

Press Release

Contact: Mayor Joe R. Whalen
Phone: (406) 234-7901

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
9 A.M. MST, January 19, 2010

**GUEST EDITORIAL: CITY ANTICIPATES LETTER OF FINAL
DETERMINATION FROM FEMA ON FRIDAY**

MILES CITY, MT., JANUARY 19, 2010: After exhausting all procedural options in pursuit of the development of a controlling document that accurately defines our floodplain using the best available data, I'm writing to report that your city fully expects to receive a Letter of Final Determination from FEMA for Custer County this coming Friday, January 22nd that re-defines our floodplain. The delivery of this letter triggers a six-month window, within which both Miles City and Custer County will be required to either adopt new flood plain ordinances or face expulsion from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Over the next few days, we'll provide more detailed information about what the new map means for Miles City and what will be

done in the future to manage the threat of flooding. Meanwhile, it's important to recognize three key points:

First, if you find that your property is located within the new 1% annual-chance floodplain, there are steps you can take now that will reduce the cost of your flood insurance in the future. Call your insurance agent to determine if you need flood insurance. If so, learn the steps you can take now to lock-in a lower rate. That lower rate can potentially be passed onto future buyers and be useful when the time comes to sell your home. But to take advantage of these benefits, you'll need to act soon. If your insurance agent is not familiar with the National Flood Insurance Program, please have them contact FEMA's NFIP coordinator at 303-235-4912 or visit the NFIP website at www.fema.gov/business/nfip/.

Second, let me thank every individual who participated in the process of reviewing and appealing the preliminary flood map. You can all be proud of your efforts in support of becoming more informed about floodplain administration, educating your neighbors, and leading other Montana communities by engaging state and federal regulatory agencies with civil and persuasive argument. As a result, some key areas within the original flood map have been removed, lessening the total economic burden upon Miles City. Thank you for your invaluable assistance in this work. More work lies ahead but for now please take a moment to

accept congratulations for all you have done in service to your community.

Finally, you should know that Miles City took advantage of every opportunity and made every effort to identify and communicate the community's concerns with the proposed flood map to FEMA. As a result of that effort, FEMA revised the proposed flood map by removing much of our historic downtown area from the 100-year floodplain, revising the outer boundaries of the 100-year floodplain in some areas, and making other important changes. There may still be certain aspects of the flood map that we feel overstate the flood risk for Miles City, but our emphasis now must shift from challenge to regulatory compliance and then to project management.

-End-