



COCHISE COUNTY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

"Public Programs...Personal Service"

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 16, 2013

To: Flood Control District Board

From: Karen C. Riggs, County Engineer

Subject: Smullins Floodplain Variance Request, Parcel 119-03-005M

Recommendation: Floodplain staff recommends granting the requested variance from elevation requirements for the proposed improvements. We do caution however, that it is never prudent to 'build at grade'. We would recommend that the finished floor be at least six (6) inches above existing grade, whether in a floodplain or not.

Background (Brief): The subject parcel lies within a current Zone A floodplain. Cochise County has been working to get the Richland Ranchettes area (between Sunsites and Cochise) accurately mapped for almost 20 years. The flood study that Cochise County produced (via consultant JE Fuller) has been approved by FEMA. We are now in the process of getting the maps updated, which FEMA has committed to do. It still is a long process, however. The Smullins have a contract to purchase the property and plans to remodel and add on to the existing home. They do not feel that they are able to comply with the Floodplain requirement to elevate the proposed improvements. The subject parcel will be mostly removed from mapped floodplain with the map revision and the entire area around the existing house will be removed. Based on the fact that this property (and many, many others in the Richland area) has been incorrectly included in Flood Zone A and is in the process of being correctly mapped, Floodplain staff recommends granting the requested variance from elevation requirements for the proposed improvements. We do caution however, that it is never prudent to 'build at grade'. We would recommend that the finished floor be at least six (6) inches above existing grade, whether in a floodplain or not.

Fiscal Impact & Funding Sources: No fiscal impact

Next Steps/Action Items/Follow-up: The variance will be recorded.

Impact of Not Approving: The Smullins will not be able to build what they need and will most likely not purchase the property.