

they are the only practicable alternatives and to minimize harm to and within floodplains and wetlands.

(c) This identification shall consider whether the proposed action will result in an increase in the useful life of any structure or facility in question, maintain the investment at risk and exposure of lives to the flood hazard or forego an opportunity to restore the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains or wetlands. Regional Offices of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be contacted to aid in the identification and evaluation of potential impacts of the proposed action on natural and beneficial floodplain and wetland values.

(d) In the review of a proposed or alternative action, the Regional Administrator shall specifically consider and evaluate: impacts associated with modification of wetlands and floodplains regardless of its location; additional impacts which may occur when certain types of actions may support subsequent action which have additional impacts of their own; adverse impacts of the proposed actions on lives and property and on natural and beneficial floodplain and wetland values; and the three categories of factors listed below:

(1) *Flood hazard-related factors.* These include for example, the factors listed in §9.7(b)(2);

(2) *Natural values-related factors.* These include, for example, the following: Water resource values (natural moderation of floods, water quality maintenance, and ground water recharge); living resource values (fish and wildlife and biological productivity); cultural resource values (archeological and historic sites, and open space recreation and green belts); and agricultural, aquacultural and forestry resource values.

(3) *Factors relevant to a proposed action's effects on the survival and quality of wetlands.* These include, for example, the following: Public health, safety, and welfare, including water supply, quality, recharge and discharge; pollution; flood and storm hazards; and sediment and erosion; maintenance of natural systems, including conservation and long term productivity of existing flora and fauna, species and habitat di-

versity and stability, hydrologic utility, fish, wildlife, timber, and food and fiber resources; and other uses of wetlands in the public interest, including recreational, scientific, and cultural uses.

#### §9.11 Mitigation.

(a) *Purpose.* The purpose of this section is to expand upon the directives set out in §9.6 of this part, and to set out the mitigative actions required if the preliminary determination is made to carry out an action that affects or is in a floodplain or wetland.

(b) *General provisions.* (1) The Agency shall design or modify its actions so as to minimize harm to or within the floodplain;

(2) The Agency shall minimize the destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands;

(3) The Agency shall restore and preserve natural and beneficial floodplain values; and

(4) The Agency shall preserve and enhance natural and beneficial wetland values.

(c) *Minimization provisions.* The Agency shall minimize:

(1) Potential harm to lives and the investment at risk from the base flood, or, in the case of critical actions, from the 500-year flood;

(2) Potential adverse impacts the action may have on others; and

(3) Potential adverse impact the action may have on floodplain and wetland values.

(d) *Minimization Standards.* In its implementation of the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, the Agency shall apply at a minimum, the following standards to its actions to comply with the requirements of paragraphs (b) and (c), of this section, (except as provided in §9.5 (c), (d), and (g) regarding categories of partial or total exclusion). Any Agency action to which the following specific requirements do not apply, shall nevertheless be subject to the full 8-step process (§9.6) including the general requirement to minimize harm to and within floodplains:

(1) There shall be no new construction or substantial improvement in a floodway, and no new construction in a coastal high hazard area, except for:

(i) A functionally dependent use; or

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(ii) A structure or facility which facilitates an open space use.

(2) For a structure which is a functionally dependent use, or which facilitates an open space use, the following applies. There shall be no construction of a new or substantially improved structure in a coastal high hazard area unless it is elevated on adequately anchored pilings or columns, and securely anchored to such piles or columns so that the lowest portion of the structural members of the lowest floor (excluding the pilings or columns) is elevated to or above the base flood level (the 500-year flood level for critical actions) (including wave height). The structure shall be anchored so as to withstand velocity waters and hurricane wave wash. The Regional Administrator shall be responsible for determining the base flood level, including the wave height, in all cases. Where there is a FIRM in effect, it shall be the basis of the Regional Administrator's determination. If the FIRM does not reflect wave heights, or if there is no FIRM in effect, the Regional Administrator is responsible for delineating the base flood level, including wave heights.

(3) *Elevation of structures.* (i) There shall be no new construction or substantial improvement of structures unless the lowest floor of the structures (including basement) is at or above the level of the base flood.

