

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Region IV
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30341



FEMA

December 21, 2018

The Honorable Paul Pearson
President, Coahoma County Board of Supervisors
115 First Street
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614

Subject: Preliminary DFIRM Community Coordination (PDCC) Meetings and Public Open Houses for the Big Sunflower Watershed, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Pearson:

Two Preliminary DFIRM Community Coordination (PDCC) Meetings for local officials and two Flood Risk Public Open Houses to discuss the Preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) for your community, resulting from the Big Sunflower Watershed Risk MAP Project, are scheduled for Wednesday, January 16, 2019, and Thursday, January 17, 2019, at the times and venues shown below. Representatives from FEMA Region IV, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and the Engineering Study Contractor will be present and conduct the meetings.

On November 14, 2018, copies of the Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and associated FIS report were sent to you, which identified the flood risk in your community. An important and necessary component of this process is to offer an opportunity for you, other local officials, and your citizens to review the FIRM and FIS report. In our November 14 letter, we requested that you compare your current effective FIRM with the Preliminary FIRM and make note of any changes which may affect your citizens. This would enable you to make appropriate notifications to residents.

Residents and business owners of your community are invited to attend either of the two Flood Risk Public Open Houses to learn how and why the local risk of flooding has changed, how the proposed new flood maps will be used, and steps they can take to protect themselves from the extensive damage that floods often cause.

At the Flood Risk Public Open Houses, community officials and representatives of FEMA, MDEQ, MEMA, and the Engineering Study Contractor will be on hand to answer questions about flood risk changes and review the proposed new flood maps. They will also help residents and businesses determine if their property may be subject to any related insurance requirements and explain how property owners affected by the change may be able to reduce future insurance costs.

The format of the Flood Risk Public Open Houses is very informal. No presentations are made and there are no formal questions or statements from the public. We encourage you to publicize this event to reach

homeowners, insurance agents, developers, and representatives of lending institutions or anyone who may be impacted by the proposed flood maps. A sample Open House advertisement is enclosed for your use.

<u>Big Sunflower Watershed Local Officials Meeting #1</u> Date: Wednesday, January 16, 2019 Time: 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM Central Time Place: Sunflower County Courthouse 200 Main Street Indianola, MS 38751	<u>Big Sunflower Watershed Flood Risk Public Open House #1</u> Date: Wednesday, January 16, 2019 Time: 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM Central Time Place: Sunflower County Courthouse 200 Main Street Indianola, MS 38751
<u>Big Sunflower Watershed Local Officials Meeting #2</u> Date: Thursday, January 17, 2019 Time: 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM Central Time Place: Coahoma Community College Workforce Development Center 510 Sunbelt Drive Clarksdale, MS 38614	<u>Big Sunflower Watershed Flood Risk Public Open House #2</u> Date: Thursday, January 17, 2019 Time: 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM Central Time Place: Coahoma Community College Workforce Development Center 510 Sunbelt Drive Clarksdale, MS 38614

The Preliminary FIS will be subject to a 90-day review and appeal period, which will begin approximately 3 months after the PDCC Meetings and Flood Risk Public Open Houses are held. If any appeals or other comments are received during that time, FEMA will review and resolve them prior to initiating the subsequent 6-month adoption/compliance period. Therefore, it will take at least 9 months, from the beginning of the 90-day appeal period to the end of the adoption/compliance period, before the Preliminary FIRM and FIS report become effective for lending and insurance purposes. The appeal and comment process will be discussed during the PDCC Meetings with community officials.

It is important that your floodplain administrator and representatives of the building/permitting department, planning and engineering offices be in attendance at the PDCC Meeting. You may also wish to consider inviting elected officials to that meeting so that they may be apprised of the forthcoming changes to the FIRM and FIS report.

The Preliminary FIS is considered an update to the current effective FIS. This revised study, when it becomes effective, may result in increases and/or decreases to the regulatory flood elevations and/or width of the floodplain boundaries, depending on the identified flooding conditions. It will be the basis for your community's continued application and enforcement of all local floodplain management regulations required in conjunction with the participating criteria of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Revisions to your community's existing floodplain management ordinance may be necessary to incorporate changes. In addition, before the new FIRM and FIS report become effective, your community's ordinance will need to be updated to reference the effective date.

The requirement of your local ordinance requires that any study data be used as "best available data." The study should be considered "best available data" in the following instances:

1. When development is proposed within any newly identified Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) on the preliminary maps but shown outside of a currently effective SFHA on the currently effective FIRM.
2. Where a base flood elevation (BFE) is shown on the preliminary maps, in areas presently shown as an unnumbered A Zone with no elevations on the currently effective FIRM.
3. Where a BFE on the preliminary maps exceed those identified on the currently effective FIRM, the elevation should be used for regulatory purposes.

We encourage you to visit the FEMA website, which may be accessed at www.fema.gov. A great deal of information is available regarding the many Agency programs, its structure, purpose, and operation.

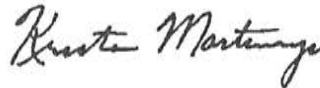
We appreciate your cooperation in this matter, and look forward to meeting with you. If you have questions or need additional information please contact Michael Taylor, AECOM, at 404-946-9488, or the FEMA Region IV Project Officer assigned to your community at 770-220-5406.

Sincerely,



Stephen D. Champlin, RPG
Director, Geospatial Resources Division/ Flood Mapping
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

Sincerely,



Kristen M. Martinenza, P.E., CFM, Chief
Risk Analysis Branch
FEMA Region IV

Enclosures: Open House Sample Advertisement

cc: Richard Dickson, Floodplain Administrator, Coahoma County
Johnny Tarzi, Emergency Management Agency, Coahoma County
Stacey Ricks, State NFIP Coordinator, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency