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Regulatory Branch

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
 FEMA Region IX
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FEMA

May 4, 2009

Aaron O. Allen, Project Manager
 U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
 Los Angeles District Regulatory Branch
 Ventura Field Office
 Attn: CESPL-CO-2003-01264-AOA
 2151 Alessandro Drive, Suite 110
 Ventura, California 93001

Dear Mr. Allen:

This is in response to your request for comments on the Public Notice/Application for Permit, Notice of Availability for Draft EIS/EIR and Notice of a Public Hearing for the Newhall Ranch Draft EIS/EIR.

Please review the current effective countywide Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the City of Santa Clarita (Community Number 060729) and Los Angeles County (Community Number 065043), Maps revised September 26, 2008. Please note that the City of Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County, California is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The minimum, basic NFIP floodplain management building requirements are described in Vol. 44 Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR), Sections 59 through 65.

A summary of these NFIP floodplain management building requirements are as follows:

- All buildings constructed within a riverine floodplain, (i.e., Flood Zones A, AO, AH, AE, and A1 through A30 as delineated on the FIRM), must be elevated so that the lowest floor is at or above the Base Flood Elevation level in accordance with the effective Flood Insurance Rate Map.
- If the area of construction is located within a Regulatory Floodway as delineated on the FIRM, any *development* must not increase base flood elevation levels. **The term *development* means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings, other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or drilling operations, and storage of equipment or materials.** A hydrologic and hydraulic analysis must be performed *prior* to the start of development, and must demonstrate that the development would not cause any rise in base flood levels. No rise is permitted within regulatory floodways.

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- All buildings constructed within a coastal high hazard area, (any of the "V" Flood Zones as delineated on the FIRM), must be elevated on pilings and columns, so that the lowest horizontal structural member, (excluding the pilings and columns), is elevated to or above the base flood elevation level. In addition, the posts and pilings foundation and the structure attached thereto, is anchored to resist flotation, collapse and lateral movement due to the effects of wind and water loads acting simultaneously on all building components.
- Upon completion of any development that changes existing Special Flood Hazard Areas, the NFIP directs all participating communities to submit the appropriate hydrologic and hydraulic data to FEMA for a FIRM revision. In accordance with 44 CFR, Section 65.3, as soon as practicable, but not later than six months after such data becomes available, a community shall notify FEMA of the changes by submitting technical data for a flood map revision. To obtain copies of FEMA's Flood Map Revision Application Packages, please refer to the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip/forms.shtm>.

Please Note:

Many NFIP participating communities have adopted floodplain management building requirements which are more restrictive than the minimum federal standards described in 44 CFR. Please contact the local community's floodplain manager for more information on local floodplain management building requirements. The Santa Clarita floodplain manager can be reached by calling Christina Monde, Floodplain Coordinator, at (661) 255-4959.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call Cynthia McKenzie of the Mitigation staff at (510) 627-7190.

Sincerely,



Gregor Blackburn, CFM, Branch Chief
Floodplain Management and Insurance Branch

cc:

Christina Monde, Floodplain Coordinator, Development Services Division, City of Santa Clarita
George De La O, Floodplain Administrator, Los Angeles County, Department of Public Works
Garret Tam Sing/Salomon Miranda, State of California, Department of Water Resources,
Southern District

Cynthia McKenzie, Senior Floodplanner, CFM, DHS/FEMA Region IX
Alessandro Amaglio, Environmental Officer, DHS/FEMA Region IX

001. Letter from Gregor Blackburn, FEMA, dated May 4, 2009

Response 1

This comment responds to information provided by the Public Notice/Application for Permit, Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS/EIR, and Notice of a Public Hearing for the Newhall Ranch Draft EIS/EIR. The comment does not address the adequacy of the analysis provided by the Draft EIS/EIR and provides general information related to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The proposed Project will be constructed to conform with all applicable requirements of the NFIP. Since the comment does not raise any specific issues regarding the analysis provided by the Draft EIS/EIR, no additional response is provided. However, the comment will be included as part of the record and made available to the decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed Project.