



June 24, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community Executive Officer / Local Floodplain Administrator

FROM: Al W. Goodman, Jr., CFM
State NFIP Coordinator

RE: Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative
Jones County 'Meet & Greet'

Background: The State of Mississippi was designated by FEMA as a Cooperating Technical State in January 2003. With this designation, the State assumed primary responsibility for the development of new National Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for Mississippi communities. Through a 'Request For Qualification' process, the *Mississippi Coordinating Council for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems* selected a contractor from five interested groups on January 12, 2004. The state's contract was awarded to the multi-discipline team of the Mississippi Geographic Information, LLC. This group consists of Waggoner Engineering, Watershed Concepts, and Earthdata.

The Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative Team (MEMA, MDEQ, and MGI, LLC) will conduct its initial 'Meet & Greet' meeting with Jones County and the communities of Ellisville and Laurel on July 28, 2005 at 10:00 AM. This meeting will take place in the County Supervisors Board Room, located on the first floor, at 415 North 5th Avenue, Laurel, MS 39440.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide partner communities with an overview of the flood map modernization initiative and to begin the process of soliciting input from the communities regarding their flood map study needs. This will hopefully ensure that the

new maps will adequately address these needs by providing more accurate flood hazard information.

I am requesting the assistance of the Jones County EMA Director in inviting each appropriate Board Supervisor, Mayor, Alderman, Community Engineer, Community Administrator, Community Development Planner, GIS staff, and any other appropriate person(s) to the briefing. This is not a public meeting; we are not at that stage as of yet.

We propose a one-hour session, which will inform the local officials of the method in which the State of Mississippi is conducting the new flood map modernization program, in partnership with the local stakeholder communities. We wish to make personal contact with the community officials in order to build goodwill and a team attitude. As this will be a countywide re-mapping effort, it is important that both the county and the various communities found within the county provide input into the process. The maps will be constructed with the full input of each concerned community.

The following five bullets are the type of information that we will be soliciting at the follow-up 'Scoping Meeting' on September 1, 2005.

- How accurate is the information on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) currently used by the communities?
- Are there areas of the community that routinely flood, but are not depicted as flood zones on the current FIRMs?
- Are there areas where new or planned development will increase stormwater runoff and cause flood heights to increase downstream?
- What are your proposed stream study priorities?
- What data are available from the county or communities that might assist in the remapping effort (such as new orthophotography, digital topographic data (LIDAR), GIS data layers, high water marks, bench mark inventory, etc.)?

We encourage the involvement of local engineers and surveyors who are familiar with the current flood maps and topography of Jones County. Since the new FIRMs will be produced in both printed and digital formats, community GIS personnel may wish to discuss how the new maps can be integrated with other county and city GIS systems. This is our great opportunity to improve our existing flood maps, let's make a best effort to improve these flood risk identification tools for our citizens. We look forward to working with you and your staff to provide a superior flood hazard risk map for your citizens. A better map will lead to better floodplain management within your community. If you have any questions, please contact me at 601-366-6325 or through the agency web page at <http://www.msema.org/nfip/nfip.htm>.