(ii) There shall be no new construction or substantial improvement of structures involving a critical action unless the lowest floor of the structure (including the basement) is at or above the level of the 500-year flood.

(iii) If the subject structure is non-residential, FEMA may, instead of elevating the structure to the 100-year or 500-year level, as appropriate, approve the design of the structure and its attendant utility and sanitary facilities so that below the flood level the structure is water tight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components having the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy.

(iv) The provisions of paragraphs (d)(3)(i), (ii), and (iii) of this section do not apply to the extent that the Fed-

eral Insurance Administration has granted an exception under 44 CFR §60.6(b) (formerly 24 CFR 1910.6(b)), or the community has granted a variance which the Regional Administrator determines is consistent with 44 CFR 60.6(a) (formerly 24 CFR 1910.6(a)). In a community which does not have a FIRM in effect, FEMA may approve a variance from the standards of paragraphs (d)(3)(i), (ii), and (iii) of this section, after compliance with the standards of 44 CFR 60.6(a).

(4) There shall be no encroachments, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements of structures or facilities, or other development within a designated regulatory floodway that would result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the occurrence of the base flood discharge. Until a regulatory floodway is designated, no new construction, substantial improvements, or other development (including fill) shall be permitted within the base floodplain unless it is demonstrated that the cumulative effect of the proposed development, when combined with all other existing and anticipated development, will not increase the water surface elevation of the base flood more than one foot at any point within the community.

(5) Even if an action is a functionally dependent use or facilitates open space uses (under paragraph (d) (1) or (2) of this section) and does not increase flood heights (under paragraph (d)(4) of this section), such action may only be taken in a floodway or coastal high hazard area if:

(i) Such site is the only practicable alternative; and

(ii) Harm to and within the floodplain is minimized.

(6) In addition to standards (d)(1) through (d)(5) of this section, no action may be taken if it is inconsistent with the criteria of the National Flood Insurance Program (44 CFR part 59 *et seq.*) or any more restrictive Federal, State or local floodplain management standards.

(7) New construction and substantial improvement of structures shall be elevated on open works (walls, columns, piers, piles, etc.) rather than on fill, in

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all cases in coastal high hazard areas and elsewhere, where practicable.

(8) To minimize the effect of floods on human health, safety and welfare, the Agency shall:

(i) Where appropriate, integrate all of its proposed actions in floodplains into existing flood warning and preparedness plans and ensure that available flood warning time is reflected;

(ii) Facilitate adequate access and egress to and from the site of the proposed action; and

(iii) Give special consideration to the unique hazard potential in flash flood, rapid-rise or tsunami areas.

(9) In the replacement of building contents, materials and equipment, the Regional Administrator shall require as appropriate, disaster proofing of the building and/or elimination of such future losses by relocation of those building contents, materials and equipment outside or above the base floodplain or the 500-year floodplain for critical actions.

(e) *In the implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program.* (1) The Federal Insurance Administration shall make identification of all coastal high hazard areas a priority;

(2) Beginning October 1, 1981, the Federal Insurance Administration of FEMA may only provide flood insurance for new construction or substantial improvements in a coastal high hazard area if:

(i) Wave heights have been designated for the site of the structure either by the Administrator of FEMA based upon data generated by FEMA or by another source, satisfactory to the Administrator; and

(ii) The structure is rated by FEMA-FIA based on a system which reflects the capacity to withstand the effects of the 100-year frequency flood including, but not limited to, the following factors:

(A) Wave heights;

(B) The ability of the structure to withstand the force of waves.

(3)(i) FEMA shall accept and take fully into account information submitted by a property owner indicating that the rate for a particular structure is too high based on the ability of the structure to withstand the force of waves. In order to obtain a rate adjust-

ment, a property owner must submit to FEMA specific information regarding the structure and its immediate environment. Such information must be certified by a registered professional architect or engineer who has demonstrable experience and competence in the fields of foundation, soils, and structural engineering. Such information should include:

(A) Elevation of the structure (bottom of lowest floor beam) in relation to the Base Flood Elevation including wave height;

(B) Distance of the structure from the shoreline;

(C) Dune protection and other environmental factors;

(D) Description of the building support system; and

(E) Other relevant building details.

