

## **Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard Designated Floodplain and/or Wetland**

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that South Carolina Office of Resilience (SCOR) under 24 CFR Part 58 has determined that the following proposed actions under the Hurricane Helene Housing Program may include properties located in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain /wetland, and SCOR will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action within the floodplain/wetland and the potential impacts on the floodplain/wetland from the proposed action, as required by Executive Orders 11988 and 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands. The proposed projects will be located in Aiken, Cherokee, Edgefield, Saluda and Union counties. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using the 0.2 percent flood approach.

SCOR is conducting a Tier I Broad Level environmental review for the Hurricane Helene Housing Program. Project activities will include rehabilitation, reconstruction, replacement, elevation, demolition, and buyout of single-family homes and/or mobile home units (MHUs). The proposed projects will be located in multiple locations throughout each county, with the exact location of site-specific projects determined at a later date. Site-specific project activities will be conducted on previously developed residential properties. Homes located in the FFRMS floodplain, that receive assistance for reconstruction, repair of substantial damage, or substantial improvement, will be elevated in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations or requirements, including 24 CFR Part 55. All homes assisted through the program within the 100-year floodplain will require the maintenance of flood insurance in perpetuity. When replacement of a mobile home unit (MHU) is not feasible at the same location as the original structure, the MHU will be replaced at an alternative location. The alternate location must be a previously developed residential property/parcel, zoned to allow for installation of an MHU and have ready access to sewer, water, and electric connections. Additionally, the alternate site cannot be located in the FFRMS Floodplain or a mapped wetland.

According to the FEMA Flood Map Service Center, Aiken County contains approximately 55,564 acres within the 100-year floodplain and 4,132 acres within the 500-year floodplain. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) identifies approximately 59,471 acres of designated wetlands in the county. Cherokee County has an estimated 19,243 acres within the 100-year floodplain and 74 acres within the 500-year floodplain. It also includes approximately 3,413 acres of designated wetlands. Edgefield County contains about 12,557 acres within the 100-year floodplain and 174 acres within the 500-year floodplain. The county has approximately 5,943 acres of designated wetlands. Saluda County has an estimated 21,832 acres within the 100-year floodplain and 9 acres within the 500-year floodplain. The NWI identifies approximately 4,930 acres of designated wetlands in the county. Union County contains approximately 25,418 acres within the 100-year floodplain and 18 acres within the 500-year floodplain. It also has about 10,490 acres of designated wetlands. None of the counties include areas classified as Coastal High Hazard Areas (V Zones) or Limits of Moderate Wave Action (LIMWA). Floodplains and wetlands are beneficial for wildlife, creating a variety of habitats for fish and other animals. In addition, floodplains are important to the storage and conveyance of storm water, water quality protection, and recharge of groundwater.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplain/wetland, 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 floodplain/wetland, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate project impacts on the floodplain/wetland. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for comment about floodplains/wetlands can facilitate and enhance federal efforts to reduce the risks 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 floodplain/wetland, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by the SCOR, at the following address on or before July 24, 2025: South Carolina Office of Resilience, 632 Rosewood Drive, Columbia, South Carolina 29201 and 839-250-0171; Attention: Keely Lewis-Schroer, Environmental Manager (RE: Hurricane Helene Housing Program-Aiken, Cherokee, Edgefield, Saluda and Union Counties). A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM at the address above. Comments may also be submitted via email to [keely.lewis-schroer@scor.sc.gov](mailto:keely.lewis-schroer@scor.sc.gov).

Date: July 8, 2025