

## **Section 1**

# **Procedures for Processing New and Revised Flood Insurance Study Reports and Flood Insurance Rate Maps**

This section provides the standard procedures that staff from the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), FEMA contractors, and other organizations that partner with FEMA are to follow for processing new and revised Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports and Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs). This section also provides general guidelines for selecting and preparing the appropriate standard documents during the mapping process.

Except where noted, these processing procedures apply to all FEMA-contracted map creation and update activities, including the following:

- Type 15 Flood Insurance Study (FIS)—An FIS is an initial detailed study of flood hazards performed for a community that does not have an effective Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) or DFIRM.
- Type 19 Flood Insurance Restudy (RFIS)—An RFIS is a revised detailed study of flood hazards performed for a community that already has an effective FIRM/DFIRM; FIS report; and, in some cases, Flood Boundary and Floodway Map (FBFM).
- Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) Revision—A CBRS revision is a map revision, prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), to transfer CBRS boundaries from congressionally adopted source maps to a FIRM/DFIRM.
- Notice-to-User Revision—A Notice-to-User Revision is a revision issued by FEMA to quickly and inexpensively correct a nontechnical problem with a published FIS report, FIRM, DFIRM, or FBFM.

This section also provides the standard procedures for processing revisions to FIS reports, FIRMs, DFIRMs, and, in some rare instances, FBFMs based on physical map updates initiated by a community or other FEMA Flood Hazard Mapping Partner. This section also provides general guidelines for selecting and preparing the appropriate correspondence. The two types of physical map updates initiated by communities are Physical Map Revisions (PMRs) and Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) Program Flood Map Projects.

A **PMR** is a revision made by FEMA, based on community-supplied data, to an FIS report; FIRM; DFIRM; or, in some rare instances, FBFM. FEMA will consider issuing a PMR rather than a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) when (1) changes resulting from the requested revision are extensive, affecting significant portions of a FIRM/DFIRM panel or multiple FIRM/DFIRM panels; (2) revisions will add significant Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) to the effective FIRM/DFIRM; or (3) revisions will result in increases in the Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) and/or the area included in the regulatory floodway. For additional information on LOMRs, see

Section 2 of this Manual and Volume 2 of FEMA's *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003).

A **CTP Flood Map Project** is a flood hazard study performed by a community, regional agency, or State agency that is participating in the CTP Program. These Project Team members are hereinafter referred to as "CTPs."

The CTP Program allows communities as well as regional agencies and State, Commonwealth, and Territory agencies that have the interest and capability to become active partners in the FEMA Flood Hazard Mapping Program. FEMA and the participating CTPs administer activities under the CTP Program through close and frequent coordination and through formal agreements. More detailed information on these agreements and eligible activities is provided on the FEMA Flood Hazard Mapping Website at [http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/ctp\\_main.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/ctp_main.shtm).

FEMA also may convert a community to the Regular Phase of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) without preparing a FIRM/DFIRM with detailed flood insurance risk zones. The "Special Conversion" process that is followed depends on whether FEMA determines that the community is "non-floodprone" or "minimally floodprone."

A non-floodprone community is a community that is determined by FEMA to not have SFHAs, meaning that the community is not subject to inundation by the 1-percent-annual-chance (100-year or base) flood. A minimally floodprone community is a community that FEMA has determined to be subject to inundation by the base flood, but for which existing conditions indicate that the area is unlikely to be developed in the foreseeable future. The processing requirements for Special Conversions are provided in Section 4 of this Manual.

The process flowcharts are provided in Figures 1-1 through 1-3, which are presented at the end of this section:

- Figure 1-1, "Processing Procedures for FEMA-Contracted Studies, Restudies, and CBRA boundary transfers" (page 1-45);
- Figure 1-2, "Processing Procedures for Community-Initiated Physical Map Revisions" (page 1-53); and
- Figure 1-3, "Processing Procedures for Appeals and Protests" (page 1-61).

Descriptions and copies of the standard documents cited in this section are provided in Appendix A of this Manual.

## **1.1 Initial Processing of Draft Materials Resulting from FEMA-Contracted Flood Map Projects**

The procedures documented in this Manual begin with the delivery of draft delivery materials to the Project Team member that is responsible for reviewing the materials before Preliminary versions of the new or updated map(s) and report are prepared. Other "pre-Preliminary" activities (e.g., pre-scoping, scoping) and related standard documents are presented in Volume 1

and Appendix I of FEMA's *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003).

FEMA, the National Service Provider (NSP), and other Project Team members assigned this activity by the FEMA Lead for a particular FEMA-contracted Flood Map Project (including CTP Flood Map Projects) shall handle the initial processing of draft report and map materials as discussed below:

1. Upon receipt, the assigned Project Team member assigns a unique identifier and enters appropriate information about the Flood Map Project into the FEMA Mapping Information Platform (MIP) and updates the Status of Studies (SOS) module of the FEMA Community Information System (CIS) database via transaction files sent by modem. The NSP or other designated Project Team member then includes all dates and other status-related information in regular updates of both systems. The MIP is located at <https://hazards.fema.gov/femaportal/wps/portal>.
2. The assigned Project Team member reviews the submittal package to determine whether the Project Team member assigned to prepare the draft materials—usually, an Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity contractor (IDIQ) or CTP—has provided all required materials. Detailed information on the required materials also is presented in Volume 1 of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003).
3. The assigned Project Team member prepares an acknowledgment letter to the IDIQ (IDIQ-ACK, Appendix A, page A-153) or CTP (CTPACK, Appendix A, page A-147). These letters list the materials received and request materials that are missing.
4. The assigned Project Team member distributes external and in-house file copies of the letters in accordance with the requirements in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.

## **1.2 Initial Processing of Physical Map Revisions**

The requirements that communities must meet in preparing PMR requests for FEMA review are documented in Volume 2 of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003). The first requirement is the delivery of the required materials to FEMA.

The initial processing requirements for PMRs are summarized below and presented graphically in the process flowchart in Figure 1-3, which appears at the end of this section. The distribution requirements are summarized in Table 1-1, also at the end of this section.

1. If a submittal package is sent to FEMA, the FEMA Project Engineer in the Engineering Management Section or other FEMA Headquarters (HQ) staff member within the FEMA Risk Analysis Branch sends the package to the NSP for processing without reviewing the contents of the package.
2. The NSP Project Administration (PA) group reviews the package to determine the appropriate category for the request, whether FEMA is to be reimbursed for processing the request, and whether the requester has submitted the appropriate MT-2 application form package. The PA group reviewer then verifies whether a check, money order, or credit card information sheet to cover the initial fee (for requests based on structural measures on alluvial fans) or the full review and processing fee is included.

3. If a request is not fee-exempt and no check, money order, or payment information sheet is included in the submittal, the NSP case reviewer contacts the NSP Fee-Charge System Administrator (FCSA) to determine whether the required payment was submitted directly to the FCSA.
4. If a check, money order, or credit card payment information sheet is included and is appropriate for the type of request submitted, the PA group reviewer sends the original check, money order, or information sheet and a copy of the incoming correspondence to the FCSA. Before sending it to the FCSA, the NSP PA group reviewer writes the case number on the check, money order, or information sheet. The NSP uses the software program provided in the MIP to assign the FEMA case number (e.g., 07-06-002P), which is based on the guidance information below.
  - The first two digits ("06" in the example above) identify the fiscal year in which the request is received.
  - The next two digits ("06" in the example above) identify the FEMA Region in which the community is located.
  - The last three or four digits ("002" in the example above) identify the consecutive request number for that Region during the fiscal year.
  - The letter suffix ("P" in the example above) identifies the process under which the request is to be processed.

In the example above, the case would be the second received and assigned in Region VI during Fiscal Year 2007, and it would be processed as a PMR request or as a LOMR request. (See Section 2 of this Manual for LOMR processing requirements.)

5. The PA group then forwards the package to the NSP case reviewer for processing.
6. If the NSP group case reviewer determines a payment has been submitted incorrectly for a request for a fee-exempt request and the payment has already been deposited into the National Flood Insurance Fund (NFIF), the NSP case reviewer prepares and sends a 316-REFUND letter (Appendix A, page A-127) or selects the appropriate paragraph in the 316-ACK acknowledgment letter (Appendix A, page A-105).
7. The NSP distributes copies of the letter to the FCSA and to the FEMA refund coordinator.
8. The FEMA refund coordinator prepares a memorandum to the Office of the Comptroller (REFUND1.MEM, Appendix A, page A-173) to request a refund check, and sends two copies of the memorandum to the NSP (one for the case file and one for the FCSA). All refunds are credited to the check originator's bank account.
9. If the NSP determines that the request is not exempt, but the payment submitted is more than was required, the NSP case reviewer prepares a 316-REFUND letter (Appendix A, page A-127) or selects the appropriate standard paragraph in an acknowledgment (316-ACK) letter (Appendix A, page A-105).
10. The NSP case reviewer provides copies of the letter to the FCSA and to the FEMA refund coordinator.

11. The FEMA refund coordinator prepares a memorandum to the Office of the Comptroller to request a refund check, and sends two copies of the memorandum to the NSP (one for the case reviewer and one for the FCSA).
12. If the NSP case reviewer determines that a payment has been submitted incorrectly for a fee-exempt request and the payment has **not** already been deposited into the NFIF, the NSP case reviewer either selects the appropriate paragraph in the previously cited 316-ACK letter or prepares a 316-RETURN letter (Appendix A, page A-131) and mails it to the requester.
13. The NSP case reviewer provides copies of the letter and check to the FCSA and FEMA refund coordinator.
14. The NSP case reviewer creates a case file and enters appropriate information about the request into MIP and into the Letter of Map Change (LOMC) and SOS modules of the FEMA CIS database, and includes all information about the request in regular updates to the MIP and the FEMA CIS database.
15. The FCSA deposits the fee into the NFIF and enters appropriate information into the fee collection portion of the LOMC module of the FEMA CIS database.
16. The NSP case reviewer reviews the submittal for completeness, in accordance with the requirements of Part 65 of the NFIP regulations.
17. At the direction of the FEMA Project Engineer, the NSP case reviewer acknowledges a request by telephone or letter. If a written acknowledgment letter is required, the NSP case reviewer follows the procedures below.
  - a. For fee-exempt requests, the NSP case reviewer prepares and sends the previously cited 316-ACK letter within 5 working days. If the requester has submitted the required (i.e., MT-2) application forms package and sufficient supporting information, the 316-ACK letter only acknowledges receipt of the forms and information. If the requester has not submitted all required forms and information, the 316-ACK letter requests the required forms and/or information.
  - b. For requests that are not fee exempt, the NSP case reviewer prepares the previously cited 316-ACK letter or a 316-FEE letter (Appendix A, page A-117) within 5 working days. If the materials submitted are complete, meaning the requester has submitted the required application forms package, sufficient information, and proper review and processing fee, the 316-ACK letter simply acknowledges receipt of the forms, information, and fee. If the materials submitted are **not** complete, the 316-ACK letter requests the remaining required forms, information, and fee. If the requester has submitted the required forms and sufficient supporting information, but has not provided the required fee, the NSP sends the 316-FEE letter to request the appropriate fee payment.

18. If the payment submitted by the requester exceeds the amount required by FEMA and the request involves structural measures on alluvial fans, the NSP case reviewer notifies FEMA. At the request of the Project Engineer, the NSP case reviewer may prepare a 316-REFUND letter to return the excess amount or delay refunding the money until processing of the case is complete and apply the additional amount toward the total review and processing fee.
19. The NSP distributes file copies of the letters in accordance with Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.

### **1.3 Technical Review and Production**

Upon receipt of all required materials, the NSP or other designated Project Team member performs the technical review of the Flood Map Project or PMR. Before proceeding, the designated reviewer searches the MIP to identify previous map actions for the affected map panel(s) to ensure that effective data are used. The designated reviewer also notes other ongoing LOMR requests that may affect the study or PMR.

