

Project Name:	<i>Grant County, Arkansas First-time Countywide DFIRM</i>
Meeting:	<i>Initial Coordination Meeting</i>
Date:	<i>October 29, 2009</i>
Place:	<i>County OES/EOC/911 Office, Sheridan, Arkansas</i>
Time:	<i>8:30 AM to 10:30 AM</i>

**Attendees:** See attached attendance sheet

**Agenda Items**

**1. Introduction/Sign-in Sheet**

Mr. Guy Lowes, representing FEMA Region VI, began the meeting at 8:30 AM (CDT) with a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Lowes stated that during this meeting, the representatives of the different organizations would have the opportunity to discuss the flood mapping issues that should be included or addressed during the DFIRM study process. RAMPP, a joint venture of the Dewberry, URS Corporation and ESP Associates, will ensure that they coordinate with the communities and the Region throughout the restudy effort.

Mr. Lowes, indicated that RAMPP would compile the results of the Scoping Meeting in a report and enter the mapping needs captured at the meeting into needs database. The database would be used to justify funding from Congress for the future.

All meeting attendees introduced themselves and acknowledged that they had signed the sign-in sheet

**2. Study Overview**

**National Flood Insurance Program Overview and Flood Mapping Process**

Mr. Lowes provided a background of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and FEMA's role. He then presented information on the transition from Map Mod to RiskMAP and the goals to work with states, tribes, and local governments to perform the next round of mapping updates. All communities within this county participate in the NFIP.

Mr. Lowes asked the communities if they had any levee issues. The communities responded that they have no levees. Grant County responded they do have dams which may be in the State Dam Safety Program.

Mr. Lowes began by indicating it is important to establish points of contact for the project at the scoping stage. This helps identify decision makers for each community and creates a good working relationship throughout the project.

**3. 44 CFR 66 Discussion**

Ms. Cindy Crouch, Study Manager with RAMPP, indicated that the main purpose of this meeting was to identify the community needs, discuss the first-time countywide Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) process and to capture community concerns about existing flooding problems or areas of growth and development. She also stressed that it is important for the community to work with the mapping contractor throughout the process so that any issues can be resolved before the maps are released.

Ms. Crouch provided compliance with requirements of 44 CFR 66 with a discussion of: the approximate date the proposed study would commence, the areas identified for study, the nature and purpose of the proposed study, the scope and methodologies for the proposed study and the intended use of data obtained for the study.

## Map Base Options

Ms. Crouch provided an overview of the options for the DFIRM base map, which included ortho or vector-based map. Her discussion included the advantages and disadvantages of each type of map, which included:

- The refresh rate for orthos can be longer for the public when using ortho-based maps.
- Identification of flood hazards for vector maps can be difficult when a County does not have adequate road coverage. Communities need plus or minus twenty-foot horizontal accuracy for road files.
- Orthophoto base maps could make maps difficult to read when they are copied or faxed.
- Roads and rail are identified with lines and labels on a vector based map, but only with labels on an ortho-based map.
- Paper maps will have the same ortho on them until maps are updated again.
- There is complete countywide coverage with orthophotography.
- Orthophotography may be harder to see at larger scales.
- Communities and end users without GIS capabilities may have a hard time determining locations on a vector based map

The State NFIP coordinator mentioned that all DFIRMs within the state of Arkansas, to date, have been vector based maps.

All communities opted for a vector-based DFIRM.

## Topographic Data Acquisition

Ms. Crouch provided an overview of the need for topographic data to prepare new flood maps. The State NFIP coordinator indicated that the state has 5-meter USGS Digital Elevation Models available. The communities said there was no other topographic data available for their County.

## Engineering Analysis

Ms. Crouch provided an overview of the engineering analyses and the study types including: Detailed Study, Enhanced Approximate Study, Approximate Study as well as Redelineation and Refinement.

## Mapping and DFIRM Production Overview

Ms. Crouch provided an overview of the mapping process of merging base data, topography, flood data, and placing it on a DFIRM.

