

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

DIVISION OF FLOOD MANAGEMENT

P.O. BOX 219000

SACRAMENTO, CA 95821-9000



April 19, 2013

«Salutation» «First_Name» «Last_Name»
«Title»
«Agency»
«Mailing_Address»
«City», «State» «Zip_Code»

Dear «Salutation» «Last_Name»,

I am writing to invite a representative of your agency to participate in an important effort that could affect land use decisions of all cities and counties within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley (Valley) which have Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated flood zones within the city or county jurisdiction. For an illustration of the potential extent of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, please refer to Figure 3-1 Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley per California Government Code Section 65007(g) and (i) in the April 2012 Public draft of the *Urban Level of Flood Protection Criteria* (http://www.water.ca.gov/floodsafe/urbancriteria/ULOP-Draft-Criteria_2012.0404.pdf).

Per Government Code § 65007(n), DWR is developing criteria that define the urban level of flood protection necessary to withstand flooding that has a 1-in-200 chance of occurring in any given year. Within thirty-six months after July 2, 2013, all cities and counties within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley will be required to make findings consistent with these criteria in order to approve development in urban and urbanizing areas located in flood hazard zones. While California cities and counties outside the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley are not required to make such findings, these criteria can help inform local land use decisions.

In April 2012, DWR developed and released draft *Urban Level of Flood Protection Criteria* for public review and comment. The draft criteria were developed with input from a diverse work group of representatives from cities, counties, other State and federal agencies, and associated professional organizations. Since the release of the draft criteria, Senate Bill 1278 and Assembly Bill 1965 of 2012 were passed to amend the original Senate Bill 5 of 2007.

To address public comments, recent legislative amendments, and several implementation challenges that remain, we plan to engage in additional discussions with affected stakeholders about revising the draft criteria and potentially recommending additional legislative amendments. Therefore, DWR is convening a new *ULOP Criteria*

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Refinement Work Group consisting of local government planners and other related topic experts to discuss and identify what can be done to support pragmatic implementation of the urban level of flood protection law.

As part of this effort, we also expect to convene some topic specific subgroups to work through details on specific topics with a smaller group of representative experts. Once DWR convenes the ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group, we plan to discuss with the members which topic specific sub groups we should form and who should serve on each subgroup. We expect that some experts may serve on one or more subgroups without being a member of the larger ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group.

Members of the ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group (or topic specific subgroups) will be required to have expertise in land use decision-making or other related fields (such as floodplain management, floodplain mapping, or engineering of flood protection structures). Members will also be expected to participate actively in developing text to refine the draft criteria or help draft potential legislative amendments as necessary. DWR invites your agency to designate a representative to be considered for participation in the ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group discussions. Depending on the number and qualifications of interested participants, DWR may choose to select a subset of the applicants who will provide diverse representation of the affected stakeholders in order to assure that the work group is small enough to function effectively.

In addition to local government representatives, DWR is inviting representatives from the California State Association of Counties, League of California Cities, California County Planning Directors Association, American Planning Association California Chapter, Floodplain Management Association, and various environmental organizations to participate in the work group. We will also be inviting FEMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Central Valley Flood Protection Board, California Department of Housing and Community Development, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and California Emergency Management Agency to participate in the ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group. I will be DWR's executive sponsor for the Project.

We expect that the ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group will meet approximately once a month, currently anticipated being active from May, 2013 through the summer and possibly beyond. Meetings typically will be held in the Sacramento area and last a half-day, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Meetings will be facilitated by a mediator from the Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS. The first meeting has yet to be scheduled.

If your agency is unable or chooses not to participate in the ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group, your agency will still be welcome to comment on the revised draft document through public workshops and/or a written comment submission process that will be held when a revised draft is available (anticipated by September, 2013).

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Applications for the workgroup are due Friday, May 3 2013. If your agency seeks representation in the ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group, please contact Michele Ng, Project Manager, Department of Water Resources, at (916) 574-2371 or Michele.Ng@water.ca.gov for the ULOP Criteria Refinement Work Group Charter and application. Michele can also answer any additional questions you may have about the overall project.

Sincerely,

Paul Marshall
Assistant Chief, Division of Flood Management
Department of Water Resources