

**Federal Emergency Management Agency
PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Bastrop County Welsh Tract Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project, Bastrop County, Texas
HMGP-DR-1999-TX PROJECT #14

Interested persons are hereby notified that Bastrop County has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding under Section 404 of 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 Bastrop County for hazardous fuels reduction activities on 310 acres of a 400-acre property owned by the county known as the Welsh Tract. The proposed action would reduce hazardous fuels loading in the under- and mid-story and partially open up the forest canopy to mitigate the effects of a wildfire moving through Welsh Tract and potentially spreading to nearby residential structures.

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of the proposed action and alternatives on the human and natural environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508), the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and the implementing regulations of FEMA (44 CFR Parts 9 and 10). The draft EA evaluates alternatives that provide for compliance with applicable environmental laws. The alternatives evaluated include (1) no action; (2) the proposed action described above.

The draft EA is available for review and comment at the Office of the Bastrop County Judge located at 804 Pecan Street, Bastrop, Texas 78602, from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday from September 28, 2013 to October 28, 2013. An electronic version of the draft EA can be requested from Dorothy Weir, FEMA Region 6, at dorothy.weir@fema.dhs.gov or viewed on FEMA's website at <https://edit.fema.gov/environmental-planning-and-historic-preservation-program/environmental-documents-public-notices-2>.

The comment period will end 30 days from the initial notice publication date. Written comments on the draft EA can be mailed, emailed, or faxed to Dorothy Weir, Environmental Specialist, FEMA Region 6, 800 N Loop 288, Denton, TX 76209, Fax: 940-383-7299; dorothy.weir@fema.dhs.gov. 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.