

AUG 27 2012

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

SOUTHERN REGION OFFICE
770 FAIRMONT AVENUE, SUITE 102
GLENDALE, CA 91203-1035



NC DHR
Dave B

AUG 23 2012

Honorable Steve Pougnet
Mayor of the City of Palm Springs
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, California 92262

Dear Mayor Pougnet:

Thank you for the cooperation and courtesy extended to Mr. Salomon Miranda of my staff during the Community Assistance Visit (CAV) in your community on Wednesday, March 28, 2012. I hope the meeting was useful and informative for your community's floodplain management staff.

The purpose of the CAV is to provide information about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and to provide assistance to participating communities. On behalf of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), I commend your staff for their conscientious efforts in implementing the NFIP. Continued enforcement of NFIP regulations will ensure your community's good standing with FEMA and guarantee availability of flood insurance coverage for residents in flood hazard areas. A copy of the Department's CAV Report with the City of Palm Springs is enclosed for your records.

After our review of your community's floodplain management program, we have concluded that it is in full compliance with the minimum NFIP requirements as specified in *Title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 59, 60.3 through 60.6, and 65.3.*

This concludes the Department's role in this CAV cycle with the City of Palm Springs. If you have any questions concerning the content of this letter, the CAV Report, or any aspect of the NFIP, please contact Mr. Salomon Miranda of my staff at (818) 500-1645, extension 245 or at salomon@water.ca.gov; I can be reached at extension 222 or at marks@water.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Stuart".

Mark Stuart, Chief
Southern Region

ITEM NO. 2.0.

Honorable Steve Pougnet

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Enclosure

cc + enclosures: Mr. Felipe Primera, Assistant Engineer
City of Palm Springs
Public Works and Engineering Department
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, California 92262

Mr. David Barakian, City Engineer
Public Works and Engineering Department
City of Palm Springs
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, California 92262

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY			
COMMUNITY VISIT REPORT			
SECTION I			
1. NAME OF COMMUNITY Palm Springs	2. STATE California	3. COMMUNITY ID NUMBER 060257	4. COUNTY Riverside
5. VISIT CONDUCTED BY Salomon Miranda	6. AGENCY California Department of Water Resources		7. DATE OF VISIT March 28, 2012
SECTION II			
8. NAME OF LOCAL OFFICIAL David J. Barakian, City Engineer			9. TELEPHONE NUMBER (760)323-8253 x 8732
10. ADDRESS OF LOCAL OFFICIAL 3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, California 92262			
SECTION III - FINDINGS			
PART A			
QUESTIONS - Select appropriate response	RESPONSE		
	Serious	Minor	None
1. Are there problems with the community's floodplain management regulations?			X
2. Are there problems with the community's administrative/enforcement procedures?			X
3. Are there any 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 problems with the Biennial Report data?	___ YES	___ X ___ NO	
6. Are there any programmatic issues or problems identified?	___ YES	___ X ___ NO	
7. Are there any potential violations of the community's floodplain management regulations?			
___ A potential violation or violations has/have been identified.			
___ X No violations have been identified.			
___ Actions are being taken on the part of the community to remedy the violation(s) identified during the CAV.			

**NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM
COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE VISIT**

*Palm Springs, California
March 28, 2012*

SECTION III – FINDINGS (Continued)

PART B – NARRATIVE

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is based on an agreement between the federal government and participating communities that have been identified as flood prone. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through the Federal Insurance 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 19,000 of the nation's 22,000 cities, towns, counties, and boroughs are members of the NFIP.

On behalf of FEMA, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) periodically schedules and conducts Community Assistance Visits (CAV) with participating communities to evaluate the effectiveness of local floodplain management practices and to offer assistance where necessary.

This report describes the findings of the March 28, 2012, CAV with the City of Palm Springs.

BACKGROUND

The City of Palm Springs is located in Riverside County in the northwestern part of the Coachella Valley, approximately 110 miles east of Los Angeles and 20 miles northwest of the City of Indio. The City is bounded by Cathedral City, unincorporated areas of Riverside County, and the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation. Incorporated in 1938, Palm Springs covers approximately 95 square miles and has about 44,000 residents.

