are readily available. The water supply for the site, the city reservoir, sustained some damage to the dam from the hurricane and loss of capacity so rehab will be needed for long term supply. The Southern Baptist Convention has pledged funds for construction, Standard Fruit will purchase the materials through their contracting department and CEDA will oversee construction. They hope to start this week.