

## East Texas Community Sees Far Less Flooding with Construction of Detention Pond

Pine Forest, TX – For three days in March, torrential rain saturated parts of eastern Texas, resulting in record flooding across the Sabine River Basin. Some areas saw more than 10 inches of rain, others recorded more than 18 inches.

In Orange County, the small city of Pine Forest located 15 miles northeast of Beaumont, sustained minimal damage, due in part to the city’s two-acre stormwater detention pond. Homes near the detention pond escaped virtually unscathed.

“We fared very well,” said Lilith Sutherland, the city secretary. The community of roughly 500 residents and those living downstream from the ponds reported none of the flooding they had seen in the past.

Texas was hit with torrential rain during most of March, resulting in a federal disaster declaration for 11 counties, including Orange. From March 9-11, the heavy rains caused flash flooding in Pine Forest which, according to Sutherland, “had been susceptible to street flooding for years.”

Since 2012, however, the city’s detention pond—a mitigation project prompted by the flooding that followed Hurricane Ike in 2008—has proved a valuable investment. A detention pond is a low-lying area that temporarily holds water while slowly draining to another location. The pond provides some flood control during heavy rains.

Before 2012, Pine Forest had several flood claims on record. According to the National Flood Insurance Program, eight flood loss claims resulted in payments of \$25,767.11.

Following Ike, the city sought and received a grant from the Texas General Land Office’s U.S. Housing and Urban Development Disaster Recovery fund to construct the detention pond. Bids were awarded in August 2011, and the project was completed the following January.



**Pipe in foreground is the part of the flood control mechanism that lets flood waters out of the pond once the flooding event is diminishing. A spillway located between pond and Tiger Creek allows flood waters to enter pond.**

*Photo Courtesy of: The Vidor Vidorian*



**This is an aerial view of the detention pond and its proximity to nearby homes.**

*Photo by Google Earth, courtesy of The Vidor Vidorian*