

## Notice for Early Public Review of a Proposal to Support Activity in Bastrop County Floodplains and Wetlands

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This publication gives notice that Bastrop County has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management, to determine the potential affect that its activities in surrounding floodplain will have on the human environment associated with the Bastrop County Complex Fire Recovery Program (BCCFRP). Through the Texas General Land Office (GLO) the BCCFRP will receive federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from HUD in the amount of \$23,802,962. The GLO was allocated HUD funding to help Bastrop County address unmet housing needs and urgent public infrastructure restoration as a result of the Bastrop County Complex Fire that occurred in September 2011. The *CDBG Funding* (April 16, 2012) and *State of Texas Action Plan for Disaster Recovery* (July 12, 2012) establish an outline of eligibility requirements and target \$19,042,369 for housing activities, and \$4,760,592 for infrastructure restoration activities. The BCCFRP housing assistance is restricted to eligible Bastrop County residents Bastrop County.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains or wetlands, and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in or affecting floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

The projects for Owner-Occupied Housing are:

- Approximately 150 reconstructions and/or rehabilitations
- Approximately 15 elevations
- Approximately 80 applicants for down-payment assistance

The approximate number of proposed infrastructure restoration projects on public properties within the wildfire perimeter is 25.

While the confirmation of address locations is in progress, initial estimates indicate some applications from households impacted by wildfire may be for properties situated in the 100-year floodplain and thus potentially considered for rehabilitation or reconstruction. Potential BCCFRP applications will primarily be received from low-to moderate income households of Bastrop County. Due to income limitations, a large number of damaged homes occupied by low-to-moderate income households may have been un-insured or inadequately covered to support rehabilitation or reconstruction.

The Special Flood Hazard Zones A, AE, and AO comprise the 100-year floodplain and are located along the Colorado River and its upstream segments and comprise approximately 78,467 acres (13.4%) of the County's 100-year floodplain. Applicants receiving BCCFRP housing assistance for their residential properties partially or wholly situated within the 100-year floodplain will be required to participate in the NFIP. This requirement would not apply to the applicants receiving housing assistance whose residential properties are situated in Zone X, which encompasses the remaining 478,813 acres (83.6%) of the County's territory, and include the 3 most densely populated towns of Bastrop, Elgin, and Smithville. Bastrop County does not anticipate critical action within the 15,397 acres (2.7%) located in the 500-year floodplain, but homes situated here must also carry flood insurance.

Bastrop County has selected 25 public properties requiring emergency infrastructure restoration located within the wildfire perimeter, four of which are located in the 100-year floodplain. These projects are designed to have a positive impact on the environment by stemming the loss of de-vegetated soil and the consequent sedimentation of water resources in the vicinity of the 2011 wildfires. The design of these measures incorporates the application of hydromulch with a native seed mix to promote emergence and growth of vegetation to enhance the environment. Hand-seeding and drainage structure repairs will be required along with possible slope stabilization efforts. Erosion control activities will adhere to the LPRT's prescribed measures for habitat recovery to avoid further environmental impacts.

This notice is required by Section 2(a)(4) of Executive Order 11988 for Floodplain Management, Section 2(b) and Executive Order 11990 for Protections of Wetlands, and is implemented by HUD Regulations found at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management. The 8-Step Decision Making Process includes public notices and the examination of practicable alternatives to building in the floodplain. Additional project information, including maps of floodplains and wetlands in Bastrop County and its census tracts, is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file with: Mr. Jim Wither, Bastrop County, 804 Pecan Street, Bastrop, TX 78602 and may be examined 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Written comments to help identify potential floodplain impacts of restoring housing in the floodplains, factors for consideration of BCCFRP implementation, and determination of ways to avoid or reduce impacts where there are no practicable alternatives must be received by the Honorable County Judge, Mr. Jim Wither by close of business August 9, 2012 at: Bastrop County, 804 Pecan Street, Bastrop, TX 78602 or email to [Jim.Wither@co.bastrop.tx.us](mailto:Jim.Wither@co.bastrop.tx.us). Additional information may be obtained by contacting Mr. Wither at (512) 332-7201 between 8:00am and 4:30pm weekdays.

***Bastrop County (Bastrop Advertiser): July 21, 2012***