



Mississippi Emergency
Management Agency
P.O. Box 5644
Pearl, MS 39208



Mississippi Department of
Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 20305
Jackson, MS 39289

August 28, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community Executive Officer / Local Floodplain Administrator

FROM: Al W. Goodman, Jr., CFM
NFIP State Coordinator / FPM Bureau Director

RE: **Benton County ‘Flood Risk Open House’**

The Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative Team (MEMA, MDEQ, and MGI, LLC) will conduct a final coordination meeting with officials from Benton County and the communities of Ashland, Hickory Flat and Snow Lake Shores on September 17, 2007 at 3:00 PM.

On August 15, 2007, we mailed you a copy of the preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and a copy of the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), which identified the flood risk in Benton County and the incorporated communities. An important and necessary component of this process is to offer an opportunity for you, your local officials, and your citizens to preview the FIS and FIRM. This allows feedback and concerns regarding flood risk management and mitigation. Working with the Benton County EMA Office, we have scheduled the following two meetings, the first to be attended by local officials, and the second being open to the general public.

Benton Co. Local Official’s Meeting

When: Monday, Sept. 17, 2007
Time: 3:00 PM
Where: Ag Center, Hwy. 5
One mile north of Ashland
Ashland, MS 38603

Benton Co. Flood Risk Open House

When: Monday, Sept. 17, 2007
Time: 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Where: Ag Center, Hwy. 5
One mile north of Ashland
Ashland, MS 38603

Our staff will be able to address FIRM, NFIP, or any other questions regarding flood protection and mitigation. We also encourage your floodplain, building and zoning, and engineering staff to attend as an opportunity to provide information on your local flood development permit requirements and ordinance, and other requirements within your community. In addition, we have extended an invitation to local insurance agents from your community who may wish to use this venue to provide insurance information and outreach to your community related to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

This “Open House” will be of particular interest to those living in or near Special Flood Hazard Areas, as well as realtors, insurance agents, developers, representatives of lending institutions, and members of the local media. We request that you publicize this event utilizing whatever means you deem necessary to reach this target audience, such as your local newspaper, local libraries, post offices, community websites, local television stations, or any other relevant organizations.

The format of the Open House is very informal, consisting of a sign-in sheet for the public and a table for each community which will display the new map. We will staff each community table and request that the local floodplain administrator also be present to answer questions or take comments from the citizens. We will also have a table with NFIP information, manned by both FEMA and MEMA.

As a reminder, participation in the NFIP will require that your community adopt the new FIRM into a local flood damage prevention ordinance by the date when the FIRM goes into effect. We strongly encourage your community’s participation in these two meetings, for they will provide an opportunity for you and your staff to thoroughly review the preliminary FIS and FIRM and bring to the table any questions or concerns prior to your formal adoption process.

Thank you for your time and participation in this process, and we look forward to our continued collaboration. If you have any questions before September 17th, please contact me via e-mail at agoodman@mema.ms.gov.

Enclosure: Sample Press Release

Benton County “Flood Risk Open House” Scheduled

General public provided opportunity to find out more about floodplain management in their community.

Representatives from the Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative Team (MEMA, MDEQ, and MGI, LLC) will be conducting a Flood Risk Open House on Monday, September 17th from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the Agricultural Center located on Highway 5, just north of Ashland. This Open House will provide the public with an opportunity to review a recently completed preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and its accompanying preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that include base flood information and identification of areas subject to flood hazards within the county.

The Open House will be staffed with representatives from various local, state, and federal agencies, to provide you the most current information about flood risk, flood insurance, floodplain development requirements, and the process for floodplain mapping within Benton County, Ashland, Hickory Flat and Snow Lake Shores. Once the preliminary FIRMs become effective, these maps will be used by floodplain permit officials, builders and developers, lenders, realtors, insurance agents, and the general public to determine flood risk.

Property owners, realtors, lenders, and insurance agents are encouraged to attend and take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about flood risk and hazard mitigation within your community.