

SACRAMENTO NEWS & REVIEW

**Editorial: Whatever, Congressman Dan Lungren**

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Natomas flood control has been taken hostage.

That's because nobody has yet come up with a good solution to the levee funding problem brought on by a blanket "earmark" policy the House Republicans put in place at the start of their ultra-conservative ideological rule of Congress. Though earmarks can certainly serve as an corrupt tool for getting pork-barrell projects approved by certain politicians (we've written about such earmarks plenty), they also tend to fund some critical infrastructure projects, such as needed improvements to Natomas levees.

So Natomas flood-control improvements won't happen until somebody comes up with a workaround. This is despite the fact that the levees are deemed necessary to protect public safety by federal agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and have fulfilled state and local funding match requirements. As our region's flood-protection stalwart Congresswoman Doris Matsui says, "Hundreds of thousands of residents in affected areas across the country are having their safety put at risk."

Into this mess comes our own Congressman Dan Lungren, who thinks the holdup on levee funds was a perfect time to argue for ... drumroll please ... the return of the Auburn Dam. We're not kidding.

Whatever, Dan. The Auburn Dam has already gone down in flames twice in Congress. Why not get real and join others—like Matsui, and U.S. Sens. Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer—who are sincerely attempting to protect Natomas by upgrading the levees?

