

**CITY OF GAUTIER
MEMORANDUM**

To: Samantha Abell, City Manager
From: Patty Huffman, Grants and Projects Manager
Through: Chandra Nicholson, Director of Economic Development and Planning
Date: September 29, 2014
Subject: Submission of Notice of Intent to Participate in FEMA Region IV's
2015 High Water Mark Initiative for Mississippi Coastal Communities

REQUEST:

The Economic Development and Planning Department requests City Council authorization to submit a Letter of Intent to FEMA Region IV to participate in a Mississippi Coastal Community 2015 High Water Mark (HWM) Initiative along with the other communities located along the coast.

BACKGROUND:

The objective of the FEMA High Water Mark Program is to increase awareness of the risk of flooding in communities and to encourage local action to reduce the risk. The High Water Mark Project helps communities meet this objective by strategically helping plan mitigation actions using a High Water Mark Launch Event to raise awareness and communicate about those future actions. FEMA and other federal partners provide funding for signage and technical support for the initiative. The survey and installation of signage is provided by local communities as a cost share. The City of Gautier proposes to install up to three signs. Detailed proposals are due by December 1, 2014.

DISCUSSION:

The National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS) provides a flood insurance premium discount for policy holders in communities that participate in CRS. CRS points can be earned through high water mark posting and ongoing outreach. The greater the supporting outreach, the greater the possible CRS points that can be earned. The Mississippi's Coastal Hazard Outreach Strategy Team (C-Host) has volunteered to lead the High Water Mark Initiative for participating communities. A proposed date for a coast-wide HWM Launch Event is the 10-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, August 29, 2015. (See the proposed Action Steps for details.)

RECOMMENDATION:

The Economic Development and Planning Department staff recommends that City Council authorize submission of a Letter of Intent and Full Proposal to FEMA to participate in the High Water Mark Project along with other coastal communities. City Council may:

1. authorize submission of a Letter of Intent/Full Proposal to participate in the High Water Mark Initiative as outlined above; or
2. disapprove submission of a Letter of Intent/Full Proposal to participate in the High Water Mark Initiative.

ATTACHMENT(S):

Letter of Intent
CRS Credit for a High Water Mark Initiative
Mississippi Coastal Community 2015 High Water Mark Action Steps



2015 FEMA Region IV High Water Mark Initiative

Letter of Intent

The purpose of this letter is to inform FEMA Region IV of the intent of the City of Gautier to participate in the 2015 High Water Mark Initiative.

The City of Gautier understands that the High Water Mark Initiative is designed to raise awareness of flood risk, beginning with a community launch event for members of community and the media. By placing High Water Mark signs in prominent locations throughout the community, and reinforcing awareness through a launch event and ongoing outreach activities, our community will underscore its commitment to the well-being of its citizens and local businesses, galvanize the community around reducing the impact of floods, seek to earn additional Community Rating System (CRS) points to reduce the cost of flood insurance and put Federal and State mitigation assistance funds to work.

The City of Gautier projects to have (3) three High Water Mark signs placed around our community.

The community will submit a more detailed proposal by December 1, 2014.

Sincerely,

Chandra Nicholson
Director of Economic Development & Planning
City of Gautier

The “Know Your Line: Be Flood Aware” High Water Mark initiative, created by FEMA and seven other federal agencies, helps communities remind residents of major local floods and encourage residents to prepare for the next one. Participating communities post high water mark signs in prominent places, hold a high profile launch event to unveil the signs and conduct ongoing education to build local awareness of flood risk and motivate people to take action.

CRS CREDIT FOR A HIGH WATER MARK INITIATIVE

WHAT IS CRS?

The National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS) provides a flood insurance premium discount for policy holders in communities that participate in CRS. The discount is based on an assessment of floodplain management activities implemented by the community to reduce flood losses, promote flood risk awareness and flood insurance, and protect natural floodplain functions.

