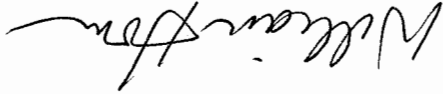


Enclosure

William Hom, Chief
Floodplain Assistance Section
Division of Flood Management



Sincerely,

If you have questions concerning this letter, the enclosed report, or any aspect of the NFIP, please contact me at (916) 574-0633 or have your staff contact Jerry Bare at (916) 574-0624.

Our review indicates that Butte County has a good floodplain management program in place, and no deficiency of NFIP regulations was identified. NFIP and guarantee availability of flood insurance coverage. members for their conscientious efforts in implementing the NFIP. Continued enforcement On behalf of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, I commend your staff

Important aspects of the CAV are establishment of a thorough understanding of a community's responsibilities in the National Flood Insurance Program and provision of any assistance that may be required. To determine the needs of the community, the local floodplain management regulations and enforcement practices were reviewed at the meeting. A copy of the findings is enclosed.

Thank you for the cooperation and courtesy your staff extended to Jerry Bare and me during the Community Assistance Visit on Thursday, August 7, 2003. We hope the meeting was as useful and informative for your staff as it was for our Department.

Dear Mr. Beeler:

Mr. Robert J. Beeler
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors
Butte County
1880 Bird Street
Oroville, California 95965

SEP 29 2003

Kris Kinaley
N.D.

Mr. Robert J. Beeler
SEP 29 2003

Page 2

cc: Mr. Mike Shore
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region IX
1111 Broadway Street, Suite 1200
Oakland, California 94607-4052

cc + Enclosure: Mr. David Weinstock
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region IX
1111 Broadway Street, Suite 1200
Oakland, California 94607-4052

Mr. Michael Viera
Manager, Building Inspection
Department of Development Services
Butte County
7 County Center Drive
Oroville, California 95965

bcc + Enclosure: Kris Kingsley, Northern District

**FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM**

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE VISIT REPORT

SECTION I

NAME OF COMMUNITY:		Butte County
STATE:	California	
I.D. #:	060017	
COUNTRY:	Butte	

VISIT CONDUCTED BY:		Jerry Bare and Bill Hom
AGENCY:	Department of Water Resources	
DATE OF VISIT:	August 7, 2003	

SECTION II

NAME OF LOCAL OFFICIAL:		Michael Vieira
TELEPHONE #:	(530) 538-7541	

TITLE:		Manager, Building Inspection
ADDRESS:	7 County Center Drive Oroville, California 95965	

SECTION III

PART A - Findings (Check appropriate column.)		
SERIOUS	MINOR	NONE

1.	Are there any problems with the community's floodplain management regulations?				X
2.	Are there problems with the community's administrative and enforcement procedures?				X
3.	Are there engineering or other problems with the maps or flood insurance study?				X
4.	Are there any other problems in the community's floodplain management program?				X
5.	Are there any problems with the Biennial Report data?				X
6.	Are there any programmatic issues or problems identified?				X

7. Have structures been identified as being in violation? (Check appropriate category below.)

No violations have been identified.

A potential violation or violations have been identified.

Actions are being taken on the part of the community to remedy the violation(s) identified during the visit.

Background

Butte County is located in the northern part of California's Sacramento Valley. It may be reached via State Highways 99 or 70. The County includes parts of both the Lassen and the Plumas National Forests. The bordering counties include: Plumas County on the northeast, Yuba County on the southeast, Sutter and Colusa Counties on the southwest, Glenn County on the west and Tehama County on the northwest. The western boundary is the Sacramento River.

Founded on February 18, 1850, Butte County was one of the original 27 California counties. The first county seat was Hamilton. It was moved to Bidwell's Bar in 1853, then in 1856 to Oroville which is the county seat today. From the lush Sacramento River and surrounding Sacramento Valley to the wooded foothills of where the Sierra and Cascade mountain ranges come together, Butte County is an area of great diversity. It has such natural wonders as the Feather Falls, the sixth highest waterfall in the United States, and the Sutter Buttes, the world's smallest mountain range. In fact, the County was named for the Sutter Buttes, the very prominent small range of hills on the valley floor, west of Gridley.

The Mechoopda and Concow bands of the Maidu Indians originally inhabited the Butte County area. Gold mining and logging provided economic stability in the past. Presently, agriculture, retail, medical, and educational institutions contribute significantly to the local economy. The County has a population of 210,500 and encompasses approximately 1,675 square miles. Major cities and towns are Biggs, Chico, Durham, Gridley, Magalia, Oroville, Palermo, Paradise, and Thermalito.

Butte County is geographically divided into portions that lie in the northeastern part of the Sacramento Valley and the mountainous area surrounding the valley. The topography of the County varies: from the relatively flat Sacramento Valley floor with an elevation ranging from 60 to 200 feet, to extensive rolling foothills with elevations ranging from 200 to 2,100 feet, and to the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Mountain Ranges with elevations ranging from 2,100 to greater than 6,000 feet above sea level.

Butte County has a typical Mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters. Cooler summers and cold winters are common in the areas of higher elevation. Annual precipitation, generally in the form of rain, ranges from 18 inches along the Sacramento River to 80 inches in high-elevation areas, where snow falls regularly.

