

**FEMA AHPP Fischer (Algiers) Group Housing Site
Eight-Step Planning Process for Floodplains and Wetlands**

<p>Step 1: Determine whether the Proposed Action is located in a wetland and/or the 100-year floodplain, or whether it has the potential to affect or be affected by a floodplain or wetland.</p>	<p>Project Analysis: According to the preliminary DFIRMs (digital flood insurance rate map) dated January 13, 2008, the Fischer Site is in the 100-year floodplain in Zone AE at a advisory base flood elevation (ABFE) of 3 feet above mean sea level (amsl).</p> <p>Based on a review of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) and a site visit, wetlands will not be impacted by the proposed AHPP housing project. The proposed site is in a developed urban setting which has been used for the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) housing for many years prior to its demolition and is not in an area identified as a wetland.</p>
<p>Step 2: Notify public at earliest possible time of the intent to carry out an action in a floodplain or wetland, and involve the affected and interested public in the decision-making process.</p>	<p>Project Analysis: A final public notice was previously issued by FEMA notifying the public regarding floodplain impacts from various proposed housing actions within the 100-year floodplains in Orleans and St. Bernard parishes. In addition, FEMA and the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) will notify the public of the availability of the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) which evaluates all natural resource impacts from the proposed project, including floodplains. The public notice will be provided in a newspaper of general circulation on March 16, 2009 when the EA is made available for public review.</p>
<p>Step 3: Identify and evaluate practicable alternatives to locating the Proposed Action in a floodplain or wetland.</p>	<p>Project Analysis: The Applicant considered the following alternatives in selecting the proposed action:</p> <p><i>No Action Alternative:</i> Under the No Action Alternative, no AHPP housing would be provided for families displaced from their homes. Rental resources are very limited in the affected area, and people displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita would remain in housing provided by family members or friends, in hotels, in temporary "dormitories" such as homeless shelters or churches, or in facilities damaged by the storm and determined structurally unsafe or unsanitary. Although no new construction would occur in the 100-year floodplain, permanent housing for Louisiana residents would remain inadequate.</p>

<p>Step 3. continued</p>	<p><i>Proposed Action Alternative:</i> Under the Proposed Action Alternative FEMA would construct approximately 105 permanent single-family AHPP units (Louisiana Cottages) within the proposed project site. The approximately 20-acre plot has previously been utilized by the HANO, as multi-family government housing from the 1960s, which has since been demolished and is located in the New Orleans Westbank neighborhood of Algiers, Orleans Parish, Louisiana and is bound by Semmes Street to the north, General De Gaulle Drive to the south, the Mississippi River to the east, and Thayer Avenue on the west.</p> <p>The Louisiana Cottages would be built on piers to bring them up to the required ABFE of 3 feet amsl, as necessary. Driveways would be constructed to facilitate access and parking for the AHPP cottages. The houses would tie into existing water and sewer infrastructure currently located near each lot site, and utilities would then be installed to each individual cottage.</p>
<p>Step 4: Identify the full range of potential direct or indirect impacts associated with the occupancy or modification of floodplains and wetlands, and the potential direct and indirect support of floodplain and wetland development that could result from the Proposed Action.</p>	<p>Project Analysis: Direct impacts to the floodplain include converting approximately 20 acres of 100-year floodplain to areas outside the floodplain. The loss of floodplain area in the vicinity of the project would generally be considered a direct, permanent impact; however, in this case it would be a minor adverse effect for the following reasons: 1) the site was previously elevated by HANO after demolition of the former HANO multi-family housing when the area was filled, contoured, and graded which left the site at or near the 3 feet ABFE; 2) should the final elevation not be above the 3 foot ABFE, elevation of the proposed AHPP units to the ABFE would be attained through the addition of fill material, the construction the AHPP units on piers, or through a combination of both; 3) the proposed conversion of the project area to non-floodplain is not likely to result in an evident increase in flood velocities or elevations upstream or downstream.</p> <p>Although the project does not encourage additional development within the floodplain, the project will result in providing civic support</p>

