

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Region IV
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30341



FEMA

February 16, 2018

The Honorable Peter D. O'Bryan
Chairman, Indian River County Board of County Commissioners
Indian River County Administration Complex
1801 27th Street, Building A
Vero Beach, FL 32960-3388

Subject: Consultation Coordination Officer Meeting and Public Open House for Indian River County, Florida

Dear Chairman O'Bryan:

A Consultation Coordination Officer (CCO) Meeting and a Flood Risk Open House to discuss the Preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) for your community are scheduled for Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at the times and venues shown below. Representatives from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region IV, the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), and the FEMA Engineering Study Contractor will be present and conduct the meeting.

On September 29, 2017, copies of the Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and associated FIS report were distributed to your community. The Preliminary FIRM and associated FIS report reflect the results of two projects – the Coastal Flood Risk Study for the East Coast Central Florida Study Area and a Levee Analysis and Mapping Procedure analysis and mapping project for central Indian River County.

An important and necessary component of our mapping process is to offer an opportunity for you, other local officials, and your citizens to review the FIRM and FIS report. In our September 29 letter, we requested that your community compare your current effective FIRM with the Preliminary FIRM and make note of any changes which may affect your citizens. This would enable you to make appropriate notifications to residents. Information on the two sessions scheduled for March 21, the first to be attended by local officials and the second for the public, is provided below.

The residents and business owners of Indian River County and Incorporated Areas are invited to attend the Flood Risk Open House to learn how and why the local risk of flooding has changed, how the proposed new FIRMs will be used, and steps they can take to protect themselves from the extensive damage that floods often cause.

At the Flood Risk Open House, community officials and representatives of FEMA, FDEM, and the FEMA Engineering Study Contractors (BakerAECOM and Compass) will be on hand to answer questions about flood risk changes and review the proposed new FIRM panels. They will also help residents and businesses determine if their property may be subject to any related insurance requirements and explain how property owners affected by the change may be able to reduce future insurance costs. The format of the Flood Risk Open Houses is very informal. No presentations are made and there are no formal questions or statements from the public.

We encourage you to publicize this event to reach homeowners, insurance agents, developers, representatives of lending institutions, or anyone who may be impacted by the proposed new FIRM. A sample Open House advertisement is enclosed for your use.

<u>Indian River County Local Officials Meeting</u>	<u>Indian River County Flood Risk Open House</u>
Date: Wednesday, March 21, 2018	Date: Wednesday, March 21, 2018
Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST	Time: 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM EST
Place: Indian River County Administration Complex Community Development Conference Room 1801 27th Street, Building A, 1st Floor Vero Beach, FL 32960	Place: Sebastian River High School Cafeteria 9001 Shark Boulevard Sebastian, FL 32958

The Preliminary FIS will be subject to a 90-day review and appeal period, which will begin approximately 1 month after the CCO Meeting and Open House are held. If any appeals or other comments are received during that time, FEMA will review and resolve them before initiating the subsequent 6-month adoption/compliance period. Therefore, it will take at least 9 months, from the beginning of the 90-day appeal period to the end of the adoption/compliance period, before the Preliminary FIRM and FIS report become effective for lending and insurance purposes. The appeal and comment process will be discussed during the CCO Meeting with community officials.

It is important that your floodplain administrator and representatives of the building/permitting department, planning and engineering offices attend the CCO Meeting. You may also wish to consider inviting other elected officials to that meeting so that they may be apprised of the forthcoming changes to the FIRM and FIS report.

The Preliminary FIS is considered an update to the current effective FIS. This revised study, when it becomes effective, may result in increases and/or decreases to the regulatory flood elevations and/or the widths of the floodplains, depending on the identified flooding conditions. The Preliminary FIS will be the basis for your community's continued application and enforcement of all local floodplain management regulations required in conjunction with the participation criteria of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Revisions to your community's existing floodplain management ordinance may be necessary to incorporate changes. In addition, before the new FIRM and FIS report become effective, your community's ordinance will need to be updated to reference the new effective date.

Your local ordinance requires that any study data be used as "best available data." The study should be considered "best available data" in the following instances:

1. When development is proposed within any newly identified Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) on the Preliminary FIRM, but shown outside of a currently effective SFHA on the current effective FIRM.
2. Where a Base Flood Elevation (BFE) is shown on the Preliminary FIRM, in areas presently shown as an unnumbered A zone with no elevations on the current effective FIRM.
3. Where BFEs on the Preliminary FIRM exceed those identified on the currently effective FIRM, the elevation should be used for regulatory purposes.

We encourage you to visit the FEMA website, which may be accessed at www.fema.gov. A great deal of information is available regarding the many Agency programs, its structure, purpose, and operation.

We appreciate your cooperation in this matter, and look forward to meeting with you. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Chris Mack, the BakerAECOM Project Manager, at 843-302-8712, or the FEMA Region IV Project Officer assigned to your community, at 770-220-5406.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristen Martinenza". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K'.

Kristen M. Martinenza, P.E., CFM, Chief
Risk Analysis Branch
FEMA Region IV

Enclosure
Open House Sample Advertisement

cc: Stan Boling, Community Development Director
Steve Martin, State NFIP Coordinator, FDEM