

**Federal Emergency Management Agency
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA)
for Ben Geren Regional Park Safe Room
Ft. Smith, Sebastian County, Arkansas
HMGP-DR-1819-AR Project #52**

Interested persons are hereby notified that Sebastian County has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for program funding under Section 404 the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provides grants to states and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures that reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster.

FEMA proposes to provide funding to Sebastian County through the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) for the construction of a community safe room at Ben Geren Regional Park (Latitude: 35.32429; Longitude:94.34818), Ft. Smith, AR. The proposed project aims to protect the residents and the general public in the southwestern portion of Fort Smith, Arkansas, and visitors to Ben Geren Regional Park from the risk of tornadoes and other high wind events.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and the implementing regulations of FEMA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared to assess the potential impacts of the proposed action on the human and natural environment. The Draft EA summarizes the purpose and need, alternatives, affected environmental, and potential environmental consequences for the proposed action. The Draft EA is available for comment and can be viewed at the Fort Smith Public Library, 3201 Rogers Avenue, Fort Smith, AR 72901, between April 13 and May 12, 2011, from 9a.m. to 9p.m. Monday – Thursday; 9a.m. to 6p.m. Friday; 10a.m. to 5p.m. Saturday; and 1p.m. to 5p.m. Sunday. An electronic version of the Draft EA can be requested from Dorothy Weir, FEMA Region 6, at dorothy.weir@fema.gov.

The comment period will end 30 days from the initial notice publication date of April 13, 2011. Written comments on the Draft EA can be mailed, emailed, or faxed to the contact below. If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA will become final and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued for the project. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.

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