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CASS COUNTY COMMISSION

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Region VIII  
Denver Federal Center, Building 710  
P.O. Box 25267  
Denver, CO 80225-0267



**FEMA**

September 28, 2011

PRELIM1

The Honorable Darrell Vanyo  
Chairman, Cass County  
211 Ninth Street South  
Fargo, North Dakota 58103

Dear Mr. Vanyo:

We are pleased to present you with the enclosed preliminary copies of the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report for your community to review. As you may be aware, the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has undertaken an initiative to modernize National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) maps nationwide.

We prepared the FIS report and FIRM in a countywide format, which means that flood hazard information for jurisdictions within Cass County, including your community, have been included on one FIRM and in one FIS report. The flood hazard information presented on the FIRM includes Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), which are the areas subject to inundation by the base (1-percent-annual-chance) flood; Base Flood Elevations (BFEs); and regulatory floodways. **Regulatory floodways are areas defined as the channels of a stream, plus any adjacent floodplain areas, that must be kept free of encroachment so that the base flood discharge can be conveyed without increasing the BFEs more than a specified amount.**

In addition, we have converted the effective flood hazard information and other digital data for your community to conform to the new FEMA digital FIRM database specifications and Geographic Information System (GIS) format requirements. Information on FEMA's digital database specifications is available at [http://www.fema.gov/fhm/dfm\\_dfhm.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/fhm/dfm_dfhm.shtm). By providing the flood hazard information in ESRI Interchange (.e00) format, ESRI Shapefile format, and MapInfo Interchange Format (MIF), we are making it easier for your community to incorporate these data into your local GIS. Digital FIRM data for your community will also be available as georeferenced TIFF files, and the FIS report will be available in PDF format, allowing for ready use by your community.

To assist your community in maintaining the FIRM, we reviewed our records to determine if any previous Letters of Map Change (e.g., Letters of Map Amendment or Letters of Map Revision) will be superseded when the FIRM panels become effective. According to our records, no Letters of Map Change have been issued for the areas of your community covered by the FIRM.

The preliminary copies of the FIRM panels and FIS report will be the basis for a formal coordination meeting with community officials and interested citizens in Cass County. The purpose of this meeting will be to present the FIRM panels and FIS report and to give your community and other affected communities a chance to comment or ask questions.

**We are sending the preliminary FIRM panels and FIS report at this time to give your community an opportunity to review them. We will contact you shortly to schedule the coordination meeting. In the meantime, we encourage you to circulate the enclosed copies as widely as possible among elected**

meantime, we encourage you to circulate the enclosed copies as widely as possible among elected officials, staff, citizens, and other interested local stakeholders, so that they will have the opportunity to review them thoroughly before the meeting. The review period provides community officials and citizens in the affected communities with an opportunity to correct or add to the nontechnical information presented on the FIRM panels and in the FIS report, including the configuration and labeling of physical features such as roads, bridges, and streams, prior to the formal appeal period. Requests to revise such information may be provided to FEMA during this community review period, at the community coordination meeting, or during the statutory 90-day appeal period. Approved changes will be shown on the final printed FIRM.

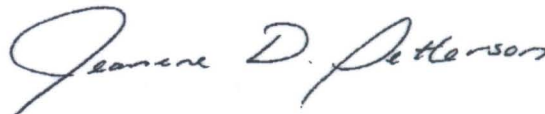
During the course of preparing the countywide FIRM and FIS report, we added or modified BFEs where appropriate. Therefore, after the coordination meeting is held, we will initiate a statutory 90-day appeal period for the new or modified BFEs. Based on the information received to date, no BFEs were added or modified for the flooding sources within the corporate limits of your community. Because the countywide FIRM must be processed for all communities concurrently, further action on the flood hazard information for your community will be postponed until the completion of the 90-day appeal period for other communities and the resolution of all appeals. Additional information regarding the 90-day appeal period will be provided during the community coordination meeting.

After the review and appeal periods have ended and all comments and appeals have been addressed, we will initiate the final preparation of the FIRM and FIS report. The new FIRM and FIS report for your community will become effective approximately six months later. Before that date, you will be reminded of the requirements for your community to adopt new floodplain ordinances or modify existing ordinances as necessary to reflect any changes in the FIRM or FIS report, including references to the new effective date. If you or other community officials have any questions regarding the floodplain ordinance for your community, you can raise them at the community coordination meeting, or you can discuss those issues with your State NFIP Coordinator. Approximately one month before the effective date, we will send your community printed copies of the FIRM panels and FIS report.

Once the FIRM and FIS report are printed and distributed, the digital files containing the flood hazard data for the entire county will be available to your community for use in a computer mapping system. These files can be used in conjunction with other thematic data for floodplain management purposes, insurance purchase and rating requirements, and many other planning applications. In addition, your community may be eligible for additional credits under our Community Rating System if you implement your activities using digital mapping files.

Your community's comments on the enclosed materials are an important part of our review process and will be carefully considered before we publish the FIRM and FIS report in their final form. If you are interested in discussing the enclosed materials or if you have questions about the community coordination meeting, please contact the Consultation Coordination Officer designated for your community by telephone at (303) 235-4830.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeanine D. Petterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeanine" being more prominent and the last name "Petterson" following in a similar style.

Jeanine D. Petterson  
FEMA Region VIII Mitigation Division Director

Enclosures:

Preliminary FIS report and FIRM Panels

cc: Community Map Repository  
Keith Berndt, Community Floodplain Administrator  
Jeff Klein, State NFIP Coordinator  
Julie Prescott, State MMMS Coordinator  
Nancy Steinberger, FEMA Region VIII Risk MAP Specialist  
David Kyner, FEMA Region VIII NFIP Specialist