CRS OUTREACH PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

Communities that participate in CRS earn credits toward flood insurance premium discounts through a variety of activities including public information programs and projects. One of these is Activity 330 (Outreach Projects), which provides credit points based on the type of project, the audience reached, and the message(s) conveyed. Other public information activities credit providing floodplain map information, disclosing a property's flood status to a potential buyer, putting references in a library, posting information on a website, and providing one-on-one technical advice.

A CRS Program for Public Information (PPI) is an ongoing public information effort designed to transmit the messages that the community determines are most important to its flood safety and the protection of its floodplains' natural functions. It is developed following a seven step process designed to assess the community's public information needs, determine messages and outcomes appropriate for different audiences, and implement the most effective measures. Working with partners is a key factor throughout the process, resulting in greater credit for more involvement of other organizations and agencies.

HIGH WATER MARK AND CRS POINTS

One activity that communities are implementing more often is providing information on past floods, such as posting high water marks in public places and maps and photographs of past floods on their websites. These high water mark initiatives and a CRS-credited PPI have a lot in common.

CRS HIGH WATER MARK HIGHLIGHTS



CRS HIGH WATER MARK HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ CRS points can be earned through high water mark posting and ongoing outreach
- ▶ The greater the supporting outreach, the greater the possible CRS points that can be earned
- ▶ CRS points are explained in the CRS Coordinator's Manual

To learn more about CRS, visit:

www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program/national-flood-insurance-program-community-rating-system

High Water Mark Initiative

The "Know Your Line: Be Flood Aware" High Water Mark Initiative was created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and partner Federal agencies, as a community-based awareness initiative to remind residents of major local floods and encourage residents to prepare for the next one. Participating communities post High Water Mark signs in prominent places, hold a high profile launch event to unveil the signs, and conduct ongoing activities to increase awareness of flood risk that motivates people to take action.



FEMA

To maximize CRS credit for such an initiative, communities are encouraged to use high water marks as a way to generate greater flood risk awareness. For example, a ceremony to unveil flood level signs could be used to announce the formation of a PPI committee or the release of the PPI report.

FEMA and seven other Federal agencies have recently been promoting such efforts in its “Know Your Line: Be Flood Aware” initiative. This initiative encourages communities to post signs showing historical high water levels and educating residents about the risk of flooding.

ONGOING OUTREACH AND CRS POINTS

It is important to note that both the High Water Mark initiative and the CRS call for more than just putting lines on a building or a sign. High water marks can be a catalyst for a master cooperative and coordinated public information program. Such an approach can receive through a PPI, also credited under Activity 330 in the 2013 *CRS Coordinator’s Manual*. Reviewing the criteria for both the High Water Mark Initiative and PPI is recommended, so communities can benefit from both programs via the same local activity. Credits are based on three factors:

- ▶ What and how many messages are conveyed;
- ▶ What type of projects they are (e.g., informational materials that people pick up, activities that reach out to people, or projects targeted to a specific audience); and
- ▶ How often they are delivered. Outreach Projects in CRS must be delivered at least once each year.

The 2013 *CRS Manual* provides more detailed information about the priority topics areas to be communicated for CRS credits, with sample messages for each.

PROMOTING ACTION

Community outreach is one of many things communities can do to promote awareness, but more than awareness, communities need to promote action. Through examining ways communities can bolster mitigation actions and plans in their communities, the more CRS points can be earned. In fact, there are activities communities can do concerning everything from floodplain mapping, flood damage reduction planning or enacting new flood warning and response actions that can make communities more resilient...and safer!

LEARN MORE

For more information on CRS credit for public information activities, contact your ISO/CRS Specialist. They are listed at <http://crsresources.org/100-2>. More information on “Know Your Line: Be Flood Aware” can be found at www.fema.gov/knowyourline.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE HIGH WATER MARK CAMPAIGN:

Vince Brown

vincent.brown@fema.dhs.gov

Website:

www.fema.gov/knowyourline

2015 High Water Mark – 10 Year Katrina Anniversary Mississippi Coastal Community Event

Course of Actions:

