



## **Alluvial Floodplain Task Force (AFTF) CHARTER December 7, 2007**

This Charter describes the work of the AFTF including its history, purpose, roles of the parties, groundrules and the decision-making process. Changes to the charter may be adopted with the concurrence of the members and sponsors, using the Charter decision-making process.

### **Background**

An alluvial fan is a fan-shaped deposit formed at the base of semi-arid mountain ranges where fast flowing water flattens, slows, and spreads - typically at the exit of a canyon or mountain pass onto a flatter plain. Alluvial fans present special challenges for floodplain management. Principal hazards associated with alluvial fan flooding are high-velocity, debris-laden flows resulting from a series of storms, particularly following wildfires in semi-arid regions. Alluvial fan floodplains are found throughout California; however, they are most prevalent in the Counties of San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Kern, Imperial, Orange, and San Diego.

The hillsides that regularly burn as a result of periodic Southern California wildfires create ideal conditions for post-fire debris flows on alluvial fans and downstream alluvial floodplains. On numerous occasions throughout California's history, foothill communities have suffered from property damage as tons of sediment and rock pour down the mountain channels, filling downstream creeks, debris basins, and flood control channels beyond their capacity flowing onto the alluvial floodplains. Post-fire flooding conditions remain elevated for up five years after a wildfire and the cycle repeats with the next wildfire. Alluvial fans are part of a larger system with flood risks that extend beyond the boundary of the fans.

Growth forecasts predict that communities located where alluvial fans are present will accommodate up to 60-percent of the new development occurring in Southern California in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. National attention on the cost of protecting lives and property from repetitive disasters have prompted the State of California and the federal government to look at measures that will reduce future flood damage and promote more "sustainable" local land-use decisions on floodplains.

### **California Floodplain Management Task Force Recognizes Need for AFTF**

In 2000, Governor Gray Davis signed AB 1147, which recommended the creation of the California Floodplain Management Task Force. In February 2002, the Governor established the task force with broad membership from local, state and federal government and stakeholders with interest in flood management. The Final Task Force Report recommended strategies to reduce flood losses and maximize the benefit of floodplains. A copy of this report is included in the binder provided to each AFTF member.

Given the extent of growth projections on alluvial fans, the Floodplain Management Task Force specifically recommended that the State should convene an Alluvial Fan Task Force with the representation of vested stakeholders in Southern California to review the state of knowledge regarding alluvial fans floodplains and develop recommendations that would be specific to alluvial fan floodplain management.

## **Establishment of the Alluvial Fan Task Force (AFTF)**

In 2004, following a tragic post-fire debris flow in San Bernardino County that took the lives of 16 Californians, Governor Schwarzenegger signed AB 2141. The bill directed the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to seek federal funding for the establishment of a stakeholder-driven Alluvial Fan Task Force to develop a Model Ordinance and planning tools as decision support for local governments that are entrusted with land-use authority.

DWR submitted an application to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and was awarded a Pre-Mitigation Disaster Planning Grant. In 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger signed AB 466 authorizing the State to expend funds to provide a matching cost share to the FEMA grant.

In March of 2007, DWR announced a partnership with California State University, San Bernardino's (CSUSB) Water Resources Institute to develop the AFTF under the direction of DWR staff. Following extensive interviews with elected officials, local flood districts, stormwater managers, water suppliers, water quality regulators, developers, development consultants, Native Americans, land-use advocates and the environmental community, DWR Director Lester Snow appointed 33 members to the AFTF joined by representatives from federal and state agencies.

## **Mission**

The AFTF is charged with reviewing the state of knowledge of alluvial fans, examining the flood risks, and developing local planning tools, including a "Model Ordinance" and set of "Design Guidelines for Development on Alluvial Fans," aimed at reducing losses to human, built and natural resources resulting from the natural hazard of flooding on alluvial fans.

It will be pioneering work that will receive statewide and national attention for focusing attention on the special features and challenges of development on alluvial fans and recommending best practices to both reduce flood risks and sustain critical environmental assets. The AFTF will seek to close the gap between the actual flood risk (what the risk really is), the perceived flood risk (what decision makers and the public think the risk is) and the expected flood risk (what the decision makers and the public think the risk should be).

## **Geographic Scope**

The geographic scope of the Task Force will be the 10 counties of Southern California - Los Angeles, Kern, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, San Diego, Imperial, Ventura and Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo.

## **Methodology**

The land use guidelines and model ordinance will be developed collaboratively by the members of the AFTF with the support of the DWR Management Team, the Water Resources Institute at CSUSB, and technical resource consultants and under the guidance of a professional facilitator.

1. Number of Plenary Sessions. The AFTF will hold seven plenary sessions between December 2007 and June 2008 to review information, consider options and develop recommendations for land use guidelines and a model ordinance.
2. How Meetings Will Be Conducted. Meetings will be convened by the AFTF Coordinator and run by a professional facilitator. Agendas will be discussed at prior meetings to give all AFTF members an opportunity to contribute to the agenda content. Meetings will be open to the public. Meetings are planned in communities affected by rapid growth on alluvial fans as projected by local governments through 2030.
3. Options for Work Groups. The AFTF has the option of creating smaller work groups to pursue topics in greater depth for the purpose of moving the AFTF's agenda forward. It

will be up to the members of the AFTF to identify topics and select members for all work groups. The full group will be advised of any activities conducted by small groups.