<p>Step 4. continued</p>	<p>to populations living in the floodplain which would be an indirect impact.</p> <p>No direct or indirect impacts to wetlands are anticipated for the proposed project.</p>
<p>Step 5: Minimize the potential adverse impacts from work within floodplains and wetlands (identified under Step 4) and restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by wetlands.</p>	<p>Project Analysis: To minimize impacts to the floodplain, the proposed AHPP cottages would be constructed on the proposed site which has already been filled and graded so that the AHPP group site development would be located outside the 100-year floodplain. The proposed AHPP units would be elevated above the ABFE with a finished floor elevation above 3 feet amsl.</p>
<p>Step 6: Re-evaluate the Proposed Action to determine: 1) if it is still practicable in light of its exposure to flood hazards; 2) the extent to which it will aggravate the hazards to others; 3) its potential to disrupt floodplain and wetland values.</p>	<p>Project Analysis: The Proposed Action remains practicable, as it increases permanent affordable housing in Louisiana, would only minimally (if at all) increase nearby flood elevations, and preserves abundant nearby floodplains retaining their natural values.</p>
<p>Step 7: If the agency decides to take an action in a floodplain or wetland, prepare and provide the public with a finding and explanation of any final decision that the floodplain or wetland is the only practicable alternative. The explanation should include any relevant factors considered in the decision-making process.</p>	<p>Project Analysis: Executive (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires Federal agencies to avoid direct or indirect support of development within the 100-year floodplain whenever there is a practicable alternative. FEMA applies the decision process described in 44 CFR Part 9, referred to as the Eight-Step Planning Process, to ensure that its actions are consistent with EO 11988.</p> <p>A final public notice for Orleans Parish was published in November 2007 informing the public of FEMA's decision to proceed with the AHPP projects.</p>
<p>Step 8: Review the implementation and post-implementation phases of the Proposed Action to ensure that the requirements of the EOs are fully implemented. Oversight responsibility shall be integrated into existing processes.</p>	<p>Project Analysis: This step is integrated into the NEPA process and FEMA project management and oversight functions.</p>

FINAL PUBLIC NOTICE

FEMA-1603-DR-LA AND FEMA-1607-DR-LA

Proposed Federal Funding in the 100-year Floodplain

Public Notice is hereby given by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) per 44 Code of Federal Regulations Part 9 (Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands), FEMA's implementing regulation for Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, of its intent to provide alternative pilot housing assistance under the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery of 2006, Pub. L. No. 109-234, to the Louisiana Housing Finance Agency (applicant).

Section 2403 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Acts provided for "the costs sufficient for alternative housing pilot programs in the areas hardest hit by Hurricane Katrina and other hurricanes of the 2005 season." FEMA awarded the applicant with \$74,542,370 under this program after a competitive grant process.

After the Presidential disaster declarations FEMA-1603-DR-LA and FEMA-1603-DR-LA, FEMA published an initial floodplain notice providing information on the agency's disaster assistance actions in the 100-year floodplain (areas that have been determined to have a one percent probability of flooding in any given year).

This publication provides final notice for the construction of alternative pilot housing projects that would be located in the 100-year floodplain, in the parishes of Orleans and St. Bernard. FEMA has determined that for housing actions located in the aforementioned parishes, there are typically no practicable alternatives outside the floodplain because much of the parish area is in the floodplain. The applicant will ensure appropriate elevation of housing units through open works (columns, piers, piles, etc.) or fill. The applicant will ensure that construction meets the applicable State or local floodplain standards. Other mitigation measures may be incorporated on an action-by-action basis.

Maps of the area are available for public inspection upon request. Maps can also be accessed through the internet at <http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/noma/resources4.shtm#katrina> and http://www.fema.gov/hazard/flood/recoverydata/katrina/katrina_la_maps.shtm.

This constitutes final notice and FEMA is accepting comments to its above determination. The public comment period will be limited to the 7 days from November 30, 2007 to December 6 2007. Written comments can be faxed to (504) 762-2888; and verbal comments will be accepted at (504) 762-2425; between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm.