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Media Alert

90-Day Appeal Period Starting for Proposed Floodplain Maps - City of Bozeman and Gallatin County

Background

The City of Bozeman and Gallatin County have been working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) to update floodplain maps for the West Gallatin River and Bozeman Creek and its tributaries. Updated flood insurance rate maps will provide more accurate flood risk information that can help local officials and residents make informed decisions about reducing flood risks and purchasing flood insurance.

Before new flood insurance rate maps become effective, there is a 90-day Appeal Period during which local residents and business owners can provide additional data for consideration before the maps are finalized. The appeal period runs September 20 – December 18, 2018.

The existing floodplain maps for the West Gallatin River, Bozeman Creek, Matthew Bird Creek, Nash Spring Creek, Flat Creek and Mill Ditch Diversion were produced from studies conducted more than 30 years ago. Revising the maps is a key step in providing the best available data to help keep families, homes, roads and other infrastructure safe from future flood events.

The proposed maps and information about the Appeal and Comment Period are available online at www.floodplain.mt.gov/gallatin or www.bozeman.net/floodplain, or at the Gallatin County Planning Office or the Bozeman City Engineering Department.

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Bozeman & Gallatin County Floodplain Mapping Update Project

MEDIA FACT SHEET

KEY FACTS

- The City of Bozeman and Gallatin County are working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) to update floodplain maps for the West Gallatin River and Bozeman Creek and its tributaries.
- The existing floodplain maps for the West Gallatin River and Bozeman Creek and tributaries were produced more than 30 years ago
- Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and a Preliminary Flood Insurance Study were first released for public review in late 2016.
- A 90-day Appeal and Comment Period for the preliminary maps and study will run September 20 – December 18, 2018. Comments and appeals need to be submitted to the City and County, so they can forward them to FEMA for review and resolution before the maps and study can be finalized (expected late 2019).
- The City of Bozeman and Gallatin County mailed notification letters about the 90-day Appeal and Comment Period to affected landowners.
- Floodplain maps show flood elevations, flood zones, and floodplain boundaries for those areas in the 1% annual chance floodplain (also referred to as 100-year floodplain). Updating floodplain maps is important because it ensures stakeholders have the best available data to keep themselves and their properties safe.

OVERVIEW

FEMA, the Montana DNRC, the City of Bozeman, and Gallatin County began floodplain mapping update projects for the West Gallatin River and Bozeman Creek and its tributaries in 2012. Final floodplain maps resulting from this project will eventually replace the existing floodplain maps for the West Gallatin River, Bozeman Creek, Mathew Bird Creek, Nash Spring Creek, Flat Creek, Figgins Creek, and Mill Ditch Diversion. Most of the existing floodplain maps for these rivers were produced more than 30 years ago. The project utilizes high-accuracy topographic information, updated hydrologic data, and modern engineering methods to ensure that communities have the best available data.

Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and a Preliminary Flood Insurance Study were first released for public review in late 2016.

Early comments prompted a review and revision of one area on the West Gallatin River near Shed's Bridge. A revised FIRM was issued in February 2018 to replace the initial FIRM for that area.

The public can view the preliminary maps and get more information here: www.bozeman.net/floodplain and www.floodplain.mt.gov/gallatin or in the City Engineering Department or County Planning Department.

PUBLIC MEETINGS HELD

The City and County hosted several public open houses in January 2016 and again in January 2017 to review the draft and preliminary maps and talk with property owners one-on-one about the proposed map changes. An additional open house was held in March 2018 for landowners in the revised area of the West Gallatin River near Shed's bridge.

STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders for this project include property owners, tenants, property managers, developers, and business owners whose properties and structures will be newly mapped into or out of the proposed 1% annual-chance (100 year) floodplain.

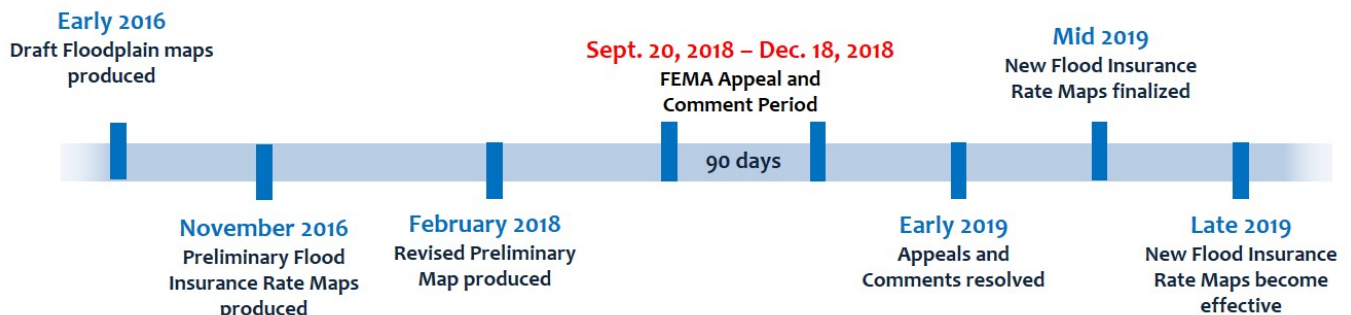
PROPOSED REFINEMENT

The City of Bozeman is currently working with FEMA and DNRC on a proposed refinement to the preliminary maps for a portion of Bozeman Creek (from Bogert Park to the East Gallatin River), and Mill Ditch (from L Street/I-90 overpass to the East Gallatin River). The City is coordinating with FEMA on the proposed refinement so it can be incorporated into the final maps. When the City's refinement has been technically reviewed and accepted by FEMA, an additional 90-day Appeal and Comment period will be held for this area (expected late 2018). The City intends to notify affected landowners by mail about the additional Appeal and Comment period.

CHANGES AHEAD

The proposed floodplain map changes will impact some properties' flood insurance rates and affect development regulations. However, changes have not yet taken place. The 90-day Appeal and Comment Period is an important part of the public review process. Property owners are encouraged to submit comments or provide technical information for an appeal during the 90-day Appeal and Comment Period.

After any submitted comments and appeals have been resolved, final maps will be produced. Final maps have an expected effective date of late 2019. See below for the tentative project schedule.



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CONTACT INFORMATION

The public can contact the following staff for more information about the floodplain mapping update:

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