During the course of the technical review of a PMR request, the NSP may determine that additional information is required to complete the review. The NSP may contact the requester by telephone to discuss the additional information or fee required. However, regardless of whether the requester is contacted by telephone, the NSP prepares and sends a 316-AD letter (Appendix A, page A-111) to the requester with an enclosure describing the information required.

If the required information is received within 90 days of the date of the letter and is accepted, the NSP case reviewer prepares and sends another 316-AD letter to the requester to acknowledge receipt of the data and initiates final processing of the request. If the submitted information is incomplete, the NFP case reviewer prepares and sends a 316-AD/INC letter (Appendix A, page A-113) to inform the requester about the additional items that are needed.

If the required information is not received within the 90-day period, but the requester submits a request for an extension, the NFP case reviewer prepares and sends the requester a 316-EXT letter (Appendix A, page A-115) to inform the requester that the extension was granted and to provide a new deadline for submittal of the data. If the required information is not received within the 90-day period and the requester does not request an extension, the NSP suspends processing of the request. Any submittal received after the suspension date is treated as an original request and is subject to all submittal requirements, including repayment of the required review and processing fee, if applicable.

If the NSP encounters significant delays in the processing of the request, the NSP prepares and sends a 316-INT letter (Appendix A, page A-119) to notify the requester about the reason for the delay and to provide a timeframe within which the request will be processed.

After all fees and information have been received and the technical review has been completed for a PMR, the NSP case reviewer prepares and sends a 316-PMR(1) notification letter (Appendix A, page A-123). The 316-PMR(1) letter informs the community that a PMR is being performed and requests any additional information that could be included in the revision. The NSP case reviewer reviews any information received in response to the 316-PMR(1) letter; discusses the information with FEMA, if necessary; and incorporates changes in the Preliminary copies of the map(s) and FIS report.

The remaining technical review and production requirements for FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects and PMRs are detailed in FEMA's *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003).

## **1.4 Preliminary Map and Report Processing**

After the technical review and production processes have been completed, the designated Project Team member prepares and mails Preliminary copies of the FIS report; FIRM/DFIRM; and, if appropriate for certain PMRs, FBFM. These copies are issued in accordance with the distribution requirements established with and by each FEMA Regional Office (RO). Usual recipients of Preliminary copies of the FIS report and maps are listed below.

- Community Chief Executive Officer (CEO);
- Revision requester (for PMRs) if different than the CEO;
- Community floodplain administrator;
- Non-Community CTP;
- RO staff;
- State NFIP Coordinator;
- NSP Regional Management Center (RMC); and
- IDIQ if the preliminary distribution is performed by the NSP.

For FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects, at the request of FEMA RO staff, the NSP or other designated Project Team member sends the Preliminary copies of maps and reports to the RO for distribution or directly to the CEO of the community and other recipients. Sample copies of the transmittal letters that may be used for FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects (including CTP Flood Map Projects) are as follows:

- Community CEO and Floodplain Administrator—PRELIM1 letter (Appendix A, page A-161);
- IDIQ and/or CTP—PRELIM2 letter (Appendix A, page A-167); and
- FEMA RO—PRELIM3 letter (Appendix A, page A-169).

For PMRs, if a 90-day appeal period is required (because new or modified BFEs will be proposed), the NSP case reviewer prepares a 100 letter (Appendix A, page A-23). If a 90-day appeal period is not required (because no BFEs will be proposed), the NSP case reviewer prepares a 100-A letter (Appendix A, page A-25). The NSP case reviewer also prepares an enclosure that summarizes the revision. This summary includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Flooding sources that are affected by the revision;
- Name of the agency/firm that performed the reanalysis and the basis for the reanalysis;
- The source of the digital base map files, as applicable;
- Portions of effective report and map(s) affected;

- Description of physical changes to flood hazard information on map(s); and
- Description of other changes (e.g., corporate limits, format, LOMCs incorporated).

The Preliminary transmittal letters are to be accompanied by a list of previously issued LOMCs for the affected FIRM/DFIRM panels called a Summary of Map Actions (SOMA). The procedures for preparing the Preliminary SOMA (SOMA-1, Appendix A, page A-185) are provided in Subsection 1.5 of this Manual.

The designated Project Team member then mails the Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, FBFM (if required for a PMR), and Preliminary SOMA (if required) and distributes the external and in-house file copies in accordance with the requirements in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.

At this point in the processing, the designated Project Team member establishes the Flood Elevation Determination Docket (FEDD) file as required by Section 67.3 of the NFIP regulations. As specified by the regulations, the designated Project Team member maintains copies of all correspondence between the community and FEMA in the FEDD file.

At the direction of FEMA, the NSP may initiate a PMR immediately after issuing a LOMR. In general, the procedures detailed in this section are followed. However, the following exceptions must be noted:

- Because the LOMR notifies the CEO and others that a PMR will be issued and requests additional information, the NSP does not prepare a 316-PMR (1) letter.
- If additional information is submitted in response to the LOMR request for additional information, the NSP prepares and sends a 316-PMR (2) letter (Appendix A, page A-125) to the community CEO and floodplain administrator to acknowledge receipt of the information.
- If new or modified BFEs are proposed and a 90-day appeal period is initiated during the processing of the LOMR, no additional appeal period is required for the PMR. **The community receives a 30-day review period only.** Therefore, the NSP transmits the Preliminary copies of the report and map(s) with a 100A letter (Appendix A, page A-25).

After the 30-day review period has elapsed and any comments received have been addressed, the NSP revises the Letter of Final Determination (LFD) to:

- Clarify that the Preliminary copies of the PMR were issued to reflect the changes effected by the LOMR;
- Cite the appeal period dates for the LOMR and state why no additional appeal period was provided; and
- Cite whether any comments were received on the Preliminary copies of the PMR.

The procedures that FEMA and NSP staff must follow for processing LFDs for PMRs are discussed in detail in Subsection 1.11 of this Manual.



## **1.5 Summary of Map Actions Preparation**

When a revised FIRM/DFIRM panel becomes effective, all previous map actions for that panel are superseded. Therefore, each time a FIRM/DFIRM panel is physically republished, the panel must be updated to include the changes in the flood hazard information made via the LOMC processes.

The changes made to the effective FIRM/DFIRM via the LOMC processes become effective without the affected panels being physically revised and republished. Therefore, the NSP maintains records of these modifications for FEMA so these modifications may be incorporated as appropriate into the next physical update of the affected panels.

Frequently, the results of a LOMC cannot be shown on the revised FIRM/DFIRM panel. Results of a LOMC are not shown on the FIRM/DFIRM for the following reasons:

- Map scale limitations;
- Results indicated a particular property or structure was outside the SFHA as shown on the effective FIRM/DFIRM;
- Flood hazard information on which the determination in the LOMC was based has been superseded by new flood hazard information.

Historically, in such cases, if the LOMC requester (community official or property owner) submitted a written request to FEMA that the LOMC be reissued, FEMA reissued the LOMC.

If the results of the LOMC could not be shown because of map scale limitations or because the property/structure involved was determined to be outside the SFHA as shown on the effective FIRM/DFIRM, FEMA reissued the LOMC, without any review, after the new map panel became effective. If the flood hazard information had changed, FEMA reviewed the revised flood hazard information shown on the FIRM/DFIRM and the backup data for the LOMC to determine whether the LOMC determination was affected. If the previous determination was no longer valid, FEMA directed the NSP to prepare a letter to inform the requester.

In October 1996, FEMA changed this approach for the following reasons:

- The previous process was ineffective because (1) community officials were not always aware of the need to have superseded LOMCs reissued to keep them effective for floodplain management and flood insurance rating purposes; and (2) the information about the superseded determination and need for reissuance was not always communicated to the individual property owners affected by the newly published FIRM/DFIRM.
- Many communities participating in the NFIP are affected by rapidly expanding urban development, new flood-control projects, and updated detailed restudies of the flooding sources; therefore, they are generally very active in revising the flood hazard information shown on the effective NFIP maps.

- Issuance of individual letters to reissue LOMCs (with attachments, if necessary) following the publication of a revised NFIP map can be a significant effort for the NSPs and FEMA.
- The reissuance process for LOMCs is labor intensive, and FEMA is not reimbursed by communities or individual property owners for the letters and other determination documents that are issued to revalidate previous determinations. Thus, the limited funds of the NFIP were being depleted further.
- Research performed by a local floodplain administrator, property owner, insurance agent, or mortgage lender on the status of previous map actions could be minimized if not eliminated entirely.

The resulting procedures for automatically revalidating LOMCs are presented below. Under these procedures, communities and individual property owners are no longer required to request that LOMCs be reissued, and FEMA issues one letter for all affected LOMCs rather than an individual letter for each LOMC request. The result is a more effective tool for floodplain management and flood insurance purposes.

To assist communities in maintaining the NFIP maps, particularly the FIRM, the assigned Project Team member prepares SOMAs, which are summaries of the LOMCs that will be superseded when the revised FIRM/DFIRM panels become effective. The assigned Project Team member can generate a SOMA manually or by using a MIP application.

As shown in the process flowcharts in Figures 1-2 and 1-3 (which appear at the end of this section), FEMA provides the SOMAs to the communities at significant milestones during the processing of FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects and PMRs. The SOMAs are provided to inform the communities about the effect that the revised FIRM/DFIRM panels will have on previously issued LOMCs.

So that modifications made by LOMC are included in a physical map update, the assigned Project Team member performs searches for all determinations at four processing stages:

1. Before the Preliminary copies of the affected FIRM/DFIRM panels are prepared and sent to the community for review and comment;
2. Before Revised Preliminary copies of the affected FIRM/DFIRM panels are prepared and sent to the community for review and comment;
3. Before the LFD is sent to the community; and
4. Before the effective date of the revised FIRM/DFIRM panels.

At each processing stage, the assigned Project Team member sorts the LOMCs into the following categories:

- **Category 1** includes those LOMCs for which results have been shown on the revised FIRM/DFIRM panel(s).
- **Category 2** includes those LOMCs for which results could not be mapped and shown on the revised FIRM/DFIRM panel(s) because of map scale limitations or because the affected areas were determined to be outside the SFHA as shown on the effective

FIRM/DFIRM. These LOMCs are revalidated by a single letter after the revised FIRM/DFIRM panels become effective.

- **Category 3** includes those LOMCs for which results have not been, and will not be, reflected on the revised FIRM/DFIRM panels because the flood hazard data on which the determinations were based are being superseded by new detailed flood hazard data.
- **Category 4** includes those LOMCs which were previously issued for multiple lots or structures where the determination for one or more of the lots or structures has changed and cannot be revalidated through the administrative process used for Category 2 LOMCs.

For the Category 4 LOMCs, the NSP reviews the data submitted in support of the original LOMC request and issues a new determination for the subject properties after the revised FIRM/DFIRM panels become effective. If conditions have changed since the original LOMC was issued, and additional data and fees are required before a new determination may be issued, the NSP does not reissue the LOMC but coordinates with the FEMA Lead as appropriate.

During the preparation of the Preliminary copies of the FIRM/DFIRM (and FBFM, if required), the activities below are completed.

