Appeals and Comments on Preliminary Maps and Reports for the East Coast Central Florida Study Area: The Process

Introduction and Background

In support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has completed a coastal flood risk study for the East Coast Central Florida (ECCFL) Study Area (i.e., Brevard, Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie Counties). Based on the results of the study, FEMA has released Preliminary versions of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports, and associated products displaying proposed flood hazard information.

When flood hazard information is proposed through the issuance of a Preliminary FIRM and FIS report and associated products, FEMA provides community officials and property owners with an opportunity to review and comment on these products before they become effective for flood insurance and floodplain management purposes and to request changes to the information shown. This statutorily required, formal review and comment period is referred to as the 90-day appeal period.

Where to Find the Preliminary FIRMs and FIS Reports

Copies of the Preliminary FIRMs and FIS reports for the ECCFL Study Area will be stored at the Community Map Repository (CMR) for each community. The CMR addresses are accessible through “Community Information Table” linked through the Coastal Study Contacts and Information for East Coast Central Florida Study Area pages on the FEMA Region IV Coastal Analysis and Mapping Web Portal.

For some communities in the ECCFL Study Area, the Preliminary FIRM and FIS report will be accessible through a community-maintained website. Links to community-maintained websites also are provided on the above-referenced “Community Information Table,” where available.

The Preliminary FIRMs and FIS reports also will be accessible through the FEMA Flood Map Service Center website at http://msc.fema.gov/portal.

How the Appeal Period Is Administered

The community Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for ensuring that a community meets its obligations as a participant in the NFIP. Therefore, the FEMA-led Project Team consults and confers with the

Appeal Period Provides Opportunity for Communities and Property Owners in East Coast Central Florida Study Area to Request Changes to Preliminary FIRM and FIS Report

This Fact Sheet provides general information regarding the 90-day appeal period established to allow community officials and others to request changes to the information shown on a Preliminary FIRM and/or FIS report developed as part of a FEMA coastal flood risk study for the ECCFL Study Area. The Preliminary FIRM and FIS report reflect the initial results of the coastal flood risk study performed by FEMA. The following are key terms pertinent to this process:

- **Appeal** – A formal objection to FEMA’s proposed flood hazard determinations, submitted by the community CEO, FPA, or other community official designated by the CEO during the 90-day appeal period.

- **Proposed Flood Hazard Information in Coastal Study Areas** – New or revised Base Flood Elevations, Special Flood Hazard Areas, other flood hazard areas, flood insurance risk zone designations, Primary Frontal Dune designations, and Limit of Moderate Wave Action boundaries.

- **Comment** – A formal objection to information that is not related to the proposed flood hazard determinations, submitted by the CEO, FPA, or other community official designated by the CEO during the appeal period. Comments would include changes to road names and configurations, corporate limit boundaries, and requests that changes effected by Letter of Map Change be incorporated.

- **Effective FIRM and FIS Report** – The version of the FIRM and FIS report that reflect the final results of the FEMA study and that are used for administering NFIP flood insurance and floodplain management requirements.

Additional information regarding the coastal flood risk study process is provided on the FEMA Coastal Analysis and Mapping Web Portal at www.southeastcoastalmaps.com.
community CEO before, during, and after the appeal period. Community officials and property owners should address appeals and comments submitted during the 90-day appeal period to the CEO or to another local official designated by the CEO, such as the community floodplain administrator (FPA).

In accordance with standard procedures, FEMA starts the 90-day appeal period by:

1. Publishing a Proposed Flood Hazard Determinations Notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER;
2. Preparing and posting a Proposed Flood Hazard Determinations notice to the FEMA website at www.floodmaps.fema.gov/fhm/Scripts/bfe_main.asp;
3. Publishing public notices announcing the start of the appeal period twice, at least 1 week apart, in local newspaper(s) with wide circulation, as identified by the community CEO or other designated community official(s); and
4. Mailing letters, referred to as proposed flood hazard determination letters, to notify the CEOs and FPAs in each of the mapped communities about the appeal period and the proposed flood hazard information.

The appeal period starts on the date of the second successful publication of the public notice in the identified local newspaper(s).

Any individual property owner who wishes to appeal the proposed flood hazard information or to comment on any other information shown on the Preliminary FIRM, Preliminary FIS report, or associated products is required to submit the appeal or comment, along with appropriate supporting data and documentation, to the appropriate CEO or designated local community official. This approach allows the community to comply with the requirements of Part 67 of the NFIP regulations, which implements the requirements established by the U.S. Congress for the appeal period.

The required supporting data and documentation are discussed in detail in a separate Fact Sheet titled “Appeals and Comments on Preliminary Maps and Reports for the East Coast Central Florida Study Area: Supporting Data and Documentation.” This Fact Sheet is available from the Information for East Coast Central Florida Study Area page on the FEMA Coastal Web Portal.

The CEO, FPA, or other designated community official is required to review each appeal or comment to determine whether the data or documentation submitted are sufficient to be forwarded to the FEMA Region IV Office in Atlanta, Georgia, for consideration. By reviewing the appeals and comments, the CEO, FPA, or other designated community official is better able to ensure that the community is meeting its obligations under NFIP regulations throughout the mapping process.

**Where to Send Appeals and Comments**

Property owners and other individuals who choose to submit appeals or comments should submit their written requests, along with the required supporting data and documentation, to the community CEO, FPA, or other designated community official. Contact information for the community CEOs and FPAs is accessible through a link under “Community Contacts” on the Coastal Study Contacts page on the FEMA Coastal Web Portal.

The community CEO, FPA, or other designated community official is required to submit all appeals and comments, along with required supporting data and documentation, to the FEMA Region IV Office. The FEMA Region IV contact information for the submittal of appeals and comments is as follows:

Federal Emergency Management Agency
Mitigation Division
3003 Chamblee Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341
Attn: Mark A. Viera, Coastal Flood Risk Study Lead

**For More Information**

Questions regarding the appeals process in general, and the coastal flood risk study for the ECCFL Study Area in particular, can be sent via email to Mark A. Viera, the FEMA Coastal Flood Risk Study Lead, at mark.viera@fema.dhs.gov.

For more information on the coastal flood risk study for the ECCFL Study Area, please visit www.southeastcoastalmaps.com/pages/projects/east-coast-central-florida.aspx.