



**Southwestern
Illinois
Flood Prevention
District Council**

104 United Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234

618-343-9120
Fax 618-343-9132

September 23, 2010

VIA Email and Facsimile

The Hon. W. Craig Fugate
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20472
FAX 202-646-3930

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Norbert F. Schwartz
Mitigation Division Director
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA Region V
536 South Clark Street, 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60605
FAX 312-408-5551

Dear Messrs. Fugate and Schwartz:

Les Sterman
Chief Supervisor of
Construction and the Works

I recently received Mr. Schwartz's letter stating that by September 30, 2010, FEMA will issue revised preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for St. Louis and St. Charles Counties in Missouri. Mr. Schwartz indicates further that FEMA will, at the same time, issue appeal resolution letters regarding earlier preliminary FIRMs to communities in Madison, St. Clair and Monroe Counties in Illinois.

We believe these actions violate Section 10503 of the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2009, 122 Stat. 3574, Public Law 110-329 (the Act). This legislation explicitly requires FEMA to align the flood mapping processes for the contiguous Missouri and Illinois counties of the St. Louis metropolitan region. FEMA's issuance of revised preliminary maps for the Missouri counties will reopen the statutory appeals process for those Missouri communities. As we have seen, the appeals process has already taken more than a year, and with the advent of the Scientific Resolution Panel, an additional six months will be needed to fully resolve map appeals. Simultaneously ruling on the existing appeals from the Illinois counties will close the appeals process for the Illinois communities, with the exception of the SRP process. Thus, once again, FEMA will put the Illinois communities at a distinct disadvantage by having final FIRMs imposed at a much

earlier time than neighboring Missouri communities. This is exactly what the Section 10503 of the Act was intended to, and does, prohibit.

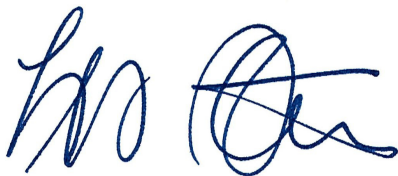
Your letter acknowledges the intent of the Act, stating that "FEMA recognizes the importance of keeping the maps aligned for Metro St. Louis communities." Yet, the proposed actions will lead to exactly the opposite result, and again FEMA proposes to treat the Illinois communities differently from adjacent Missouri communities. Mr. Schwartz's letter suggests that letters of final determination for Missouri and Illinois counties will be issued in June 2011. Meeting that schedule is highly unlikely if not impossible for the Missouri counties. If the initiation of a new appeals process in the Missouri counties occurs in November 2010, that process that could take 18 months, if past experience is any guide. LFDs for all of the counties covered by the Act should indeed be issued at the same time, but that could not occur in June 2011.

Further, we believe there is credible information supporting the contention that FEMA hastened the release of flawed maps, known to be based on obsolete data, for St. Louis and St. Charles Counties in order to more quickly release preliminary maps for Southwestern Illinois, ostensibly complying with the law. The acknowledgement now by FEMA that new preliminary maps will be issued for St. Louis and St. Charles Counties may indeed confirm our belief.

Communities in all of the counties covered by the Act submitted data disputing the preliminary maps. If new preliminary maps are needed in St. Louis and St. Charles counties, then new preliminary maps are needed for Madison, St. Clair and Monroe counties as well. There is no apparent reason for issuing new preliminary maps in St. Louis and St. Charles counties and not in Madison, St. Clair and Monroe counties, unless the maps for St. Louis and St. Charles counties were known to be deficient before FEMA released them.

The issuance of a new set of preliminary maps in St. Louis and St. Charles counties may certainly be necessary to correct serious deficiencies in those maps. However, doing so at this time without beginning a new appeal period for Madison, St. Clair and Monroe counties, is contrary to the intent and requirements of the Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Les Serman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Les Serman
Chief Supervisor of Construction and the Works

cc: Hon. Richard Durbin, United States Senate
Hon. Jerry Costello, United States House of Representatives
Hon. John Shimkus, United States House of Representatives

Messrs. Fugate and Schwartz

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Hon. Alan Dunstan, Madison County Board Chairman
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