1. The assigned Project Team member produces a Preliminary SOMA (Appendix A, page A-185), which is the product of database management software that searches the records in the MIP to identify LOMCs completed or pending for the community.
2. The assigned Project Team member reviews LOMC case files, other community-based files, hard copies of LOMCs and case files for LOMCs completed by FEMA ROs, to verify that all affected LOMCs are identified and listed in the Preliminary SOMA. The assigned Project Team member does not investigate LOMCs issued prior to the initial FIRM/DFIRM for a community, or any LOMCs that already have been superseded by a previous effective map and included on a previous SOMA in Category 3, unless it was previously revalidated.
3. The assigned Project Team member reviews each identified LOMC to determine if it has been affected by new flood hazard information and if it can be incorporated into the FIRM/DFIRM. The assigned Project Team member lists those LOMCs that are unaffected by the new flood hazard information and can be reflected on the FIRM/DFIRM in Category 1 of the SOMA. The assigned Project Team member lists those LOMCs that cannot be reflected on the FIRM/DFIRM, but are unaffected by the updated flood hazard information in Category 2 of the SOMA.
4. For LOMCs affected by new flood hazard information, the assigned Project Team member reviews the case files to determine whether the LOMCs will be superseded and placed in Category 3, or whether they can be placed in Category 2 and can be revalidated. To determine this, the assigned Project Team member locates the LOMC site on the Preliminary copy of the FIRM/DFIRM panels; determines the BFE for the site; and compares the Lowest Adjacent Grade (LAG), Lowest Finished Floor Elevation (LFFE), if applicable (for structures), or the lowest ground elevation (for undeveloped lots) to the proposed BFE at the site.

5. For those LOMCs where the assigned Project Team member determines that the LAGs, LFFEs, or lowest ground elevations are above the proposed BFEs, the assigned Project Team member includes the LOMCs in Category 2 of the SOMA; those LOMCs are eligible for revalidation. For those LOMCs where the assigned Project Team member determines that the LAGs, LFFEs, or lowest ground elevations are below the proposed BFEs, the assigned Project Team member includes the LOMCs in Category 3 of the SOMA; those LOMCs will be superseded when the revised FIRM/DFIRM panels become effective.
6. The assigned Project Team member sends the Preliminary SOMA to the community CEO and floodplain administrator, FEMA RO, State NFIP Coordinator, and others with the transmittal letter that accompanies the Preliminary copies of the revised FIRM/DFIRM panels.
7. As shown in the sample Preliminary transmittal letters presented in Appendix A, the assigned Project Team member includes the following paragraph in the transmittal :

To assist your community in maintaining the FIRM, we have enclosed a Summary of Map Actions to document previous Letter of Map Change (LOMC) actions (i.e., Letters of Map Amendment, Letters of Map Revision) that will be superseded when the revised FIRM panels referenced above become effective. Information on LOMCs is presented in the following four categories: (1) LOMCs for which results have been included on the revised FIRM panels; (2) LOMCs for which results could not be shown on the revised FIRM panels because of scale limitations or because the LOMC issued had determined that the lots or structures involved were outside the Special Flood Hazard Area as shown on the FIRM; (3) LOMCs for which results have not been included on the revised FIRM panels because the flood hazard information on which the original determinations were based are being superseded by new flood hazard information; and (4) LOMCs issued for multiple lots or structures where the determination for one or more of the lots or structures cannot be revalidated through an administrative process like the LOMCs in Category 2 above. LOMCs in Category 2 will be revalidated through a single letter that reaffirms the validity of a previously issued LOMC; the letter will be sent to your community shortly before the effective date of the revised FIRM and will become effective 1 day after the revised FIRM becomes effective. For the LOMCs listed in Category 4, we will review the data previously submitted for the LOMA or LOMR request and issue a new determination for the affected properties after the revised FIRM becomes effective.

8. If no LOMCs have been issued since the affected map panel(s) became effective, the assigned Project Team member includes the following paragraph in the transmittal to the community to acknowledge this fact, and no SOMA is sent with the Preliminary package:

To assist your community in maintaining the FIRM, we reviewed our records to determine if any previous Letters of Map Change (i.e., Letters of Map Amendment, Letters of Map Revision) will be superseded when the revised FIRM panels become effective. According to our records, no Letters of Map Change were issued previously for the affected FIRM panels.

## **1.6 Post-Preliminary Map and Report Processing**

The processing procedures during the post-Preliminary phase of production will vary depending on whether a final community coordination meeting is held and an appeal period is required. These variations are discussed in Subsections 1.6.1 and 1.6.2 below.

### **1.6.1 Final Community Coordination Meeting Held; Appeal Period Required**

FEMA and the assigned Project Team member(s) generally shall follow the procedures below when a final community coordination meeting is held and an appeal period is required.

1. If a final community coordination meeting is held and the Project Team member that is responsible for initiating the 90-day appeal period does not attend, a FEMA RO representative—usually, the Consultation Coordination Officer (CCO)—calls in minutes of the meeting to the assigned Project Team member, indicating whether the 90-day appeal period should be initiated or delayed to allow time to incorporate comments from the community or another Project Team member (i.e., IDIQ, CTP). The CCO provides a written copy of the meeting minutes and attendance list at a later date.
2. The assigned Project Team member records the following information provided by the CCO or other FEMA RO staff member:
  - Date final community coordination meeting was held;
  - Community CEO's name, title, and address;
  - Location of Community Map Repository (**Post Office boxes not acceptable**);
  - Name, address, and telephone number of local newspaper(s) in which newspaper notice will be published;
  - Compliance/non-compliance of community's floodplain management ordinances with Section 60.3 of the NFIP regulations; and
  - Special processing recommendations, which could include recommendations for early conversion or accelerated processing, in accordance with FEMA Instruction 7810.5, dated October 22, 1991.
3. The assigned Project Team member contacts the local newspaper(s) to determine the days the newspaper is published and the deadline for legal notices.
4. If community comments are received, the assigned Project Team member evaluates whether Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report and/or FIRM/DFIRM are required and obtains approval from FEMA before preparing the Revised Preliminary copies.

### **1.6.2 No Final Community Coordination Meeting Held; Appeal Period Required**

FEMA and the assigned Project Team member(s) generally shall follow the procedures below when no final community coordination meeting is held and an appeal period is required.

1. If the assigned Project Team member knows in advance that no final community coordination meeting will be held, that team member contacts the FEMA RO and/or the community 30 or 60 days (at FEMA Project Lead's discretion) after the Preliminary copies of the report and map(s) are issued to obtain the following:
  - Community comments;
  - Information necessary to start the 90-day appeal period;
  - FEMA RO comments;
  - Compliance/non-compliance of community's floodplain management ordinances with Section 60.3 of the NFIP regulations; and
  - Special processing recommendations.
2. The assigned Project Team member contacts the newspaper to determine the days the newspaper is published and the deadline for legal advertisements.
3. The assigned Project Team member evaluates whether Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report and/or FIRM/DFIRM are required and obtains approval from FEMA before preparing those copies.

### **1.6.3 Special Considerations for Preliminary Physical Map Revisions**

When the 30-day or 60-day community review period for a PMR ends, the NSP contacts the RO to verify whether community comments have been received. If comments have not been received by this time, the NSP may, at the direction of the RO, call the community to determine if any comments will be submitted. As with FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects, the NSP reviews the comments, evaluates whether Revised Preliminary copies are required, and obtains approval from the FEMA RO and Project Engineer before preparing those copies.

### **1.6.4 Appeal Period Not Required**

If the assigned Project Team member knows that no new or modified BFEs or base flood depths will be proposed as a result of the FEMA-contracted Flood Map Project or PMR, that team member discusses this situation with the FEMA RO. For most Flood Map Projects, this discussion will take place during the final community coordination meeting or when the FEMA RO calls in the results of the final community coordination meeting.

If no final community coordination meeting is held, the assigned Project Team member contacts the FEMA RO directly for the required information. During this discussion, the assigned Project Team member obtains information concerning the status of the floodplain management ordinance for each community affected by the Flood Map Project. The assigned Project Team

member then proceeds with the preparation of the LFD in accordance with the procedures discussed in Subsection 1.11 of this Manual.

### **1.6.5 Appeal Period Requirements**

If Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report and FIRM/DFIRM are required to start the appeal period, the assigned Project Team member follows the procedures presented in Subsection 1.7 of this Manual. If no Revised Preliminary copies are required, the assigned Project Team member follows the procedures below.

1. The assigned Project Team member compiles a list of proposed and/or proposed modified BFEs, including a range of the BFEs for all flooding sources where BFEs are being established or modified.
2. The assigned Project Team member chooses publication dates for the newspaper notice for the proposed and/or proposed modified BFE determinations. The first publication date must occur within the 10-day period following issuance of the proposed BFE determination (101/155) letter (Appendix A, page A-27) to the community CEO. The second publication date generally must occur 1 week later. The assigned Project Team member must allow sufficient time before the first publication date to ensure adequate processing time.
3. The assigned Project Team member prepares the following documents:
  - Proposed BFE determination letter (101/155, Appendix A, page A-27);
  - Newspaper notice (140a, Appendix A, page A-51, for FIRMs/DFIRMs that are **not** in Countywide Format; 140c, Appendix A, page A-53, for FIRMs/DFIRMs that **are** in Countywide Format);
  - Transmittal letter to newspaper (157, Appendix A, page A-75);
  - List(s) of proposed BFEs and/or base flood depths; and
  - Proposed Rule (140, Appendix A, page A-45).
4. For FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects and PMRs where the NSP is assigned the responsibility for the appeal period documents, the NSP includes the affected community on a docket listing all proposed BFE determination letters that are scheduled for a particular period of time. In such cases, the FEMA Project Engineer notifies the NSP that the proposed BFE determination letter may be mailed by concurring on the docket. For FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects and PMRs with special circumstances, the NSP sends the proposed BFE determination letter to the FEMA Project Engineer so that it may be routed for concurrence and signature.
5. For FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects where another Project Team member is assigned the responsibility for the appeal period documents, that Project Team member works with the FEMA Project Lead to establish the review and concurrence requirements.
6. Upon receiving the signed determination letter or concurrence on the docket, the assigned Project Team member delivers the Proposed Rule (140, Appendix A, page A-45) and associated proposed BFE list(s) to the NSP FEDERAL REGISTER coordinator.

7. After delivering the Proposed Rule to the NSP, the assigned Project Team member mails the transmittal letter and notice to the local newspaper, allowing ample time for arrival before the first publication date.
8. Approximately 1 week before the first newspaper publication date, the assigned Project Team member mails the proposed BFE determination letter and enclosures via certified mail, return receipt requested. The standard enclosures are copies of the newspaper notice, proposed BFE list(s), and the NFIP regulations. For non-participating communities, the assigned Project Team member also encloses a copy of the FEMA pamphlet entitled *Answers to Questions About the National Flood Insurance Program*.
9. The assigned Project Team member distributes external and in-house file copies in accordance with the requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.
10. The assigned Project Team member verifies the newspaper notice is published twice during the 10-day period immediately following the date the proposed BFE determination (101/1555) letter is sent to the community CEO.
11. If the assigned Project Team member finds that the newspaper notice has not been published or the notice has been published incorrectly, the assigned Project Team member follows the procedures detailed in Subsections 1.8.1 and 1.8.2 of this Manual, respectively.
12. Concurrent with the delivery of the proposed BFE determination letter to the community CEO and the newspaper notice to the newspaper, the NSP FEDERAL REGISTER coordinator compiles the Proposed Rules and proposed BFE lists for concurrence and signature.
13. The NSP FEDERAL REGISTER coordinator prepares and submits the original Proposed Rule, four hard (paper) copies of the Proposed Rule, and an electronic (Word) version of the Proposed Rule to the designated FEMA coordinator.
14. The NSP FEDERAL REGISTER coordinator also prepares and submits the list of proposed BFEs and/or flood depths for posting on the FEMA Flood Hazard Mapping Website at <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/bfe>.
15. The FEMA coordinator routes the original Proposed Rule for concurrence and signature and holds the additional hard copies and electronic version until the original notice is signed.
16. When the signed copy of the Proposed Rule is received, the FEMA coordinator forwards the diskette and three hard copies to the Office of General Counsel (OGC) and requests that the Proposed Rule be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER within 2 weeks and sends one hard copy to the NSP FEDERAL REGISTER coordinator for filing and distribution to other Project Team members.
17. The NSP monitors the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) website to verify timely and accurate publication of the Proposed Rule in the FEDERAL REGISTER. Once published, the NSP provides a copy of the Proposed Rule to the FEMA coordinator for FEDERAL REGISTER cost tracking, and determines whether the Proposed Rule is published correctly in the FEDERAL REGISTER.



