



Project Name:	<i>Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB), Alaska Discovery</i>
Meeting:	<i>Discovery Meeting – Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Alaska</i>
Date and Location:	<i>April 23, 2013 @ 9:00 am AST Central Mat-Su Public Safety Building, 101 W. Swanson Avenue, Wasilla, AK 99654 Field Tour in the afternoon</i>
Facilitator:	<i>Kristen Meyers, FEMA Region X</i>

DISCOVERY MEETING NOTES

Attendees

Kristen Meyers, FEMA Region X, Mitigation Planning Manager
 Josha Crowley, STARR, Region X Service Center Lead
 Emily Whitehead, STARR, Project Manager
 Sally Cox, State of Alaska, RiskMAP Coordinator
 Taunie Boothby, State of Alaska, NFIP Coordinator
 Casey Cook, Mat-Su Borough, Emergency Manager
 Michelle Olsen, Mat-Su Borough, Deputy Floodplain Administrator
 Mark Whisenhunt, Mat-Su Borough, Code Compliance Officer
 Rich Boothby, Mat-Su Borough, Fire Code Official
 Tina Crawford, City of Wasilla, City Planner
 Tahirih Revet, City of Wasilla, Planning Clerk
 Archie Giddings, City of Wasilla, Public Works Director
 Dina Sorensen, City of Palmer, Land Owner
 Kenny Barber, Butte City Council, Butte City Council Trails
 Patti Barber, Butte City Council, Butte City Council Board
 Carl Baker, Butte City Council, Butte City Council Board
 Mahana Petersen, Butte
 Sarah Geary, Alaska Municipal League, Legislative Liaison

Introductions

Kristen Meyers opened the meeting and all attendees introduced themselves. A pre-populated sign-in sheet was distributed for attendees to sign and check and correct contact information.

Overview of Risk MAP

Ms. Meyers provided a brief overview of Risk MAP, explaining how it differs from Map Modernization and previous FEMA initiatives. She discussed some of the Standard Risk MAP Products such as the Changes Since Last FIRM (CSLF), Contributing Flood Hazard Factors map, and Depth Grids, in addition to any standard regulatory products. A brief PowerPoint presentation was shown describing the Discovery process, the agenda for the meeting, and examples of non-regulatory products that could be included in the project if it were desired by the participants. Ms. Meyers discussed how Risk MAP can help communities become more resilient. Increasing community resilience through Risk MAP involves: Developing GIS data to capture community assets, Capturing or Developing Hazard Data, Estimating Losses, and Developing Problem Statements. Ms. Meyers mentioned that Risk MAP could utilize local community asset data during Risk MAP. She also mentioned that there are numerous hazard data sources available, such as:



Flood – Existing FEMA Studies; USACE Studies; New FEMA Studies.
Wildfire – Alaska DNR – Division of Forestry.
Landslide – Alaska DNR – DGGS
Earthquake/Tsunami – Alaska DNR – DGGS; USGS/NOAA

Ms. Meyers discussed how FEMA can estimate losses after a hazard by utilizing software such as GIS, and in particular, HAZUS. The hazard loss estimates are reviewed and analyzed to identify areas with highest vulnerabilities on a map. From these findings, a list of problem statements is developed, such as:

The manufactured home park is the most vulnerable area to flooding. This area floods each year.

Flooding is caused by excessive rains.

The sewage treatment plant is located in the 100-year floodplain.

The lighthouse, of significant historic value, is threatened by erosion from coastal flooding. The rate of erosion is 5 feet per year.

Ms. Meyers discussed that we hoped to gather a list of community mapping needs today. She explained that FEMA hopes to help communities by addressing these map needs via the DFIRM/FIS products. FEMA also helps communities by offering NFIP Training and Technical Support, Outreach Support, HAZUS Training and Technical Support, and hazard mitigation planning support.

Community Discussion

Ms. Meyers explained that we will soon break out into smaller groups to determine areas of concern regarding natural hazards. The groups should discuss activities to mitigate natural hazard risk. FEMA would like communities to: identify flood study priorities, training needs, potential risk assessments, communication and public outreach, additional data, resources, or funding that may be needed to implement solutions, and their relationship to the mitigation plan.

Closing

In closing Ms. Meyers reiterated that the intent of this meeting was to assist MSB in taking action to reduce risk to natural hazards and increase community resiliency.

Field Tour

MSB employees arranged a field tour of areas of flood concern, specifically those areas affected by the flood disaster in September 2012.

High winds are a disaster concern with MSB seeing wind speeds of 60-80 mph. Typically, the wind blows from Palmer to Wasilla.

Our first stop on the field tour was a small subdivision that floods but is not in a mapped flood zone on the effective DFIRM. This is a seasonal creek, wetland area. A nearby culvert was blocked and a beaver dam caused pooling water. Look for intersection of N. Marilyn Dr. & E. Lochcarron Dr.

Our second stop was near intersection of N. Sushana Dr. & Little Susitna River.

Our third stop was along Wasilla Creek. The creek here experiences shallow flooding and has had new development recently. The path of flooding from September 2012 was mapped and provided on printed our maps – with the flooding path mapped and provided to those on the field tour.

MSB recently conducted a culvert inventory which might be available as a GIS layer.



Erosion was mentioned as a hazard of concern in Butte. Currently there is a rip rap mitigation project on-going near Old Glenn Highway & E Lee Side Cr. The USACE flood study along the opposite side of Old Glenn Highway accurately depicts the flood delineation.

Avalanche was mentioned as a hazard of concern near the Knik River and bridge along Old Glenn Highway.

A couple of landslides occurred along Old Glenn Highway, in particular at the intersection with E. Twin Peaks Drive. This area is currently undeveloped, but the road could become impassable. This hazard is a lower priority of concern because there are detour options and EMS comes from the opposite direction.

Topographic Data

MSB noted that LiDAR data is available in some areas, as shown on the Discovery Meeting Map, and asked if the communities knew of any other LiDAR data collection in the area. No additional LiDAR data sources were mentioned at the time of the meeting.

Next Steps

The information gathered at this meeting and any follow up will be combined into a Discovery Report in the coming months. This will detail the area concerns and present any available multi-hazard risk data. Future conversations between MSB and FEMA will determine the specific next steps in this process and determine a scope of work to begin to address the concerns identified today. Before any work begins, a Partnership Agreement will be crafted between the MSB and FEMA. This agreement will detail the scope, schedule, methodology, and expectations between the two parties.

End.