1. Letter of Intent shall be completed by, and post marked by October 15, 2014.
2. Project Proposals for High Water Initiative. Package shall be completed and Post Marked by December 1, 2014. Ms. Lynne Keating (FEMA Region IV) will be providing a template or example.
 - a. Determine the date, time and locations of the HWM Launch Event. (Proposed Date August 29, 2015) This is a Saturday. Time to be Determined – (Could be land fall time of 10 am). Multiple locations on the coast, pending each jurisdiction marker location. This item to be coordinated by each jurisdiction.
 - b. Determine sign messaging, number of location per community, type and cost of signs.
 1. Messaging should be similar for each community. But, community specific as well. Wording drafts to be discussed and C-Host Meetings.
 2. Coordinate with community leaders as to number of location/signs in each jurisdiction.
 3. I have contacted the Soutwell Co. in Texas for an estimate on durable cast aluminum plaques. Approximate sizes 24 x18 and 30 x 18 both wall and post mounted.
 4. Establish estimated construction and installation cost of project minus sign cost.
 5. Work with C-HOST to create a coast wide theme and messaging of HWM Event.
3. Community Leaders approval. (County Board of Supervisors, City Alderman or Councils and Mayors).
4. Order Signs, and apply for reimbursement from FEMA Region IV. This item is relative to float time and sequence in chain of events here in.
5. Coordinate with local Media and announce HWM event. Ensure coverage by local new media. Invite the public to attend.
 - a. WXXV
 - b. WLOX
 - c. Radio
 - d. Other multi-media...such as news paper



C-HOST

Mississippi's Coastal Hazard Outreach Strategy Team

2015 High Water Mark – 10 Year Katrina Anniversary Mississippi Coastal Community Event

Sign Language

Community Name
High Water Marker

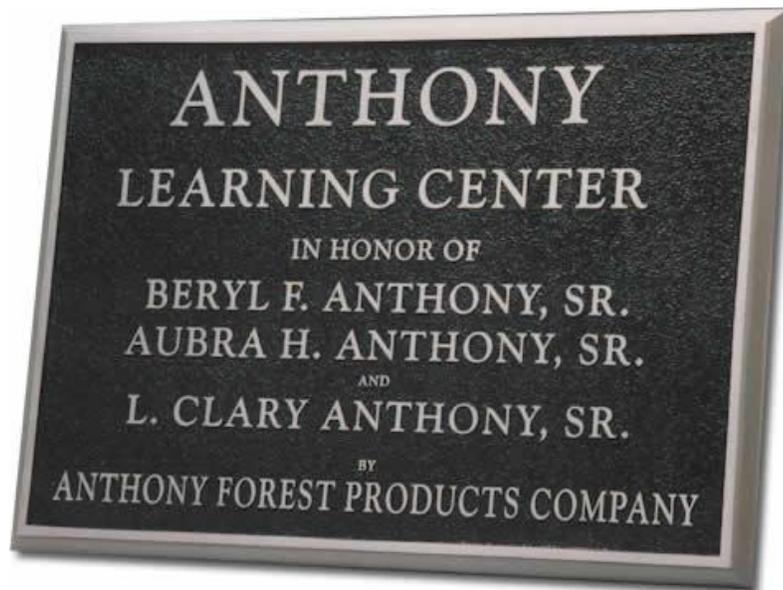
This plaque is dedicated to bring awareness of the surge and high water levels of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Camille. Both Storms brought about great devastation and loss of life to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Hurricane Katrina made landfall on the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005 at 10:00 am. The storm surge level at this location was 28 feet. There was approximately 125 billion dollars of damage to the coast, leaving 236 people dead and 67 missing. Hurricane Camille made landfall on August 17, 1969 at about 11:30 pm. The storm surge level at this location was 24 feet, with some reported tidal waves reaching 35 feet. There was approximately 1.5 billion dollars of damage to the coast leaving 131 know deaths and 41 missing.

HWM Participating Coastal Communities: Bay of St. Louis, Biloxi, D'Iberville, Gautier, Gulfport, Long Beach, Ocean Springs, Pascagoula, Pass Christian, and Waveland - Harrison County and Jackson County



FEMA

Example of plaque:



18x24 or 18x30



C-HOST

Mississippi's Coastal Hazard Outreach Strategy Team