18. If the Proposed Rule is published incorrectly, the NSP notifies FEMA and coordinates revisions with the FEMA coordinator.
19. The NSP distributes copies of the published Proposed Rule so that the assigned Project Team member may place them in the FEDD file for each community. In addition, should corrections be warranted, the NSP distributes copies of the correction notice so that the assigned Project Team member can place copies of the correction letter(s) and correction notice(s) in the FEDD file for each affected community.

## **1.7 Revised Preliminary Map and Report Processing**

If an assigned Project Team member must prepare Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM before the 90-day appeal period is started, the procedures established in Subsection 1.6.5 of this Manual are followed, with two exceptions:

1. The assigned Project Team member revises the proposed BFE determination letter to describe the changes included in the Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM and submits the letter for review and signature by FEMA HQ or RO staff; and
2. The assigned Project Team member mails Revised Preliminary copies of the of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM, as appropriate, to the community CEO and floodplain administrator, FEMA RO, State NFIP Coordinator, and other recipients of the Preliminary copies of the FIRM and FIS report.

Before Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM are prepared and submitted to the community for review, the assigned Project Team member reviews the Preliminary SOMA to determine how the Revised Preliminary information affects the LOMCs, and revises the Preliminary SOMA as necessary. The assigned Project Team member also reviews all LOMCs issued since the Preliminary copies of the FIRM/DFIRM were issued and includes them on the revised version of the Preliminary SOMA. The assigned Project Team member submits the revised version of the Preliminary SOMA and community transmittal letter to FEMA for review and mails the revised version of the Preliminary SOMA and the community transmittal letter with the Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM.

## **1.8 Handling of Newspaper Publication Problems**

The assigned Project Team member may encounter problems publishing a newspaper notice in the local newspaper. The most frequent problems encountered are notices that are published only once and notices published with omissions or errors. The procedures that are followed are detailed in Subsections 1.8.1 and 1.8.2 below.

### **1.8.1 Newspaper Notice Not Published**

When the assigned Project Team member determines that the newspaper has not published the notice at all or published on only one of the two dates required, the assigned Project Team member follows the procedures below.

1. The assigned Project Team member determines the earliest possible new publication dates and mails the following to the newspaper in ample time before the first publication date:
  - Original copy of transmittal letter to newspaper; and
  - Copy of newspaper notice.
2. Approximately 1 week before the first publication date, the assigned Project Team member prepares the appeal period restart letter (153-C, Appendix A, page A-73), mails the letter to the community CEO and floodplain administrator, and distributes the external and in-house file copies in accordance with Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.
3. As indicated in Table 1-1, the assigned Project Team member shall place copies of the correction letter(s) in the FEDD file for each affected community.

### **1.8.2 Newspaper Notice Published Incorrectly**

If the assigned Project Team member determines that the newspaper notice was published incorrectly, the assigned Project Team member follows the procedures shown in Subsection 1.8.1, EXCEPT that assigned Project Team member prepares and sends a 153-A letter (Appendix A, page A-71) rather than a 153-C letter. The assigned Project Team member shall distribute copies in accordance with the sample letter in Appendix A and the distribution shown in Table 1-1 and places copies of the correction letter(s) in the FEDD file for each affected community.

## **1.9 Appeal and Protest Processing**

FEMA and the assigned Project Team members are to follow the procedures below if requests for changes to the flood hazard information shown in the FIS report and on the FIRM/DFIRM and/or FBFM, including BFEs and base flood depths, are received during the appeal period.

1. The assigned Project Team member reviews the submittal to determine whether the submittal constitutes an appeal or protest and to evaluate the completeness of the data submitted.
2. If the submittal can be considered an appeal (i.e., proposed new or modified BFEs or base flood depths are in question), the assigned Project Team member prepares and sends an appeal acknowledgment letter (175-A, Appendix A, page A-87) to the community CEO and floodplain administrator of each affected community.

3. If the submittal does not qualify as an appeal (comments do not relate to proposed new or modified BFEs or base flood depths, but do relate to other new flood hazard information or corporate limits information shown on the FIRM), the assigned Project Team member prepares and sends a protest acknowledgment letter (175-P, Appendix A, page A-89) to the community CEO and floodplain administrator of each affected community.
4. The assigned Project Team member mails the signed acknowledgment letter(s) and distributes the external and in-house file copies in accordance with the distribution requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21. As indicated in Table 1-1 in that subsection, the assigned Project Team member places copies of the acknowledgment letter(s) in the FEDD file for each affected community.
5. Unless directed otherwise by FEMA, the assigned Project Team member calls the CEO or community official named in the letter to acknowledge receipt of the appeal or protest, to resolve any questions regarding the submitted data, and to request any required additional data.
6. If required, the assigned Project Team member prepares a letter from FEMA to the CEO and floodplain administrator of each affected community to confirm the request for additional data. The letter specifies a 30-day period to submit the data and states that, if the data are not received within a certain period of time (usually, 30 days), FEMA will resolve the appeal or protest on the basis of data already received. (Note: The 30-day period may extend beyond the end of the 90-day appeal period.)
7. The assigned Project Team member places copies of the data request letter(s) in the FEDD file for each affected community.
8. If no additional data are received within the 30-day period, the assigned Project Team member proceeds with the appeal or protest analysis using the data submitted as discussed in Subsection 1.9.1 below.
9. If additional data are received within the 30-day period, the assigned Project Team member includes these data in the analysis.

### **1.9.1 Appeal and Protest Analysis**

The assigned Project Team member performs a standard engineering review of the data submitted. If additional engineering work (i.e., hydrologic analysis, hydraulic analysis) is needed, the assigned Project Team member obtains approval from FEMA before beginning the work.

If the analysis cannot be completed such that the appeal or protest resolution letter is sent to the community CEO and floodplain administrator within 90 days of receipt of the data necessary to resolve the appeal/protest, the assigned Project Team member prepares an interim response letter. The assigned Project Team member sends the interim response letter to FEMA for review, concurrence, and signature, and mails the signed letter to the CEO, floodplain administrator, and appellants. The assigned Project Team member prepares and sends a new interim response letter at the end of each subsequent 90-day period until the appeal/protest is resolved.

## **1.9.2 Appeal and Protest Resolution**

FEMA and assigned Project Team members follow the procedures below in preparing the appeal resolution correspondence:

1. If the appeal resolution results in changes to the FIS report materials, the FIRM/DFIRM panels, and/or the FBFM panels, the assigned Project Team member prepares an appeal resolution letter to transmit the Revised Preliminary copies of the affected portions of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM to the community CEO, floodplain administrator, and all appellants. The appeal resolution letter enumerates the issues raised by the appeal and discusses the procedures used to evaluate and resolve the issues. Usually, a period of 30 days from the date of the letter to the CEO is provided for comments to be submitted to FEMA.
2. If the appeal resolution does not result in any substantive changes to the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM, the appeal resolution letter informs the community CEO, community floodplain administrator, and all appellants that the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM will not be changed and provides the reasons why no changes will be made. Again, the appeal resolution letter usually provides a 30-day period for comments to be provided on the finding of no changes required.
3. The assigned Project Team member mails the appeal resolution letter and enclosures as appropriate to the community CEO, community floodplain administrator, and all appellants and distributes external and in-house file copies in accordance with the requirements established by the appropriate FEMA staff.
4. If no comments are received within the 30-day period, the assigned Project Team member schedules the LFD for the next available date 1 week following the end of the 30-day period.
5. If comments are received within the 30-day period, the assigned Project Team member discusses the comments with FEMA to determine an appropriate response. If appropriate, FEMA directs the assigned Project Team member to delay the issuance of the LFD. (The LFD may only be delayed at the direction of FEMA.)
6. The assigned Project Team member places copies of the appeal resolution letter(s) and any comments received about the appeal resolution letter(s) in the FEDD file for each affected community.

FEMA and assigned Project Team member staff follow the procedures below in preparing the protest resolution correspondence.

1. The assigned Project Team member discusses the protest resolution with FEMA to determine whether Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM should be prepared and sent to the community CEO, community floodplain administrator, and protesters.
2. If the requested changes can be incorporated during the preparation of the final reproduction materials (see Subsection 1.12 of this Manual for details) or no changes are to be made to the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM, the assigned Project Team member includes a brief description of the changes made or the reasons that no changes were made in the LFD before submitting it to FEMA for review and concurrence.

Graphical changes such as the addition of roads, corporate limit changes, minor adjustments to Zone A floodplain boundaries and the like do not typically warrant issuance of Revised Preliminary materials and can be incorporated into the final FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM without providing the community an opportunity to review or comment on the changes. When review by the community is desired but the changes are anticipated to be accepted by the community without comment, a Proof Copy of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM may be issued with the LFD or with the 90-day suspension letter. (See Subsection 1.14 of this Manual for details.)

3. If FEMA directs the assigned Project Team member to prepare Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM, the assigned Project Team member transmits those copies to the community CEO, community floodplain administrator, and all other recipients with a protest resolution letter. The protest resolution letter briefly describes the changes that have been made. At FEMA's direction, the protest resolution letter may provide a 30-day review period for review and comment.
4. The assigned Project Team member distributes external and in-house file copies of the protest resolution letter in accordance with the requirements established by FEMA for the letter. The assigned Project Team member places copies of the protest resolution letter(s) in the FEDD file for each affected community.

## **1.10 Correction Notice Processing**

When the 90-day appeal period ends and all appeals or protests have been resolved, the procedures below are followed.

1. The assigned Project Team member determines the earliest LFD date (at least 1 week after end of the appeal period or the 30-day review period).
2. The assigned Project Team member checks the proposed BFE list to verify that it is accurate.
3. If errors or omissions are found in the study or map or in the notice of proposed BFE determinations, the assigned Project Team member notifies FEMA, who may direct the assigned Project Team member to delay the LFD.
4. The assigned Project Team member then determines the length of the additional review period, as follows:
  - If a source of flooding was omitted from the notice of proposed BFE determinations, a second 90-day appeal period is required, for just the omitted flooding source.
  - If the range of BFEs reflected in the proposed notice was incorrect, a 30-day review period is required.
5. The assigned Project Team member prepares one of the following letters for distribution to the community CEO and floodplain administrator:
  - A 152 letter (Appendix A, page A-67) is prepared if a new 90-day appeal period is required (may also transmit Revised Preliminary copies of FIRM/DFIRM and/or FBFM); or
  - A 152-A letter (Appendix A, page A-69) if a 30-day review period is required.

6. The assigned Project Team member prepares a FEDERAL REGISTER correction notice (142, Appendix A, page A-55), newspaper correction notice (142a, Appendix A, page A-59, for FIRMs/DFIRMs that are not prepared in the FEMA Countywide Format if a new 90-day appeal period is required; 142b, Appendix A, page A-61, for FIRMs/DFIRMs that are not prepared in the Countywide Format if a 30-day review period is required), and a newspaper transmittal letter (157, Appendix A, page A-75).
7. The assigned Project Team member determines the earliest possible publication date(s) for the correction notice (one time for 30-day review period, two times for 90-day restart) and mails the original copy of the newspaper letter and a copy of the newspaper correction notice to the newspaper in ample time before the publication date(s).
8. The assigned Project Team member mails the original letter, the correction notice, and Revised Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and/or FBFM, if required, to the community CEO and floodplain administrator approximately 1 week before the first publication date.
9. The assigned Project Team member distributes external and in-house file copies in accordance with the requirements in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.
10. As indicated in Table 1-1, the assigned Project Team member places copies of all correction letters and FEDERAL REGISTER correction notices in the FEDD file for each affected community.

## **1.11 Final Determination Processing**

FEMA and the assigned Project Team member(s) shall follow the procedures below in preparing and processing LFDs and associated enclosures and documentation.