Palm Springs has a desert climate characterized by low precipitation, low humidity, high summer temperatures, mild and sunny winters, and strong winds at certain times of the year. The average annual rainfall is less than 4 inches and the City's average temperature ranges from 55 degrees Fahrenheit in January to 92 degrees Fahrenheit in July.

The two major sources of flooding in the City are the Whitewater River and Tahquitz Creek. Flash flooding can also occur from the passage of strong thunderstorms in late summer. Levees, debris basins, and other flood control facilities have been constructed to prevent flooding in the City; these facilities are maintained by the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

The City of Palm Springs joined the NFIP on March 2, 1983. According to its Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), effective August 28, 2008, the City has A, AO, and AE (with floodways) flood designation zones. There are 318 flood insurance policies in force in the community that carry a total value of \$65.1 million in coverage and that have an annual premium of \$195,276. Since joining the NFIP, \$385,127 have been paid towards 121 reported losses in the community.

For its excellent work in floodplain management, the City of Palm Springs has a Community Rating System's Class 6 designation and receives 20 percent discount on its flood insurance premiums.

The last CAV prior to the 2012 CAV was conducted by DWR on September 4, 2007. The 2007 CAV revealed that the City needed to update its floodplain management ordinance in order to meet minimum NFIP requirements pursuant to the *Title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 59, 60.3 through 60.6, and 65.3*. On October 27, 2007, City staff drafted a new ordinance which was adopted on March 12, 2008.

From the 2012 CAV, we have concluded that your community is in full compliance with the NFIP regulations.

SUPPORT COMMENTS FOR SECTION III – PART A

1. Community's Floodplain Management Regulations

The Floodplain Management Ordinance is found in Chapter 8.68 of Palm Springs' Zoning Code. After the recent CAV meeting, DWR staff reviewed the ordinance and determined that it meets the minimum NFIP requirements

2. Community's Administration/Enforcement Procedures

The City Engineer is designated as the Floodplain Administrator pursuant to Palm Springs' Zoning Code Section 8.68.130.

The Engineering Department staff reviews building sites to see whether the proposed structures are located in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) and reviews building plans to ensure compliance with the City's floodplain regulations.

According to the City's Zoning Code Section 8.68.170(c), the as-built lowest floor elevation in the SFHA is required to be at two feet above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) for all new residential and non-residential structures and for all substantial improvements. Non-residential structures can also be flood-proofed as long as a certification by a registered professional engineer or architect is obtained to demonstrate that the structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to water. For AO Zones, the lowest floor elevation is required to be at two feet above the depth of flow and four feet above the highest adjacent grade if no depth is specified. All building permits issued in the SFHA are kept in the Engineering Department, including all FEMA's Elevation Certificates.

3. Engineering or Other Problems with the Maps or Flood Insurance Study

During our CAV meeting, City staff reported that FIRM Number 06111C1597G needs to be updated because the base flood elevations, resulting from the backwater effect of the confluence of Tahquitz Creek and Palm Canyon Wash, are incorrect. City staff has been working with FEMA to resolve this issue through the Letter of Map Change process.

4. Other Problems in the Community's Floodplain Management Program

None

5. Problems with the Biennial Report Data

None

6. Programmatic Issues or Problems Identified

None

7. Potential Violations Identified or Suspected of the Community's Floodplain Management Regulations

None

OTHER COMMENTS AND INFORMATION

a) Flood Mitigation Projects, Issues, or Concerns

None

b) Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management

None

c) Community Action Needed

None

d) DWR Follow-up Needed

None

e) Field Inspection

DWR staff conducted the field inspection prior to the CAV meeting and found no construction violations in the SFHA.

f) CAV Meeting Attendee List

- Felipe Primera, Engineering Assistant, City of Palm Springs
- Marcus Fuller, Public Works Assistant Director, City of Palm Springs
- Salomon Miranda, Engineer, W.R., Department of Water Resources

SECTION IV

COMPLETED BY THE FEMA REGIONAL OFFICE

Date CAV Closed _____ Initials _____

Salomon Miranda, California Department of Water Resources, Southern Region