




January 25, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community Executive Officer / Local Floodplain Administrator

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

RE: Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative
Newton County & Incorporated Communities Re-Mapping

Background: The state of Mississippi was designated by FEMA as a Cooperating Technical Partner in its flood map modernization initiative on January 28, 2003. With this designation, the state assumed primary responsibility for the development of new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for Mississippi communities. The Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative Team consists of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality and the Mississippi Geographic Information (MGI), LLC. The MGI group consists of Waggoner Engineering, Watershed Concepts and Earthdata.

The purpose of this packet is provide you, our partner communities, with an overview of the flood map modernization initiative and to begin the process of soliciting input from you regarding your flood map study needs. This will ensure that the new digital based maps will adequately address your needs by providing more accurate flood hazard information. Enclosed in this packet you will find additional documents that will familiarize you with the Map Modernization Program. The Attachment A – Pre-Scoping Questionnaire should be filled out and returned before the scheduled Scoping meeting detailed below. The other three attachments will give you additional background information on the Scoping process, FIRM adoption, and the progress of MFMMI.

I am requesting the assistance of the Newton 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 an initial “Scoping Meeting.” We will conduct this meeting with Newton County , the City of Decatur, the City of Hickory, the City of Newton, the Town of Chunky and the Town of Union at 2:00 PM on April 1, 2008. This meeting

will take place at the Newton County Emergency Management Office, at 92 West Broad Street, Decatur, MS 39929.

We propose a one hour session, 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 incorporated communities provide input into the process.

During our visit, we will be seeking input from you on issues such as:

- How accurate is the information on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps currently used by your community?
- Are there areas in the community that routinely flood, but are not depicted as flood zones on the current maps?
- 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 re-mapping effort (such as new orthophotography, digital topographic data (LiDAR), GIS data layers, etc.)?

The responses to these and other questions will be used to identify any currently mapped flood sources that should be restudied to reflect current conditions, and any additional sites that need to be studied and delineated on the new maps.

It will also be helpful if the people most familiar with both recent and historical flood events, current and future community development patterns and the accuracy of the current flood maps are available to meet with our engineers. In addition, this group should also include community planning/zoning officials, emergency management staff and building officials. Representatives from local offices of federal and state agencies such as NRCS, USACE, MDOT, Water Management Districts, Planning and Development Districts, Levee Boards, etc. may also have valuable input to the scoping process. If you have had projects with any of these agencies, please invite them.

We also encourage the involvement of local engineers and surveyors who are familiar with the current flood maps and topography of the county. Since the new DFIRMs 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.

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 601-933-6884 or by e-mail at agoodman@mema.ms.gov.

Encl: Attachment A – Pre-Scoping Questionnaire
Attachment B – Pre-Scoping Information
Attachment C – FIRM Adoption Process
Attachment D – MFMMI Contacts