No large, natural lakes exist within the County's boundaries. Several artificial lakes, serve as domestic water, irrigation, and power generating purposes, are located in the mountain and foothill areas. Some examples of these are the Oroville, Philbrook, and Madrone Reservoirs.

Butte County entered the regular phase of the National Flood Insurance Program on September 29, 1989. NFIP is based on an agreement between the federal government and participating communities that have been identified as floodprone. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, through the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, makes flood insurance available to the residents of a participating community, provided the community adopts and enforces adequate floodplain management regulations that meet the minimum NFIP requirements. Currently, about 19,500 of the nation's 22,000 cities, towns, counties, and boroughs are members of the NFIP.

A Community Assistance Visit is a scheduled visit to an NFIP community for maintaining periodic contact with the community to evaluate the effectiveness of local floodplain management practices and to offer assistance if needed.

The Department of Water Resources, Northern District staff conducted a previous CAV with the County on June 25, 1998. In the CAV report dated October 1, 1998, DWR staff found that (1) the County's Flood Hazard Prevention Ordinance did not meet the minimum NFIP requirements as specified in *Title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 59, 60.3-60.6*; (2) the County was missing "as-constructed" lowest floor elevations for many structures that were located within its Special Flood Hazard Areas; and (3) some of the structures identified in the "Floodplain Inspection List" were constructed without proper foundation openings. In a follow-up meeting on November 17, 1998, staff members from the County, FEMA, and DWR discussed these violations and actions to be taken to remedy the violations.

This report describes the findings of the August 7, 2003 CAV. The County has a good floodplain management program in place, and no deficiency of NFIP regulations was identified.

Floodplain Management Regulations

County staff provided a copy of the County's Flood Hazard Prevention Ordinance No. 3598, adopted on April 11, 2000, to DWR staff before the CAV. After reviewing the ordinance, DWR staff determined that the County's ordinance meets and exceeds the minimum compliance standards of the NFIP program and no revisions need to be made at this time.

Administration and Enforcement Procedures

In Section 26-20 of Ordinance No. 3598, the Director of Development Services is the designated Floodplain Administrator. According to County staff, this designation is still in effect.

As described by County staff, the Department of Development Services is assigned the responsibility of reviewing all development permit applications. If a proposed structure lies within an SFHA, Development Services staff members will specify that it must comply with the County's floodplain management regulations. Any residential building that is new or has substantial improvement will have its lowest floor (including basement) elevated a minimum of one foot above the Base Flood Elevation. Any non-residential building in an SFHA will have the option of floodproofing or elevating a minimum of one foot above the BFE. County staff requires developers to submit an Elevation Certificate showing the proposed lowest floor elevation before construction and an EC showing the as-built lowest floor elevation after the construction.

According to County staff, the County has also adopted floodplain management regulations that will not allow variances to be issued. It means that any building (including detached garages) that is located in SFHA will have its lowest floor (including basement) elevated a minimum of one foot above the BFE.

To verify compliance with the NFIP regulations, DWR staff members reviewed a number of elevation certificates of structures at the CAV meeting and did not find any problems with the

data on the elevation certificates. Also, a tour of the County showed new structures in the SFHA are in compliance. Buildings information is on the attached "FLOODPLAIN INSPECTION LIST."

Engineering Flood Maps and Study

FEMA issued County-wide Flood Insurance Rate Maps for Butte County in June 1998. Since then, County staff has applied and received Letters of Map Revision. The current FIRM Index date is April 20, 2000.

Under DVR's Awareness Floodplain Mapping Program, Butte Creek, Honcut Creek, Dead Horse Slough, and Wyman Ravine have been mapped by approximate method. As funding permits, additional streams will be included under the mapping program authority.

The County has developed a Geographic Information System, which can overlay flood zones on the County parcel and street maps.

Other Community Floodplain Management Program Problems

None.

Biennial Report Data

None.

Programmatic Issues

None.

Section 404, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

None.

E.O. 11988, Floodplain Management

None.

Other Findings

Within the County, 1,351 flood insurance policies, with a total coverage of \$216.1 million, have been issued to property owners, who pay a total of \$660,165 in annual premiums.

Follow-up

None.

Community Action Needed

None.

Meeting Participants

Michael Vieira

Jerry Bare

Bill Hom

Butte County

DWR, Division of Flood Management

DWR, Division of Flood Management

FLOODPLAIN INSPECTION LIST

Inspection Date:

Palermo

- 7520 Occidental – Not Substantial Improvement and Substantial Damage
- 7567 Occidental – Not SISD
- 7581 Occidental – Not SISD
- 1973 Messina – Zone X

Oroville

- 1769 Lone Tree Road – Zone X
- 1655-57 Lone Tree Road – Zone X
- 1498 Lone Tree Road – one foot above BFE
- 294 Cox Lane – Zone X
- 524 Stimson Road – Elevated
- 80 Watt Lane – Elevated
- 108 Watt Lane – Zone X
- 264 Watt Lane – Zone X
- 48 Oakwood – Detached garage
- 1151 Butte City Highway -- Elevated
- 2465 Monte Vista Avenue – Zone X
- 27 Hoover Street -- Elevated