Adequate completion of the "V-Zone Risk Factor Rating Form" is sufficient for FEMA to determine whether a rate adjustment is appropriate. The form is available from and applications for rate adjustments should be submitted to:

National Flood Insurance Program  
Attention: V-Zone Underwriting Specialist  
9901-A George Palmer Highway  
Lanham, MD 20706

Pending a determination on a rate adjustment, insurance will be issued at the class rate. If the rate adjustment is granted, a refund of the appropriate portion of the premium will be made. *Unless a property owner is seeking an adjustment of the rate prescribed by FEMA-FIA, this information need not be submitted.*

(ii) FIA shall notify communities with coastal high hazard areas and federally related lenders in such communities, of the provisions of this paragraph. Notice to the lenders may be accomplished by the Federal instrumentalities to which the lenders are related.

(4) In any case in which the Regional Director has been, pursuant to §9.11(d)(1), precluded from providing assistance for a new or substantially improved structure in a floodway, FIA may not provide a new or renewed policy of flood insurance for that structure.

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(f) *Restore and preserve.* (1) For any action taken by the Agency which affects the floodplain or wetland and which has resulted in, or will result in, harm to the floodplain or wetland, the Agency shall act to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains and wetlands.

(2) Where floodplain or wetland values have been degraded by the proposed action, the Agency shall identify, evaluate and implement measures to restore the values.

(3) If an action will result in harm to or within the floodplain or wetland, the Agency shall design or modify the action to preserve as much of the natural and beneficial floodplain and wetland values as is possible.

[45 FR 59526, Sept. 9, 1980, as amended at 46 FR 51752, Oct. 22, 1981; 48 FR 44543, Sept. 29, 1983; 49 FR 33879, Aug. 27, 1984; 49 FR 35584, Sept. 10, 1984; 50 FR 40006, Oct. 1, 1985]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 45 FR 79070, Nov. 28, 1980, §9.11(e)(4) was temporarily suspended until further notice.

### §9.12 Final public notice.

If the Agency decides to take an action in or affecting a floodplain or wetland, it shall provide the public with a statement of its final decision and shall explain the relevant factors considered by the Agency in making this determination.

(a) In addition, those sent notices under §9.8 shall also be provided the final notice.

(b) For actions for which an environmental impact statement is being prepared, the FEIS is adequate to constitute final notice in all cases except where:

(1) Significant modifications are made in the FEIS after its initial publication;

(2) Significant modifications are made in the development plan for the proposed action; or

(3) Significant new information becomes available in the interim between issuance of the FEIS and implementation of the proposed action.

If any of these situations develop, the Agency shall prepare a separate final notice that contains the contents of paragraph (e) of this section and shall make it available to those who received the FEIS. A minimum of 15 days

shall, without good cause shown, be allowed for comment on the final notice.

(c) For actions for which an environmental assessment was prepared, the Notice of No Significant Impact is adequate to constitute final public notice, if it includes the information required under paragraph (e) of this section.

(d) For all other actions, the finding shall be made in a document separate from those described in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section. Based on an assessment of the following factors, the requirement for final notice may be met in a cumulative manner:

(1) Scale of the action;

(2) Potential for controversy;

(3) Degree of public need;

(4) Number of affected agencies and individuals;

(5) Its anticipated potential impact; and

(6) Similarity of the actions, i.e., to the extent that they are susceptible of common descriptions and assessments.

When a damaged structure or facility is already being repaired by the State or local government at the time of the Damage Survey Report, the requirements of Steps 2 and 7 (§§9.8 and 9.12) may be met by a single notice. Such notice shall contain all the information required by both sections.

(e) The final notice shall include the following:

(1) A statement of why the proposed action must be located in an area affecting or affected by a floodplain or a wetland;

(2) A description of all significant facts considered in making this determination;

(3) A list of the alternatives considered;

(4) A statement indicating whether the action conforms to applicable state and local floodplain protection standards;

(5) A statement indicating how the action affects or is affected by the floodplain and/or wetland, and how mitigation is to be achieved;

(6) Identification of the responsible official or organization for implementation and monitoring of the proposed action, and from whom further information can be obtained; and

(7) A map of the area or a statement that such map is available for public