

STATE OF COLORADO

Colorado Water Conservation Board Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Jamie Prochno
Watershed and Flood Protection Section

DATE: November 6, 2013

SUBJECT: **November 19-20 Board Meeting**
Agenda Item 7 - Floodplain Rules and Regulations Update

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Mike King
DNR Executive Director

James Eklund
CWCB Director

Staff Recommendation

This is an informational item and staff is not requesting board action.

Introduction and Discussion

The State of Colorado, through CWCB action in November 2010, adopted increased standards for floodplain management, which are contained in the Rules and Regulations for Regulatory Floodplains in Colorado (Rules), effective January 14, 2011. Communities were provided with a three-year transition period to adopt local regulations consistent with the Rules. Through sound floodplain management practices, these standards support enhanced public health, safety and welfare and will help communities reduce future flood risk to people and property. Now, more than ever, Coloradoans are aware of the devastating impacts that major floods can have. Many civic leaders and decision makers have repeatedly said that Colorado can find ways to build stronger, smarter, and safer. The CWCB effective floodplain standards can help to do just that.

CWCB staff has been providing assistance and conducting public outreach as part of our Community Assistance Program. A letter was sent to every Floodplain Administrator in September 2012 and another to all Chief Elected Officials (local governments) in January 2013 explaining benefits, requirements, and consequences for non-compliance related to this topic. Staff is also aware of a previous letter sent by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region VIII to communities in support of the Rules. Staff has been working very collaboratively with communities to assist them with technical questions, model ordinance templates, and transition support. Despite the ongoing flood rebuilding and repair, many communities continue to make adopting the Rules into local floodplain regulations a priority. Several communities have actively reached out to CWCB after the floods requesting assistance for ordinance adoption or indicating that adoption of the higher standards in their community is imminent. Staff and local leaders overwhelmingly recognize the importance and benefits of the program for long-term resiliency and reduction of future flood losses.

Staff will provide the board with an update regarding implementation status, including the number of communities that have successfully adopted, or are in the process of adopting, Colorado's higher floodplain standards.