

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200
Oakland, California 94607

FEMA

January 11, 2017

The Honorable Dick Monteith, Chairman
Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors
1010 10th Street, Suite 6500
Modesto, California 95354

Dear Supervisor Monteith:

This letter is to provide an update on flood hazard mapping activities by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and to notify your county of the engineering model being used. Providing accurate and useful data on flood hazards is one of FEMA's goals and essential to helping communities make informed decisions for building safe.

Flood hazard information behind the levees along the San Joaquin River in Stanislaus County are being developed by FEMA's contractor, STARR II, using the Lower San Joaquin River and Tributaries FLO-2D model. This "natural valley" modeling (one analysis per levee system) uses the FLO-2D hydraulic modeling developed by the California Department of Water Resources (CADWR) in 2013 and hydrologic data developed by CADWR under their Central Valley Hydrology Study in 2015. Both the CADWR and FEMA studies use the Light Detection and Ranging topographic data acquired by the State. The results of the natural valley modeling will be used to inform the process for updating Stanislaus County's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM).

The FLO-2D modeling may form the basis for proposed Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) on a preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Stanislaus County. An SFHA is the mapped area subject to inundation by the 1-percent-annual-chance flood (also called the base flood). Since the likelihood of flooding in certain areas may have increased or decreased and our ability to map flood hazards has improved over time, SFHA changes are expected in Stanislaus County.

Your community has 30 days to consult with FEMA (staff identified in the last paragraph of this letter) regarding the appropriateness of the model selected for the mapping project. Your community and citizens will have additional opportunities to comment on and provide feedback about the model and other draft flood hazard information throughout the project. A formal appeals process and period will be available to help resolve any remaining questions before updated flood hazard information becomes effective for flood insurance purposes.

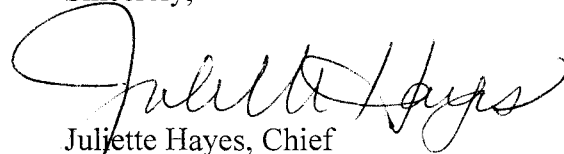
FEMA wants to ensure the most up-to-date and accurate technical data are used to develop flood hazard products. FEMA relies on community feedback. Partnerships and local

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knowledge during this important project to determine flood hazards along the San Joaquin River are critical to reduce flood risk. We look forward to working with county officials and other stakeholders in Stanislaus County to increase flood awareness and reduce risks to life and property. Initial feedback does not affect your county's ability to provide feedback later, or to formally appeal preliminary flood hazard information during a future comment period.

Please provide any initial comments related to the San Joaquin River flood study by February 10, 2017. To provide comments or ask a question on this mapping project, please contact Eric Simmons, FEMA Engineer, of our staff in Oakland California, by telephone at (510) 627-7029 or by e-mail at Eric.Simmons@fema.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,



Juliette Hayes, Chief
Risk Analysis Branch

cc: Angela Freitas, Director, Stanislaus County Planning & Community Development
James Ito, NFIP State Coordinator, California Department of Water Resources