

July 17, 2009

Honorable W. Craig Fugate, Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Office of the Administrator
500 C Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

Arthur L. Freeman, Acting Regional Administrator
FEMA Region VII
9221 Ward Parkway,
Suite 300
Kansas City, MO. 64114-3372

Re: Proposed DFIRM for Garden City and Finney County, Kansas

Dear Mr. Fugate and Mr. Freeman,

As you know, officials representing Garden City and Finney County, Kansas, have expressed significant concern about proposed revisions to their Flood Insurance Rate Map scheduled to become effective September 25, 2009. They are particularly concerned about including two drainage ditches that were not previously mapped. According to the communities, including the drainage ditches will impact about 1,800 parcels of land and thousands of their residents who live or own property in areas that previously were unmapped.

After significant discussion with city and county officials, we believe it is essential to postpone the effective date for the revised FIRM, at least as it applies to Drainage Ditch Nos. 1 and 2.

We support delaying the map's implementation because the floodplain of the two drainage ditches was mapped using approximate methods. Instead, we suggest that local, state and federal partners immediately begin work on a detailed study of the two drainage ditches because we believe it is more appropriate for the urban areas affected by the proposed FIRM. Until the detailed work is done, any map revision adopted should not include the drainage ditches.

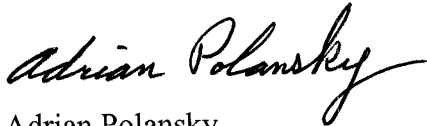
Based on an initial internal evaluation, between 10 and 15 linear miles of each of the two drainage ditches' lengths should be studied using detailed methods. Our first estimate of cost for the detailed study is \$250,000. The city and county are prepared to cost-share in the detailed study through in-kind services and cash. We strongly support realigning FEMA CTP funding to provide the balance of the study costs if new federal funding cannot be made available.

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Given the short time frame for the map's scheduled adoption, and the need for affected residents in Garden City and Finney County to prepare for it, we ask that FEMA provide an expedited decision on this matter.

We appreciate your prompt attention.

Sincerely,



Adrian Polansky
Secretary of Agriculture



David W. Barfield, P.E.
Chief Engineer

cc:

Matthew Allen, City Manager, Garden City
Peter Olson, County Administrator, Finney County
Governor Mark Parkinson
U.S. Senator Sam Brownback
U.S. Senator Pat Roberts
U.S. Representative Lynn Jenkins
U.S. Representative Dennis Moore
U.S. Representative Jerry Moran
U.S. Representative Todd Tiahrt
Representative Bill Light
Representative Carl Holmes
Representative Don Hineman
Representative Gary Hayzlett
Representative Jeff Whitham
Representative Larry Powell
Representative Melvin Neufeld
Representative Pat George
Senator Steve Morris
Senator Tim Huelskamp
Deborah Ingram, Director, Risk Reduction Division, Mitigation Directorate
Doug Bellomo, Director, Risk Analysis Division, FEMA Headquarters
William R. Blanton, Jr., Engineering Management Branch, Mitigation Directorate
Robert G. Bissell, Director Mitigation Division, FEMA Region VII
Julie Grauer, FEMA Region VII,
Melissa Janssen, Risk Analysis Branch Chief, FEMA Region VII

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Josh Deberge, External Affairs Specialist, FEMA Region VII
Bob Franke, Civil Engineer, FEMA Region VII,
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