1. The assigned Project Team member chooses the LFD date and the FIRM/DFIRM effective date from a list prepared by FEMA HQ. (As cited earlier in this section, the date chosen must be no earlier than 1 week after the 90-day appeal period [or 30-day review period for appeal and protest resolutions] has ended.)
2. The assigned Project Team member prepares the LFD using one of the templates listed below. The content of the LFD will be based on factors specific to the community, including NFIP participation status, study or restudy type, whether BFEs or base flood depths were affected, and whether an appeal or protest was received and resolved.
  - 15-series letter (Appendix A, page A-7)—This LFD template is used for a first-time FEMA-contracted study (no effective FIRM/DFIRM) where BFEs or base flood depths are established for the first time. The community has previously been identified by FEMA and offered participation in the Emergency Phase of the NFIP.
  - 15NP-ID (Appendix A, page A-13)—This LFD template is used for a first-time FEMA-contracted study (no effective FIRM/DFIRM) where BFEs or base flood depths are established for the first time. The community has not previously been identified by FEMA and offered participation in the Emergency Phase of the NFIP.
  - 19-P/NP-series letter (Appendix A, page A-17)—This LFD template is used for FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects when new or modified BFEs or base flood depths are being finalized.

- 19-N/N-NFP letter (Appendix A, page A-23)—This LFD template is used for FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects when no BFEs or base flood depths are being finalized.
  - 115-A/C-A/C-I/I letter (Appendix A, page A-35)—This LFD template is used for community-initiated PMRs when new or modified BFEs or base flood depths are being finalized.
  - 115-I-N/N-F/N-NFP letter (Appendix A, page A-43)—This LFD template is used for community-initiated PMRs when no new or modified BFEs or base flood depths are being finalized.
3. For FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects and PMRs where the NSP is assigned the responsibility for preparing or reviewing the LFD for each affected community, the NSP includes each affected community on a docket listing all LFDs that are scheduled for a particular date. In such cases, the FEMA Project Engineer notifies the NSP that the LFD may be mailed by concurring on the docket.
  4. For FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects and PMRs with special circumstances, the NSP sends the LFD to the FEMA Project Engineer so that it may be routed for concurrence and signature.
  5. For FEMA-contracted Flood Map Projects where another Project Team member is assigned the responsibility for preparing the LFD for each affected community, that Project Team member works with the FEMA RO Project Lead to establish the review and concurrence requirements.
  6. Approximately 2 weeks before the LFD date, the assigned Project Team member generates the Final SOMA (SOMA-2, Appendix A, page A-193). The Final SOMA may be generated manually or automatically using the appropriate MIP application.
  7. The assigned Project Team member verifies that the Final SOMA includes all LOMCs included in the Preliminary SOMA and all LOMCs issued since the Preliminary or Revised Preliminary copies of the FIRM/DFIRM were distributed.
  8. The assigned Project Team member mails the Final SOMA to the community CEO and floodplain administrator, FEMA RO, and State NFIP Coordinator with the LFD.
  9. If no LOMCs have been issued for the affected map panel(s), the assigned Project Team member includes the following paragraph in the LFD to acknowledge this fact, and no SOMA is distributed with the LFD:

To assist your community in maintaining the FIRM, we reviewed our records to determine if any previous Letters of Map Change (i.e., Letters of Map Amendment, Letters of Map Revision) will be superseded when the revised FIRM panels referenced above become effective. According to our records, no Letters of Map Change were issued previously for the affected FIRM panels.

10. If LOMCs have been issued for the affected map panel(s), the assigned Project Team member includes the following paragraph in the LFD to acknowledge the fact that a SOMA is enclosed:

To assist your community in maintaining the FIRM, we have enclosed a Summary of Map Actions to document previous Letter of Map Change (LOMC) actions (i.e., Letters of Map Amendment, Letters of Map Revision) that will be superseded when the revised FIRM panels referenced above become effective. Information on LOMCs is presented in the following four categories: (1) LOMCs for which results have been included on the revised FIRM panels; (2) LOMCs for which results could not be shown on the revised FIRM panels because of scale limitations or because the LOMC issued had determined that the lots or structures involved were outside the Special Flood Hazard Area as shown on the FIRM; (3) LOMCs for which results have not been included on the revised FIRM panels because the flood hazard information on which the original determinations were based is being superseded by new flood hazard information; and (4) LOMCs issued for multiple lots or structures where the determination for one or more of the lots or structures cannot be revalidated through an administrative process like that used for the LOMCs in Category 2 above. LOMCs in Category 2 will be revalidated through a single letter that reaffirms the validity of a previously issued LOMC; the letter will be sent to your community shortly before the effective date of the revised FIRM and will become effective 1 day after the revised FIRM becomes effective. For the LOMCs listed in Category 4, we will review the data previously submitted for the LOMA or LOMR request and issue a new determination for the affected properties after the revised FIRM becomes effective.

11. On the LFD date, the assigned Project Team member mails the LFD and enclosures to the community CEO and floodplain administrator; mails copies to appellants as necessary; and distributes external and in-house file copies in accordance with the requirements of Subsection 1.21 of this Manual. The LFD enclosures include the following:

- Standard Final Rule language (158, Appendix A, page A-81);
- List of final BFEs and/or base flood depths;
- Final SOMA;
- Floodplain Management Bulletin 1-98;
- FEMA 495 brochure, entitled “Adoption of Flood Insurance Rate Maps by Participating Communities” (participating communities only);
- FEMA 496 brochure, entitled “Joining the National Flood Insurance Program” (non participating communities only); and
- Two Elevation Certificates.



12. On the LFD date, the assigned Project Team member sends electronic versions of the standard Final Rule language and list of final BFEs and/or base flood depths to the NSP FEDERAL REGISTER coordinator. By the first day of each month, the NSP FEDERAL REGISTER coordinator compiles the final BFE and/or base flood depth lists for all communities receiving LFDs during the previous month and prepares the Final Rule for concurrence and signature.
13. The assigned Project Team member prepares and submits the original Final Rule for publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER, four hard copies of the Final Rule, and an electronic (Word) version of the Final Rule to the designated FEMA coordinator.
14. The FEMA coordinator routes the original version of the Final Rule for concurrence and signature and holds the hard copies and electronic version until the original version of the Final Rule is signed.
15. When the signed copy of the Final Rule is received, the FEMA coordinator forwards the electronic version of the Final Rule and three hard copies to OGC for publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER and sends one hard copy to the assigned Project Team member for filing.
16. The assigned Project Team member obtains a copy of the published Final Rule, provides a copy of the Final Rule to the FEMA coordinator for FEDERAL REGISTER cost tracking, and reviews the Final Rule to verify that it has been published correctly in the FEDERAL REGISTER.
17. If the Final Rule has been published incorrectly, the assigned Project Team member notifies the FEMA coordinator and coordinates revisions to the Final Rule with the FEMA coordinator. The FEMA coordinator works with OGC to ensure the Final Rule is corrected.

## **1.12 Processing for U.S. Government Printing Office**

After the LFD is mailed, the assigned Project Team member begins production of the final reproduction materials for delivery to the Map Service Center (MSC). The requirements for preparing final reproduction materials and related paperwork are detailed in Subsection 1.5 of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003). The transmittal (179-series) letters that the assigned Project Team member prepares and submits with the final reproduction materials are presented in Appendix A, on pages A-95 through A-109.

## **1.13 Cancellation of Final Determination**

If significant problems with a FEMA-contracted Flood Map Project or PMR resulting in FEMA deciding to cancel the LFD and Final Rule and restart the 6-month compliance period, FEMA and assigned NSP staff follow the procedures below.

1. The assigned Project Team member prepares a cancellation letter (CANCEL, Appendix A, page A-143), addressed to the community CEO, and forwards it to FEMA for review and signature.
2. If the final BFEs have been published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, the assigned Project Team member prepares a cancellation notice (158-C, Appendix A, page A-89 and forwards it to FEMA along with the cancellation letter.

3. FEMA returns the signed letter to the assigned Project Team member for distribution.
4. The assigned Project Team member mails the signed cancellation letter to the CEO and distributes the external and in-house file copies in accordance with the distribution requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.
5. If copies of the maps and report have already been distributed, the assigned Project Team member prepares a "Notice to Flood Insurance Users" and submits it to the MSC with a copy of the cancellation letter.
6. When the problem that caused the cancellation has been resolved, the assigned Project Team member prepares documentation to restart the 90-day appeal period or the 6-month compliance period following the procedures provided earlier in this section.

## **1.14 Suspension Notice Processing**

If a community's floodplain management ordinances are noncompliant with NFIP regulations when the LFD is issued and the community fails to submit compliant ordinances to the FEMA RO within the first 90 days of the compliance period, the procedures below are followed.

1. At the direction of the Floodplain Management Section (FMS) staff at FEMA HQ, the NSP prepares a 90-day suspension letter (S-90, Appendix A, page A-187 and submits it for review and signature.
2. If the CCO or other FEMA RO staff has **not** updated the FEMA CIS database or otherwise notified the FMS staff that the community's floodplain management ordinances are compliant with the NFIP regulations, the FMS returns the signed letter to the NSP for distribution. If the CCO or other FEMA RO staff member **has** updated the FEMA CIS database or otherwise notified the FMS staff that the community's floodplain management ordinances are compliant, the FMS staff returns the unsigned letter and notifies the NSP that the letter is not to be sent.
3. The NSP mails the signed letter, if required, to the community CEO and floodplain administrator and distributes the external and in-house file copies in accordance with the distribution requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.

If the community submits floodplain management ordinances that are compliant with the NFIP regulations to the CCO or other FEMA RO staff at least 30 days before the effective date, the CCO or other FEMA RO staff updates the FEMA CIS database or otherwise notifies the FMS and NSP staff. If no such notification is received, the procedures below are followed.

1. The NSP prepares a 30-day suspension letter (S-30, Appendix A, page A-183) and submits it to the FMS staff for review and signature.
2. If the CCO or other FEMA RO staff member has **not** updated the FEMA CIS database or otherwise notified the FMS or NSP staff that the community's floodplain management ordinances are compliant with the NFIP regulations, the FMS staff returns the signed letter to the NSP for distribution.
3. If the CCO or other FEMA RO staff member **has** updated the FEMA CIS database or otherwise notified the FMS or NSP staff that the community's floodplain management

ordinances are compliant, the FMS staff returns the unsigned letter and notifies the NSP that the letter is not to be sent.

4. The NSP mails the signed letter and enclosures (copies of Sections 59.24 and 60.3 of the NFIP regulations), if required, to the community CEO and floodplain administrator and distributes the external and in-house file copies in accordance with the distribution requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.
5. At the request of the FMS staff, the NSP may contact the CCO or other FEMA RO staff member to determine the compliance status of the community before mailing the suspension letter.

## **1.15 Revalidation Processing**

Approximately 4-6 weeks before the effective date for a FEMA-contracted Flood Map Project or PMR, the NSP or other assigned Project Team member initiates the preparation of a revalidation, or LOMC-VALID, letter. The procedures below are followed.

1. Approximately 2 months before the effective date, the assigned Project Team member generates a list of LOMCs that must be revalidated. The list may be generated manually or automatically using an application available through the MIP. The list includes Category 2 LOMCs from the Final SOMA, LOMCs issued since the LFD was mailed, and LOMCs for the community that are in progress, as long as they will be effective prior to the issuance of the revalidation letter.
2. The assigned Project Team member reviews the listed LOMCs to verify that all appropriate LOMCs are included. During the verification process, the assigned Project Team member assesses the in-progress LOMCs for possible completion before the new effective date. In-progress LOMCs that will be completed before the effective date may be revalidated if the determination will be unaffected by the updated flood hazard information shown on the new maps.
3. The assigned Project Team member prepares the LOMC-VALID letter. As shown in the sample LOMC-VALID letter (Appendix A, page A-161), the assigned Project Team member includes the following information for each LOMC:
  - Case number (when available);
  - Date issued;
  - Identifier;
  - Map panel number; and
  - New zone designation.

