**Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain or Wetland**

**Escambia County, AL**

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) is proposing to undertake activities relating to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. ADECA’s Home Recovery Alabama Program (HRAP), may include project sites located in the 100-Year Floodplain or Wetland. Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the Floodplain and Wetland and the potential impacts on thefloodplains or wetlands from the proposed action, as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands.

The State of Alabama was awarded HUD CDBG-DR grant to support its recovery from Hurricanes Sally and Zeta. ADECA is proposing to use the CDBG-DR funds to create HRAP. HRAP is hoping to assist at least 1,000 single-family (between 1 and 4 units), low-to-moderate income homeowners and renters, across nine (9) counties in the region, to achieve safe and code-compliant housing that meets or exceeds code standards. Program activities will include repair/rehabilitation, elevation, reconstruction, and relocation. The best available data suggests numerous homes in Escambia County sustained major or severe damage due to Hurricanes Sally and Zeta and may seek funding through HRAP to repair or rebuild. Though the confirmation of site locations is currently in progress, eligible project sites may fall within a 100-year floodplain or wetland. Approximately 81,298 acres in Escambia County are within the 100-year floodplain (Zones A and AE, AH, and AO). The floodplains in the area can be found at the FEMA Flood Map Service Center at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>. Approximately 113,827 acres in Escambia County fall within a wetland, primarily Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands. Wetlands in the area can be found at the US Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory mapper at https://fwsprimary.wim.usgs.gov/wetlands/apps/wetlands-mapper/

There are three primary purposes for this notice.  First, people who may be affected by activities in the floodplains or wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas.  Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the floodplains or wetlands, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate impacts. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about the floodplains or wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in the floodplains or wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

All interested persons, groups, and agencies are invited to submit written comments regarding the proposed use of federal funds to support the proposed activity in a 100-year floodplain and wetlands. Acting as the Responsible Entity for the proposed activity, ADECA will accept written comments during the hours of 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM delivered to: Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, P.O. Box 5690, Montgomery, AL 26103-5690, Attention: Chris Perkins, CED Engineer/Environmental Officer.

Alternatively, comments may be emailed to: Christopher.Perkins@adeca.alabama.gov with “Attention: Disaster Recovery Comments” in the subject line. The minimum 15 calendar day comment period will begin the day after publication and end on the 16th day after publication. All comments must be received on or before January 23, 2023 to receive consideration. Further information can be found at the program website: https://adeca.alabama.gov/cdbg-disaster-recovery/hurricanes-sally-and-zeta/

Para una versión española de este aviso de audiencia, visite www.adeca.alabama.gov. Para traducciones al español de los documentos mencionados en este aviso, escriba al Departamento de Alabama de Asuntos económicos y de la Comunidad, PO Box 5690, Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5690, o por correo electrónico kathleen.rasmussen@adeca.alabama.gov, o trent.williams@adeca.alabama.gov.

**Date: January 4, 2023**