

### 4.3.3 Floodplains

Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires federal agencies to avoid direct or indirect support or development within the 100-year floodplain whenever there is a practicable alternative. FEMA's regulations for complying with EO 11988 are found at 44 CFR Part 9, Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands.

In July 2005, FEMA initiated a study for the majority of the Louisiana coastal parishes as part of the Map Mod effort. This study was necessary because the flood hazard and risk information shown on many Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) was developed during the 1970s, and the physical terrain had changed significantly. Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, FEMA expanded the scope of this study to include all of coastal Louisiana. The magnitude of the impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita reinforced the urgency to obtain additional flood recovery data for the coastal zones of Louisiana. More detailed analysis was possible because new data were obtained after the hurricanes including information on levees and levee systems, new high-water marks, and new hurricane parameters.

During an initial post-hurricane analysis, FEMA determined that the flood elevations shown on the FIRMs for many Louisiana communities referred to as Base Flood Elevations, or BFEs were too low. Therefore, FEMA created recovery maps showing the extent and magnitude of Hurricane Katrina's and Rita's surge, as well as information on other storms over the past 25 years. The advisory flood data shown on the recovery maps for the Louisiana-declared disaster areas show high-water marks surveyed after the storm, flood limits developed from these surveyed points, and Advisory Base Flood Elevations, or ABFEs. The recovery maps and other advisory data were developed to assist parish officials, homeowners, business owners, and other affected citizens with their recovery and rebuilding efforts.

Updated preliminary flood hazard maps from an intensive five-year mapping project guided by FEMA have now been provided to all Louisiana coastal parishes. The new maps, known as Preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs), are based on the most technically advanced flood insurance study ever performed for Louisiana, followed by multiple levels of review. They provide an up-to-date, accurate picture of coastal Louisiana flood risks. The DFIRMs provide communities with a more scientific approach to economic development, mitigation planning, emergency response and post-flood recovery.

Orleans Parish has adopted ABFE for floodplain management, and in some cases, these elevations are more stringent than the Prelim DFIRM elevations. When that is the case, in order to comply with local floodplain management requirements, the ABFE must be met. When the Preliminary DFIRM is higher, FEMA, through the PA program, has established that reconstruction shall be done using the best available data.

In compliance with FEMA policy implementing EO 11988, Floodplain Management, the proposed project was reviewed for possible impacts associated with occupancy or modification to a floodplain. Orleans Parish enrolled in the NFIP on August 3, 1970.

Alternative 1 – No Action: As no building would be constructed at the site the No Action Alternative would have no impact on the 100-year floodplain.

Alternative 2 – Reconstruction in Original Location: Per preliminary DFIRM panel number 22071C0235F dated November 13, 2008 (Figure 12), the former Stallings Center and Pool site is located in Shaded Zone X, an area of the 0.2% annual chance (500-year) flood; an area of the 1% annual chance (100-year) flood with average depths of less than 1 ft. or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from the 1% annual chance (100-year) flood (also referred to on older FIRMs as Zone B). In addition, per Advisory Base Flood Elevation Map (ABFE Map) LA-CC32 (Figure 13) the former site is located in ABFE Elevation 4.5 ft or 3 ft above Highest Existing Adjacent Grade (HEAG). Reconstruction of Stallings Center in substantially its original footprint would not have an adverse effect on the 100-year floodplain.

Alternative 3 – Reconstruction at an Alternate Location - Preferred Alternative: The Proposed action would involve the relocation of the functions of the Stallings Center and Pool to the proposed site. Per preliminary DFIRM panel number 22071C0235F dated November 13, 2008 (Figure 12), the proposed project site is located in Shaded Zone X, an area of the 0.2% annual chance (500-year) flood; an area of the 1% annual chance (100-year) flood with average depths of less than 1 ft. or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from the 1% annual chance (100-year) flood (also referred to on older FIRMs as Zone B). In addition, per Advisory Base Flood Elevation Map (ABFE Map) LA-CC32 (Figure 13) the proposed project site is located in ABFE Elevation of 4.5 ft or BFE elevation of 3 ft above Highest Existing Adjacent Grade (HEAG), whichever is highest.

FEMA Public Assistance grant funded projects carried out in the floodplain or affecting the floodplain must be coordinated with the local floodplain administrator for a floodplain development permit and the action must be undertaken in compliance with relevant, applicable and required local codes and standards. The ABFE Map has been adopted by Orleans Parish for floodplain management; the applicant must abide by the most stringent flood elevation requirements.