Depending on the number of LOMCs that need to be revalidated, the assigned Project Team member includes the LOMC information in the letter itself or provides the LOMC information as a separate attachment.

4. For PMRs and Flood Map Projects for which LOMC-VALID letter processing is assigned to the NSP, the NSP submits the LOMC-VALID letter to the FEMA Project Engineer for concurrence via docket for review and approval approximately 3 weeks before the new effective date. The effective date of the LOMC-VALID letter will be 1 day after the new map effective date.
5. For Flood Map Projects for which LOMC-VALID letter processing is assigned to another Project Team member, that member submits the LOMC-VALID letter to FEMA for concurrence following the agreed-upon process with FEMA RO.
6. FEMA reviews and approves the LOMC-VALID letter and returns it to the assigned Project Team member.
7. The assigned Project Team member checks for new LOMCs that may be included.
8. The assigned Project Team member mails the LOMC-VALID letter to the community CEO and floodplain administrator approximately 4 weeks before the new FIRM effective date and distributes the external and in-house file copies in accordance with the distribution requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.
9. As part of the distribution of LOMC-VALID letters, copies are to be provided for inclusion in the CD product that is made available to subscribers to the LOMC Subscription Service. (See Volume 3 of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* [FEMA, 2003] for additional information on the LOMC Subscription Service.) Therefore, the assigned Project Team member is to send a copy of each LOMC-VALID letters to the NSP staff involved in the production of the LOMC Subscription publication immediately after the letter is mailed.

During the processing of a revised FIS report and FIRM, FEMA may issue LOMCs to amend or revise the effective FIS report and FIRM. In these LOMCs or the enclosures that accompany these LOMCs, FEMA includes a notification to the community or individual property owner that the affected map panel is scheduled to be republished and the determination made in the LOMC will be superseded on the date the new panel became effective. As shown in the sample determination documents and enclosures in Appendices B and C of this Manual, the LOMCs also notify the community or individual property owner that the LOMC will be revalidated after the effective date of the revised map panel(s).

The LOMC-VALID letter becomes effective 1 day after the effective date of the newly effective FIRM panels. The LOMC-VALID letter is considered legally binding, in the same manner as the original LOMC, provided a copy of the original LOMC accompanies the LOMC-VALID letter. If required by the requester, the NSP shall forward a copy of the original LOMC with the LOMC-VALID letter. No fee is to be assessed for such requests.

Subsequent to the issuance of the LOMC-VALID letter, a community official or individual property owner may request that a LOMC be reissued. If this occurs and the LOMC is listed in a LOMC-VALID letter, the NSP shall send the requester a copy of the LOMC-VALID letter and, if requested, a copy of the original LOMC. No fee is to be assessed for these requests. However, subsequent requests for copies from the requester or requests from someone other than a community official or individual property owner are subject to the fee schedule for technical

and administrative support data published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The current fee schedule is available on the FEMA Website at [http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/frm\\_fees.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/frm_fees.shtm).

## **1.16 Reinstatement Letter Processing**

If a community is suspended from the NFIP and is reinstated because it enacted compliant ordinances after the effective date, the procedures below are followed.

1. The FMS staff instructs the NSP to prepare a reinstatement letter (RINSTATE, Appendix A, page A-181).
2. The NSP prepares the reinstatement letter and submits it to the FMS staff for review and signature.
3. The FMS returns the signed letter to the NSP for distribution.
4. The NSP mails the signed letter to the community CEO and floodplain administrator and distributes the external and in-house file copies in accordance with the distribution requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.

## **1.17 Complete Countywide Map and Report Processing**

Most of the procedures and documents set forth in Section 1 will apply when maps and reports are prepared in either a community-based or countywide format. The special procedures and documents required for countywide map and report processing are detailed below.

1. The assigned Project Team member identifies all incorporated areas within the County.
2. The assigned Project Team member determines the following for each incorporated area:
  - Program Status;
  - Type of flooding to be shown on the countywide FIRM (approximate or detailed);
3. Whether detailed flooding is being revised.
4. If the FIRM is being prepared in the countywide format for the first time, the assigned Project Team member prepares and mails a notification letter (CW-NOTIFY, Appendix A, page A-155 or comparable letter as directed by the RO) to the CEO for each jurisdiction. These notification letters summarize the actions to be taken and request community information for use in updating flood hazard information for each community. The assigned Project Team member distributes the letters at least 45 days before issuing the Preliminary copies of the FIRM to give the communities time to respond to the request for information. The particular content of the CW-NOTIFY letter to be mailed will be determined by the program status of the community and the changes made to the maps.
5. The assigned Project Team member distributes Preliminary copies of the FIRM and FIS report in accordance with the distribution requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual. Recipients of the complete countywide FIRM include the CEO of the county, FEMA RO, State NFIP Coordinator, IDIQ (if applicable), CTP (if applicable and different from the county or community CEO), and the NSP. The assigned Project Team member distributes Preliminary copies of the FIS report, FIRM Index, and FIRM panels on which each incorporated area is shown to the CEO of each individual community.

6. The assigned Project Team member coordinates with FEMA and the local newspaper(s) to initiate statutory 90-day appeal periods for all communities for which new or modified BFEs are being proposed. The assigned Project Team member prepares a countywide news release wherever communities share a common newspaper and sets publication dates so that all affected communities' appeal periods are initiated on the same date if possible. The assigned Project Team member includes the following language in the 101/155 letter:

On **(Date Preliminary Sent)**, we provided your community with Preliminary copies of a Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report and Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM). The FIS report and DFIRM for your community were prepared in our countywide format, which means that flood hazard information for the entire geographic area of the county, including your community and all other incorporated areas, was presented. That material makes it appropriate to modify the elevations of a flood having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year (base flood) for certain locations in the **(Full Name of Community)**. Public notification, by way of a standard newspaper notice that the proposed modifications in Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) are posted in the BFE Notice for Studies on the FEMA Flood Hazard Mapping Website at <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/bfe>, will be given in the **(Name of Newspaper)** on or about **(First Publication Date)** and **(Second Publication Date)**. A copy of this notification is enclosed. In addition, a notice of Proposed Base Flood Elevation Determinations will be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

7. The assigned Project Team member issues LFDs to all jurisdictions on the same date so that the FIRM effective date will be the same for all communities. The assigned Project Team member includes the language below in the LFD. (See samples in Appendix A.)

The FIS report and DFIRM for your community have been prepared in our countywide format, which means that flood hazard information for all jurisdictions within **(County Name)** County has been combined into one FIS report and DFIRM. When the FIS report and DFIRM are printed and distributed, your community will receive only those panels that present flood hazard information for your community. We will provide complete sets of the DFIRM panels to county officials, where they will be available for review by your community.

## 1.18 Coastal Barrier Resources System Revisions

### 1.18.1 Overview

The U. S. Congress passed the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) in 1982 and the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act in 1990, defining and establishing a system of protected coastal areas (including the Great Lakes), known as the Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS). The Acts define areas within the CBRS as depositional geologic features consisting of unconsolidated sedimentary materials; subject to wave, tidal and wind energies; and protecting landward aquatic habitats from direct wave attack.

The 1982 and 1990 Acts further define coastal barriers as all associated aquatic habitats, including the adjacent wetlands, marshes, estuaries, inlets and nearshore waters, but only if such features and associated habitats contain few manmade structures and these structures and man's

activities on such features, and within such habitats do not significantly impede geomorphic and ecological processes. The Acts provide protection to CBRS areas by prohibiting most expenditures of Federal funds within the CBRS. These prohibitions refer to "any form of loan, grant, guarantee, insurance, payment, rebate, subsidy or any other form of direct or indirect Federal assistance," with specific and limited exceptions.

In addition to the CBRS, the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act of 1990 established Otherwise Protected Areas (OPAs). OPAs are undeveloped coastal barriers within the boundaries of an area established under Federal, State, or local law, or held by a qualified organization, primarily for wildlife refuge, sanctuary, recreational, or natural resource conservation purposes.

The U.S. Congress designated the initial CBRS areas in 1982. Subsequent modifications to the CBRS are introduced as legislation to be acted on by the U.S. Congress, and originate from State and local requests, as well as recommendations made by the USFWS. After the U.S. Congress approves additions to the CBRS, the new areas are assigned a unique effective date, after which Federal assistance prohibitions apply.

In cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Interior, FEMA transfers Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) and Otherwise Protected Areas (OPA) boundaries to FIRMs using congressionally adopted source maps. FEMA ensures that FIRMs clearly depict the different CBRS areas and OPAs and their prohibition dates with special map notes and symbology. Specific information on the notes and symbology is provided in Appendix K of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003). Although FEMA shows CBRS areas and OPAs on FIRMs, the U.S. Congress is the only entity that may authorize a revision to these boundaries. Further details associated with the mapping of CBRS boundaries on FEMA FIRMs and DFIRMs are available in Volume 2 of FEMA's *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003).

### **1.18.2 Source Materials**

Delineations of CBRS units on the FIRM are based on the congressionally adopted CBRS source maps produced by the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), which will be supplied to the NSP by the FEMA PO or his/her designee. These maps, hereinafter referred to as "System maps" were produced by the USFWS from a set of maps adopted by the U.S. Congress pursuant to the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act of 1990 and amended as new legislation warrants.

In addition, a set of maps prepared in 1988 by the DOI entitled "Report to Congress: Coastal Barrier Resources System, Recommendations for Additions to or Deletions from the Coastal Barrier Resource System" will be available to the NSP for reference purposes only. These maps show what was provided to the U.S. Congress when the 1990 Act was pending. They portray the 1982 extent of the CBRS and clearly define the recommended changes. Although these maps are not used by the NSP for the delineation of CBRS units, they are useful in determining the original extent of 1982 CBRS units and the recommended changes.

### **1.18.3 Revision Approaches**

With FEMA approval, the NSP revises the affected FIRM panels to reflect modified CBRS and/or OPA boundaries in one of the following ways: (1) by LOMR; (2) by incorporating the changes in an in-progress map update (FEMA-contracted Flood Map Project or PMR); or (3) by initiating a separate PMR. One of these mechanisms is initiated as soon as FEMA submits the congressionally adopted source maps to the NSP.

Often, a draft set of these maps will be made available either through FEMA or the USFWS. In the event that advanced copies are made available, the assigned NSP scopes out the revision and prepare to make the changes to the FIRM.

#### **1.18.3.1 Letter of Map Revision**

A CBRS or OPA boundary revision is completed by the LOMR process only when the revision is relatively small in scope. When the CBRS revision is processed in this fashion, the MSC mails a copy of the LOMR to all parties that are on record as having a copy of the subject FIRM panel(s). This ensures a wider distribution than would normally occur for LOMR distribution. The NSP provides the required number of copies to the MSC and coordinates the distribution in advance. Advanced coordination is imperative to ensure that the LOMR will be distributed by the MSC without delay.

Any CBRS boundary changes effected by LOMR are followed immediately by a PMR unless the LOMR can be incorporated into an ongoing map update as discussed below. If the ongoing map update is very early in its processing life or significant delays are expected because of an appeal, the NSP consults with the FEMA PO or his/her designee to determine whether a separate PMR to incorporate the changes in the CBRS and/or OPA boundaries is to be initiated.

#### **1.18.3.2 Ongoing Map Update**

Whenever possible, the NSP incorporates CBRS and/or OPA boundary changes into an ongoing map update (FEMA-contracted Flood Map Project or PMR). If the ongoing map update is in the very early stages of the processing cycle or significant delays are expected because of an appeal, the NSP consults with the FEMA Project Engineer to determine whether the LOMR or separate PMR methods are to be initiated to show the boundary changes. These actions are taken so as to not excessively delay the incorporation of the CBRS boundary change into the affected FIRM panel(s). Delays incurred to include the CBRS boundary changes into an ongoing map update are acceptable, however, if the revision is solely to remove areas from the System.

