



## Living on the River and Loving It

### Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

#### *Parker County, Texas*

**Weatherford, TX** - A home on the river is a picturesque scene except when it's marred by the aftermath of massive flooding. Larry and Jenanne Thompson have returned home following several flooding events to find their home virtually unscathed by the creeping waters of the Brazos River.



The Thompson's built their home in 1990 in Parker County in an area known as Horseshoe Bend. Past experience with flooding guided them in the building process. "We had just bought the land and we had a flood. We had a deck and a small camper," Jenanne said, "When we came back after the flood they were gone. I saw the devastation. I knew then...We had to build up."

The 1,670 square foot, wood frame home is elevated 12 feet, one inch above the original slab-on-grade foundation and rests on an open wooden column system. The open space below the house is used for storage, parking and access. The cost of the project was estimated at \$70,000. It was secured through homeowner financing.

On June 18, 2007 water from the Brazos River crept upon the land of Horseshoe Bend. According to the local floodplain of their Weatherford home administrator, the flood gauge was documented at 27.5 feet, approximately 2.5 feet over flood stage. As the water began to rise, Larry and Jenanne sought refuge at the home of a friend after losing power. The thought of their home flooding was not an alarming concern, having weathered floods in 1990 and 1991.

After the water receded, the Thompson's returned home to assess the damage. Debris from the river had once more been swept into the area beneath their home. The living area, however, was high and dry.

"We had plenty of debris under here," Jenanne noted, pointing to the storage area. "All of this stuff came from the river. Each time it floods we get the debris. But, we love it here."

At the house next door, a small wood frame house resting on cinder blocks, more than four feet of water had flooded the home. The neighbor was a newcomer to the community.

"I feel bad for him," Jeanne acknowledged, "He just bought that house and it's ruined."

Flood water left the house uninhabitable. During a conversation with her neighbor, following the flood he said, "I am definitely going to elevate this!"

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became a part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

#### Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County in a State**

FEMA Region: **Region VI**

State: **Texas**

County: **Parker County**

City/Community: **Weatherford**

### Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Private**  
Hazard Type: **Flooding**  
Activity/Project Type: **Elevation, Structural**  
Structure Type: **Wood Frame**  
Activity/Project Start Date: **08/1989**  
Activity/Project End Date: **03/1990**  
Funding Source: **Homeowner**  
Funding Recipient: **Property Owner - Residential**

### Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **\$70,000.00 (Estimated)**  
Non FEMA Cost:

### Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal  
Disaster? **Unknown**  
Value Tested By Disaster? **Yes**  
Tested By Federal Disaster #: **No Federal Disaster specified**  
Year First Tested: **1990**  
Repetitive Loss Property? **No**

### Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: <http://www.floodsmart.gov>  
Reference URL 2: <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/fma/index.shtm>

### Main Points

- Larry and Jenanne Thompson experienced loss due to flooding on several occasions.
- To prevent damage, the 1,670 square foot, wood frame home is elevated 12 feet, one inch above the original slab-on-grade foundation and rests on an open wooden column system.
- The cost of the project was estimated at \$70,000 which was secured through homeowner financing.
- On June 18, 2007 water from the Brazos River flooded their land with the flood gauge documented at 27.5 feet.
- The house was not affected by the flood, though Debris from the river had been swept into the area beneath their home.



Larry and Jenanne Thompson



The Neighbor's House