



FEMA

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JUL 30 2010

JUL 28 2010

Suzanne Shields  
Director and Chief Engineer  
Pima County Regional Flood Control District  
97 East Congress Street, Third Floor  
Tucson, Arizona 85701

Dear Ms. Shields:

Thank you for your letter dated July 8, 2010, to the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), regarding revisions to the Pima County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) in the area along Agua Caliente Wash. You expressed concern about FEMA's decision to process this submittal as a Physical Map Revision (PMR), rather than a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR).

FEMA appreciates the desire of your communities to revise the FIRM and incorporate the new flood data and analyses for Agua Caliente Wash as soon as possible. However, a LOMR is not the appropriate vehicle for a study of this magnitude. The studied area encompasses two full panels and portions of two additional panels of the effective FIRM for Pima County and involves restudies of three flooding sources: approximately 6 miles along Agua Caliente Wash, 1 mile along Agua Caliente Split, and 1 mile along Agua Caliente Spur. In addition to revising the FIRM, annotations to the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report will be required. Because of its complexity and scale, FEMA must process such a revision request as a PMR.

As you stated, the progress of this map revision is well on its way, including the approval of the technical data. I encourage your communities to use these data for development purposes, including the plans for the subdivisions and other development mentioned in your letter. However, the floodplain delineations on the FIRM will not be updated, and the flood insurance zones and rates will not change until the PMR is effective.

The ESRI shape files in FEMA's projection scheme will facilitate the mapping update when it is performed. In addition, you went above and beyond the requirements for public outreach and notification, but the PMR will have its own appeal period in the future.

FEMA Region IX is currently negotiating the budget for the Fiscal Year 2010 Task Order. Funding to produce this PMR was not included in the original Task Order, but a request has been made to include this PMR in the current year, as budget allows.

Suzanne Shields

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If you have additional questions, please contact Edward Curtis at the FEMA Region IX office by telephone at (510) 627-7207. I hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth A. Norton".

Beth A. Norton, Program Specialist  
Engineering Management Branch  
Federal Insurance and Mitigation  
Administration

For: Kevin C. Long, Acting Chief  
Engineering Management Branch  
Federal Insurance and Mitigation  
Administration

cc: Nancy Ward, Regional Administrator, FEMA Region IX  
Sally Ziolkowski, Director, Mitigation Division, FEMA Region IX