#### **1.18.3.3 Separate Physical Map Revision**

When the area to be revised is too large to be accomplished by a LOMR and when there are no ongoing map updates for the affected FIRM panels, the NSP initiates a separate PMR to reflect the CBRS and/or OPA boundary changes. As discussed above, FEMA may also choose the PMR processing option when areas being added to the CBRS area or OPA are too large to show on a LOMR attachment. The NSP directs all questions or problems concerning the delineation of CBRS and/or OPA boundaries to the FEMA Project Engineer.



#### **1.18.4 Work to be Performed**

The tasks performed by the NSP include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Retrieve copies of printed FIRMs and FIRM artwork or digital files.
- Review lists of ongoing map updates to determine whether the necessary revisions to CBRS and/or OPA boundaries can be combined with an update.
- Prepare the map layout and perform all mapping work associated with showing new boundaries and screens of CBRS and/or OPA boundaries on the affected FIRM panels in accordance with FEMA's *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003).
- Perform a detailed quality control review of all existing and revised CBRS and/or OPA boundaries on the FIRM panels being revised.
- Prepare correspondence to notify affected communities of the revisions being made.
- Prepare final reproduction materials (hardcopy and digital) for submittal to the MSC contractor for printing by GPO.

#### **1.18.5 Flood Insurance Study Report**

The NSP does not revise the FIS report for revisions performed solely to add, remove, or revise CBRS and/or OPA boundaries. For FIS reports that are being prepared to reflect other map updates, the NSP adds standard CBRS paragraphs in Section 3.0 (Insurance Applications) of the FIS report to explain the CBRS. (See Appendix J of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003) for specific information on the CBRS standard paragraphs.)

#### **1.18.6 Coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Once the NSP has revised all FIRM panels that are affected by the changed CBRS unit and OPA boundaries, the NSP sends one Proof Copy of each affected FIRM panel to the CBRA Coordinator at the USFWS office in Washington, DC, for review before sending them to the affected communities. To transmit these copies, the NSP uses a special transmittal letter (USFWSLTR, Appendix A, page A-189). The NSP distributes the external and in-house file copies of this letter in accordance with the distribution requirements detailed in Subsection 1.21.

#### **1.18.7 Community Notification**

The NSP prepares Proof Copies of revised FIRM panels and transmits them to the community CEO and floodplain administrator for revisions that are processed solely for the modification of CBRS boundaries. To transmit the Proof Copies of the revised FIRM panels to the CEOs and floodplain administrators of the affected communities, the NSP uses a special LFD (115-CBRS, Appendix A, page A-37).

### **1.18.8 Preparation of Final Reproduction Materials**

When the final reproduction materials are complete, the NSP submits the following to the MSC contractor:

- Standard transmittal letter to the CEO of the community (179-CBRS, Appendix A, page A-93);
- CMA list; and
- Appropriate GPO paperwork, as discussed in Volume 1, Subsection 1.5 of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003).

### **1.19 Notice-to-User Revisions**

Notice-to-User revisions are intended to quickly and inexpensively address a nontechnical problem (i.e., error, omission) identified in a published FIS report, FIRM, or FBFM. These types of revisions are intended solely to address an incorrect or omitted component and are not be used to establish new or revised flood hazard information. The errors or omissions that can be corrected using the Notice-to-User revision process include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Typographical error in BFEs shown on a FIRM/DFIRM;
- Missing table in an FIS report;
- Incorrect entry in a table included in the FIS report;
- Incorrect map scale shown on a FIRM/DFIRM or FBFM panel;
- Incorrect flood insurance risk zone label shown on a FIRM/DFIRM panel;
- Incorrect or missing flood insurance risk zone screens on a FIRM/DFIRM or FBFM panel;
- Addition or correction of corporate limits shown on a FIRM/DFIRM or FBFM panel;
- Addition or correction of Township, Range, or Section line on a FIRM/DFIRM or FBFM panel;
- Errors in Bench Marks or Elevation Reference Marks on a FIRM/DFIRM or FBFM panel; and
- Missing Elevation Reference Mark descriptions on a FIRM or FBFM panel.

When Notice-to-User revisions are completed, FEMA usually will establish a new effective date for the affected FIS report component(s), FIRM/DFIRM panels(s), and/or FBFM panel(s). However, FEMA may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis. For example, when a required correction is discovered shortly before or after the effective date, FEMA may decide to reissue the FIS report component(s), FIRM/DFIRM panel(s), and/or FBFM panel(s) without changing the effective date.

### **1.19.1 Identification of Incorrect or Omitted Component**

The incorrect or missing component may be identified by FEMA, by a FEMA contractor or other Project Team member, or another Mapping Partners. FEMA's decision regarding whether to use the Notice-to-User process to address the problem shall be based on information obtained in response to the following questions:

- What is the specific error or omission?
- How long has the component been in effect?
- How was the error or omission identified?
- Who is requesting the correction?
- How many copies of the component has FEMA printed and distributed?
- Are any revisions to the defective component ongoing or planned?

### **1.19.2 Options for Correction**

When an error or omission is brought to the attention of FEMA, FEMA shall select the proper course of action to take from the following correction options:

- Issue PMR;
- Issue LOMR;
- Issue Notice-to-User revision; or
- Defer the correction.

FEMA will base their decision on the relative priority assessed during the identification process. Processing procedures for PMRs are discussed earlier in this section of this Manual; processing procedures for LOMRs are discussed in Section 2 of this Manual. The Notice-to-User revision process is summarized in Subsections 1.19.3 and 1.19.4 below.

### **1.19.3 Processing Procedures**

Once the Notice-to-User revision process has been chosen to address the identified error or omission, the NSP follows the processing procedures summarized below.

1. Determine if any previously issued LOMCs must be reissued or incorporated into the component revision.
2. Document the decision made by FEMA in the appropriate NSP monitoring report.
3. Inform the MSC contractor of the action being taken and the timeframe for submission of the corrected component. The accelerated nature of the Notice-to-User Revision process requires advance coordination to ensure timely printing and delivery of revised components to appropriate FIS report, FIRM, and/or FBFM users.

4. Contact the FEMA RO to determine if the community's floodplain management ordinances are already compliant with the NFIP regulations or if the community requires a compliance period. If the community has model ordinances that specify that they will adopt all future revisions of the FIS report, FIRM/DFIRM, and FBFM, then the Notice-to-User revision may be accelerated. If the community requires a compliance period to adopt a new or modified ordinance, FEMA will send a letter to the community CEO and floodplain administrator informing them of the need for the revision and the effective date for the new or revised component.
5. Make the necessary corrections to affect portions of the FIS report, FIRM, and/or FBFM.
6. Determine, after consultation with the FEMA PO or his/her designee, if the newly corrected component will have a new effective date or will be issued with the same date as currently exists. Because it is advantageous to have the FIS report carry the same date as the FIRM/DFIRM Index and individual FIRM/DFIRM panels, the FIS report may be reissued with the same effective date and a notation that it is being reissued with corrections. When this option is chosen, the Notice to Users page in the front of the FIS report shall contain a brief description of the reason for revision.
7. Prepare the Notice-to-User letter that will be transmitted to all individuals on the MSC distribution list to explain why a revised component is being issued. Use Notice1 (Appendix A, page A-157) for corrections to FIRM/DFIRM and FBFM panels. Use Notice2 (Appendix A, page A-159) for corrections to FIS report components.

#### **1.19.4 Submittal to Map Service Center**

The NSP or other assigned Project Team member submits the corrected component(s) to the MSC contractor. The MSC contractor works with GPO to have the component(s) printed. The MSC contractor then distributes the component(s) to all individuals who previously received a copy of the product that contained the error or omission. In addition to the corrected component, the NSP also submits the following items to the MSC contractor a minimum of 2 months before the new effective date:

- Notice1 or Notice2 letter;
- CMA list; and
- Appropriate GPO paperwork, as discussed in Volume 1, Subsection 1.5 of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* (FEMA, 2003).

The assigned Project Team member shall verify with the MSC contractor whether the original signed letter or a digital copy for reproduction purposes.

### **1.20 Corporate Limit Change Requests**

Corporate limit changes may occur in a community as a result of annexation, incorporation, or other appropriate legal actions. Section 64.4 of the NFIP regulations requires communities to update their ordinance within 6 months of such an activity; however, some communities may provide this information in a timelier manner. Occasionally, communities provide this information with other information they regularly provide to FEMA, such as the Biennial Report.

Corporate limit change information is forwarded by FEMA to an assigned Project Team member responsible for processing updates to the FIRM for that community. If the boundary change affects an SFHA, FEMA shall provide appropriate guidance to the community, identifying the affected FIRM/DFIRM (and, in some cases, FBFM) panels and FIS report components for the affected area.

If there is an ongoing map update (i.e. FEMA-contracted Flood Map Project, LOMR, PMR) for the community that affects the panels on which the corporate limit changes appear when the corporate limit changes are submitted, the assigned Project Team member incorporates the corporate limit change into the ongoing map update, and no additional response is necessary. If the corporate limit change is for a community that is mapped on numerous panels and the panels for which the corporate limit changes are submitted are not panels that are being updated as part of an ongoing update, the assigned Project Team member coordinates with FEMA to determine the appropriate action to be taken. However, the majority of corporate limit changes are submitted, when no map update is underway.

The procedures presented in Subsections 1.20.1 through 1.20.3 below have been developed to provide guidance for the actions and response to such a corporate limit change submittal. A decision-making flowchart for corporate limit changes is graphically illustrated in Figure 1-4 on page 1-39 at the end of this section.

It is unlikely that FEMA would receive change information from a non-participating community, and that issue is not addressed. However, if a non-participating community expands into an area that was previously in a participating community, the situation could result in a PMR and would warrant review by the affected jurisdictions on a case-by-case basis.

### **1.20.1 Technical and Programmatic Review**

The technical review of the data submitted consists of reviewing the corporate limit change submittal for certain information. Two items are required: a complete copy of the corporate limit change ordinance, including the date the change became effective; and a map showing the location and area involved in the change. Usually, a letter from a community official is included; this is helpful contact information. If either the map or the ordinance is not submitted, the assigned Project Team member shall telephone the community and request this information.

When the corporate limit change request is for a community FIRM that is not being updated, the assigned Project Team determines the location of the change on the effective FIRM. If the area of change does not include an SFHA, the assigned Project Team member prepares a Standard Response Letter (CORPLTR1, Appendix A, page A-139) for FEMA signature.

The assigned Project Team member also reviews the flood hazard information on the FIRM panels for adjacent land areas for consistency. If they are inconsistent, the assigned Project Team member initiates a map update to address the problem. If they are consistent, a letter response is appropriate. The assigned Project Team member uses the Standard Response Letter in situations where the ordinance level is the same in both affected communities, or where the ordinance level of the community assuming jurisdiction is higher than that in the affected area.

To resolve inconsistencies, the assigned Project Team member first verifies whether data are available, and whether those data are available internally or must be requested from the

community. If insufficient data are available, the assigned Project Team member prepares the Standard Response Letter to notify the affected communities that the change will be incorporated in the next revision of that FIRM/DFIRM panel. If sufficient data are available, the assigned Project Team member determines the magnitude of the change and determines, in close coordination with FEMA, whether a LOMR or PMR is to be initiated.

In such cases, the assigned Project Team member prepares a Restudy Response Letter (CORPLTR2, Appendix A, page A-141) to inform the community of the upcoming map action. The ordinance levels are detailed in Paragraphs 60.3(a) through (f) of the NFIP regulations. For the purpose of reviewing corporate limit change materials, a very general overview of the levels of ordinances as they apply to map information follows:

- Paragraph 60.3(a)—The community has no flood hazard data and no FIRM;
- Paragraph 60.3(b)—The FIRM has only Zone A flood hazard information;
- Paragraph 60.3(c)—The FIRM shows some BFEs and detailed flood hazard information;
- Paragraph 60.3(d)—The FIRM or FBFM shows regulatory floodway information;
- Paragraph 60.3(e)—The FIRM shows coastal high hazard information (V zones) ; and
- Paragraph 60.3(e)—The FIRM shows flood zone restoration areas (AR zones)..