## Proposed DFIRM Panel Layout

Ms. Crouch provided visuals of the effective FIRM panel and stream layout, and discussed that since there is currently no countywide panel scheme, one will be developed that consolidates all of the effective community data and is seamless across the county. The panel scheme will be USGS quad based. Ms. Crouch explained that we anticipate some panels with any new detailed study identified as part of this scoping meeting may need to be created at a scale of 1 inch = 500 feet so the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) data is readable. Ms. Crouch also mentioned there may be some panels within the County that are not printed, if there are no special flood hazard areas determined in those areas.

## **DFIRM and FIS Report**

Ms. Crouch informed the meeting attendees that all of the new and effective data would be merged to create a single, countywide DFIRM set and FIS. Communities would no longer be separated out.

## **Incorporation of Engineering Studies by Others**

Ms. Crouch asked the communities to provide any LOMRs or information about any other floodplain related engineering projects to RAMPP to ensure they are captured and incorporated into the maps.

## **4. Post Preliminary Process and Map Adoption**

Ms. Crouch gave a brief overview of the steps that would be taken once the DFIRM process had been completed.

## **5. Outreach**

Ms. Crouch indicated that there are outreach tools, materials, pamphlets, and websites available from FEMA to assist in keeping the community informed about the process. She indicated that FEMA has asked RAMPP to be proactive in communications with the communities, including a monthly newsletter as well as a RAMPP website.

FEMA asked the communities for a primary point of contact for this project and they indicated that the Grant County Floodplain Administrator would help coordinate with FEMA and RAMPP and the communities.

Please refer to the <http://www.rampp-team.com> for more updates on the project.

## **6. Community Risk Assessment**

Ms. Crouch indicated that every state, county, city, town has some level of risk from some threat. The difference is in how those risks are managed.

## **7. Mitigation Planning**

Ms. Crouch mentioned the importance of RiskMAP and integrating the identification of flood hazards and the ties to mitigation planning and Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMP). The communities each have HMPs approved by FEMA.

## **8. Needs Assessment**

Ms. Crouch indicated going forward needs will be captured via the Coordinated Needs Management Strategy (CNMS). CNMS is GIS driven. Mr. Lowes indicated that the next round of FEMA funding will be tied to the information that is input into CNMS and it is very important that the communities help us in the process of identifying areas where they have concerns on their existing maps and areas of new growth.

## **9. Scoping Presentation Summary**

Mr. Lowes provided a brief summary of the scoping meeting including contact information.

## 10. Community Needs Collection

Members of RAMPP and FEMA broke-out with each community and began a discussion of community needs. The communities were asked to identify any potential flooding issues that needed to be addressed. It was reiterated that each community has many needs but there is limited budget. The communities were informed that they needed to provide all their mapping needs so they are captured now and put into a database.

RAMPP worked with the communities to develop their mapping needs.

The communities commented that their corporate limits shown on the effective FIRM are incorrect.

The State NFIP coordinator and the communities indicated that development and population is growing very quickly in the County and in the City of Sheridan since it is a popular commuter area to Little Rock. They currently have much development occurring in unshaded Zone X areas, which potentially could have flood hazards. The communities specifically requested more detailed study within the City of Sheridan and just outside the City in the unincorporated areas as this area is the focus of growth. The State NFIP coordinator provided snapshots of aerial images indicated growth and potential problem areas.

The State NFIP coordinator and Grant County indicated that the SFHA for Town Branch stream is incorrect. There is a detention basin that was not taken into account in the delineation of the Zone A floodplain.

Grant County asked how clear-cutting timber areas are managed on the FIRMs since they come and go. FEMA responded that this is really a local government ordinance and management issue. The HMP's may also help since communities could apply for Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grants if the clear-cutting is contributing to drainage issues for silt detention or retention on property.

The State NFIP coordinator asked FEMA and RAMPP to contact Shelby Johnson at the State of Arkansas GIS office to acquire base data for this county.

FEMA asked RAMPP to send MOA agreements to the communities in Grant County as they were not able to sign them during this meeting.

## 11. Meeting Adjourned at 10:30 AM

*Please find attached the minutes from our meeting on October 29, 2009. Please note the minutes are an interpretation of discussions held. Please provide any additions or corrections to the originator within 5 days of the date signed; otherwise they will be assumed correct as written.*