If a community will be incorporating flood hazard information with the corporate limit change that will require a higher floodplain management ordinance level, the community must upgrade the ordinance. For example, if the changed area includes a regulatory floodway and the effective FIRM or FBFM for the community assuming jurisdiction also presents a regulatory floodway, the community likely will not be required to update its floodplain management ordinance and the Standard Response Letter is appropriate.

However, if the changed area has a regulatory floodway shown, and the FBFM or FIRM/DFIRM for the community assuming jurisdiction does not present a regulatory floodway, then the community must upgrade its floodplain management ordinance to incorporate the requirements of Paragraph 60.3(d) of the NFIP regulations. In such cases, the assigned Project Team member advises the community of the change required in their ordinance using the Ordinance Upgrade Response Letter (CORPLTR3, Appendix A, page A-145).

## **1.20.2 Document Preparation**

The corporate limit change submittal usually will include a copy of the ordinance, a map showing the location and area involved in the change, and a letter from a community official. Once the corporate limit change submittal is received by the NSP, it is assigned for review and processing.

The NSP reviews the submittal for the required materials, specifically for the map and the ordinance, and obtains copies of the FIRM panel(s) for the changed area and the community assuming jurisdiction. The NSP notes the following information:

- FIRM/DFIRM panel name and number for the community assuming jurisdiction;
- FIRM/DFIRM panel name and number for the changed area's previous community;

- The name and title/department of the official of the community assuming jurisdiction—this is the person who wrote the letter accompanying the corporate limit change submittal (if no letter, no name);
- The name and address of the CEO of the community assuming jurisdiction;
- Date of letter that accompanied the change submittal (if no letter, date the mapping partner received the change submittal); and
- Date the change became effective (usually on the last page of the ordinance).

The NSP uses this information to create the appropriate response letter to the community. The assigned Project Team member reviews the FIRM/DFIRM panel(s) as discussed in Subsection 1.20.1, prepares the appropriate response letter, and submits the letter to FEMA for concurrence. The assigned Project Team member mails the letter to the CEO and floodplain administrator of each affected community and distributes external and in-house file copies in accordance with the requirements in Subsection 1.21 of this Manual.

### **1.20.3 Other Documentation Activities**

FEMA uses the MNUSS database to assist when prioritizing funding for map updates, and a corporate limit change is considered a Map Maintenance Need. Therefore, the assigned Project Team member is to complete a MNUSS Worksheet to document the change and shall enter the required information into the MNUSS database. (See Appendix I of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners* [FEMA, 2003].) The assigned Project Team member attaches the worksheet and a copy of the response letter to the corporate limit change submittal and files the documents in the Future Files.

The assigned Project Team member enters the following information into the Worksheet and the MNUSS database:

- CID, name, County, State of community assuming jurisdiction;
- CID, name, County, State of community losing jurisdiction;
- Number of changes;
- Ordinance received (Y/N or Date);
- Map received (Y/N or Date);
- Date most recent change became effective;
- Date received the change submittal;
- Date responded to the change submittal; and
- Method of response (which type of letter).

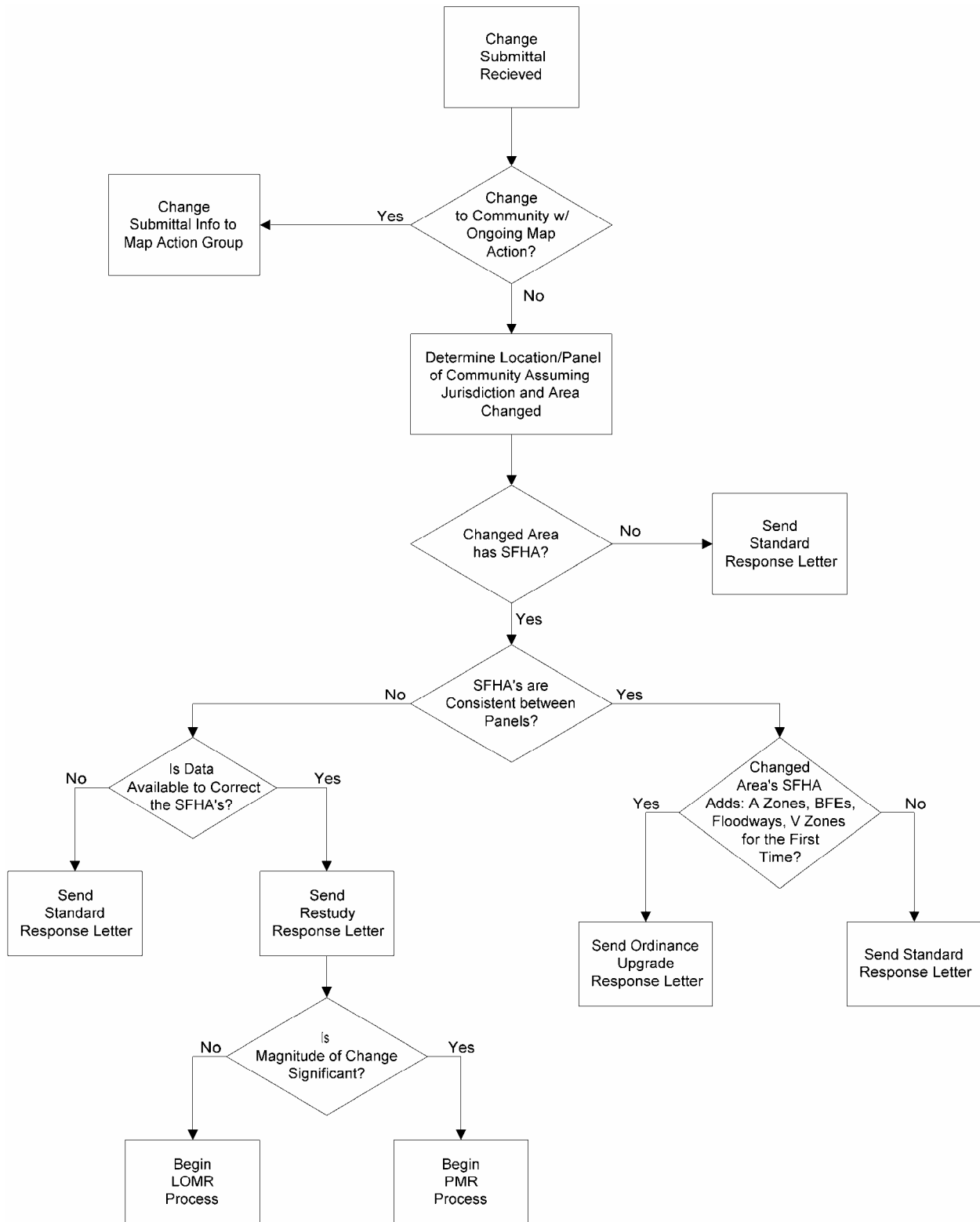


Figure 1-4. Map Revision Decision-Making Flowchart for Corporate Limit Changes



## **1.21 Distribution Requirements**

In addition to the CEOs and floodplain administrators for the affected communities, many other individuals and agencies receive copies of the standard documents used in processing new and revised FIS reports and FIRMs. The distribution requirements for these standard documents are summarized in Table 1-1.

It is likewise critical to keep appropriate individuals and agencies informed when non-standard documents are produced. Some of the more frequent non-standard documents (e.g., appeal resolution letters) are discussed throughout Section 1. For non-standard documents, the FEMA Project Engineer at FEMA HQ or the appropriate FEMA RO staff member establishes distribution requirements for the assigned Project Team member to follow.

**Table 1-1. Distribution Requirements for Copies of Standard Documents Used in Processing New and Revised Flood Insurance Study Reports and Flood Insurance Rate Maps**

Document Number	State NFIP Coordinator	Regional Flood Insurance and Mitigation Division Director	Community Map Repository	NSP Case File	FEDD File	IDIQ/CTP Case File	FCSA	FEMA Refund Coordinator	Other	Community Assistance Section
15-Series	X	X	X	X	X	X				
19P/NP-Series	X	X	X	X	X	X				
19P-N/N-NFP-Series	X	X	X	X	X	X				
100	X	X		X	X					
100-A	X	X		X	X					
101/155	X	X		X	X					
115-A/C-A/C-I/I-Series	X	X	X	X	X	X				
115-CBRA	X	X	X	X	X	X				
115I-N/N-F/N-NFP-Series	X	X	X	X	X	X				
140	X	X		X	X					
140a	X	X		X	X					
142	X	X		X	X					
142a	X	X		X	X					
142b	X	X		X	X					
142c	X	X		X	X					

**Table 1-1. Distribution Requirements for Copies of Standard Documents Used in Processing New and Revised Flood Insurance Study Reports and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Cont'd)**

Document Number	State NFIP Coordinator	Regional Flood Insurance and Mitigation Division Director	Community Map Repository	NSP Case File	FEDD File	IDIQ/CTP Case File	FCSA	FEMA Refund Coordinator	Other	Community Assistance Section
142d	X	X		X	X					
152	X	X		X	X					
152-A	X	X		X	X					
153-A	X	X		X	X					
153-C	X	X		X	X					
157				X	X					
158	X	X	X	X	X	X				
158-C	X	X	X	X	X	X				
175-A	X	X		X	X					
175-P	X	X		X	X					
179				X	X					
179-CBRS				X	X					
179-CWG				X	X					
179-M				X	X					
179-R				X	X					
179-RS				X	X					

**Table 1-1. Distribution Requirements for Copies of Standard Documents Used in Processing New and Revised Flood Insurance Study Reports and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Cont'd)**

Document Number	State NFIP Coordinator	Regional Flood Insurance and Mitigation Division Director	Community Map Repository	NSP Case File	FEDD File	IDIQ/CTP Case File	FCSA	FEMA Refund Coordinator	Other	Community Assistance Section
179-S				X	X					
316-ACK	X	X	X	X			X			
316-AD		X		X						
316-AD/INC		X		X						
316-FEE			X	X			X			
316-INT				X						
316-INVOICE			X	X			X			
316-PMR(1)	X	X		X						
316-PMR(2)	X	X		X						
316-REFUND			X	X			X	X		
316-RETURN			X	X			X	X		
317-PI			X	X			X			
317-PT			X	X			X			
CANCEL	X	X	X	X	X	X				
CORPLTR1	X	X		X	X					
CORPLTR 2	X	X		X	X					
CORPLTR 3	X	X		X	X	X				

**Table 1-1. Distribution Requirements for Copies of Standard Documents Used in Processing New and Revised Flood Insurance Study Reports and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Cont'd)**

Document Number	State NFIP Coordinator	Regional Flood Insurance and Mitigation Division Director	Community Map Repository	NSP Case File	FEDD File	IDIQ/CTP Case File	FCSA	FEMA Refund Coordinator	Other	Community Assistance Section
CTPACK		X		X						
CW-NOTIFY		X		X						
IDIQACK		X		X						
LOMC-VALID	X	X	X	X	X				X <sup>2</sup>	
NOTICE1	X	X		X	X					
NOTICE2	X	X		X	X					
PRELIM1		X		X	X					
PRELIM2		X		X	X					
PRELIM3		X		X	X					
REFUND1.MEM	X	X		X	X					
RINSTATE	X	X		X	X				X <sup>1</sup>	X
S-30	X	X		X	X				X1	X
S-90	X	X		X	X				X1	X
SOMA-1	X	X		X	X				X2	
SOMA-2	X	X	X	X	X				X <sup>2</sup>	
USFWSLTR	X	X	X	X	X					

<sup>1</sup>Copy sent to State Insurance Commissioner

<sup>2</sup> Copy sent to LOMC Subscription coordinator