4. Open Process. Meetings of the AFTF will be open to the public. Agendas will be sent out in advance of the meetings and posted on the AFTF web site. Observers are welcome to attend and are expected to adhere to the same groundrules as AFTF members.

### **Decision Making**

The AFTF shall strive to reach consensus on all recommendations. Where possible, this will be achieved without traditional voting. When there is general agreement regarding a proposal, items will be moved forward; however, when necessary, the report will indicate the full range of perspectives, including minority opinions.

Throughout the process, in order to determine if the group is moving in a particular direction, the facilitator may also ask for an informal "read" of the group's perspective. Answers to this type of facilitator's request are used for the purpose of developing the dialogue and are not in anyway binding.

It is also understood that group members may represent organizations and are unable to make final commitments without the concurrence of a board or other body. In this case, agreements will be considered tentative pending approval. Such confirmation does not need to return to the group unless it affects the recommendation.

### **Meeting Schedule and Hosts**

After checking availability of the appointees, seven full plenary meetings have been scheduled between December 2007 and June 2008. County Supervisors and local Flood Control Districts will be hosting the meetings in the communities of Southern California that will be most affected by future development on alluvial fans. Members will be notified of locations for each meeting as they are confirmed.

- December 7, 2007 - *Overview of Alluvial Fans*  
Host: Riverside County Flood Control District, Riverside, CA
- January 4, 2008 - *Risks Factors on Fans*
- February 8, 2008 - *Development on Alluvial Fans*  
Host: Los Angeles Supervisor Michael Antonovich, Palmdale, CA
- March 14, 2008 - *Best Management Practices on Developed Alluvial Fans*
- April 11, 2008 - *Outline for Planning Guidelines and a Model Ordinance*
- May 16, 2008 - *Continued Discussion of Planning Guidelines and a Model Ordinance*
- June 6, 2008 - *Agree on Recommendations*

### **Roles**

Roles in the AFTF will include: Executive Sponsor (Department of Water Resources), Administrative Sponsor (Water Resources Institute), Task Force Members, State and Federal Representatives, Resource/Technical Experts, Coordinator, Facilitator, and Observers

Specific tasks and responsibilities for different roles include:

#### DWR (Executive Sponsor)

1. Function as the host agency under the executive leadership of Director Lester Snow.
2. Foster the full participation of all state and federal agency representatives that should be included in the AFTF.
3. Conduct management team discussions regarding the work of the AFTF.
4. Provide the executive officer, staff and consultant support to the AFTF.
5. Chair meetings under the leadership of DWR Director Lester Snow.
6. Serve as a peer and one of many voices during the meeting process.

7. Submit Final Report including final policy recommendations to FEMA and the Legislature  
Water Resources Institute at CSUSB (Administrative Coordinator)

1. Coordinate and manage all activities of the AFTF including contractual agreements with technical consultants.
2. Arrange meeting logistics and determine meeting content necessary to complete the products and deliverables of the AFTF.
3. Serve as a “clearinghouse” for information and release all documents for consideration by the AFTF members.
4. Develop and maintain a secure password-protected website for members and distribute public information regarding the AFTF to stakeholder groups and the members of the media.
5. Develop text and format for the final policy recommendations.
6. Submit the final report including final policy recommendations to DWR which in turn is submitted to FEMA and the Legislature
7. Transmit AFTF recommendations to County and City Governments.

The AFTF Members

1. Provide diverse perspectives, representing a broad scope of those impacted by alluvial fan development so that policy, to the fullest extent possible and meeting the needs and interests of the citizens of Southern California and its natural environment.
2. Review and provide recommendations on planning guidelines and a model ordinance.
3. Be full participants (includes representatives and designees).
4. Help identify, review, verify and critique data, assumptions, analysis and methods related to development on alluvial fans.
5. Communicate to the broader public, as well as the individual constituencies and communities represented by each individual member, information about the process and products of the AFTF.
6. Seek consensus.
7. Serve as advocates and experts on the benefits afforded by the adoption of the Model Ordinance and Design Guidelines for Development on Alluvial Fans by County Board of Supervisors, City Councils and Planning Commissions.

State and Federal Agency Representatives

1. Are expected to participate as full members of the AFTF.
2. Assure that the products and deliverables of the AFTF can be implemented effectively at all levels of government.

The Facilitator

1. Serves as professional neutral responsible for managing dialogue in meetings and overseeing the provisions of the group charter.
2. Designs, implements and refines, as needed a consensus-seeking process.
3. Facilitates AFTF meeting and related work team meetings as necessary.
4. Ensures that all points of view held by the AFTF members are heard and that the interests of each member’s constituencies are considered.
5. Acts as a professional neutral in the relationship among the AFTF members and between the AFTF and DWR and other State and Federal representatives.
6. Acts as a professional neutral in terms of the outcome of the AFTF’s work product.

Technical Consultants

1. Assemble technical information as directed by the Coordinator that is relevant to the outcomes expected of the AFTF.
2. Provide accessible educational presentations at the AFTF plenary sessions.
3. Provide a range of options to the members of the AFTF for consideration in the Model Ordinance and Design Guidelines for Development on Alluvial Fans and continue to

work with the Coordinator and members to refine the products and deliverables throughout the process

4. Be available to work with AFTF members on specific areas of interest.
5. Submit final reports as identified in Task Orders by the Coordinator for inclusion in the final AFTF report.

### **Values and Principles**

This is a consensus seeking, collaborative process. Because this process addresses a complex public policy issue, it will take many months to complete. Participants agree to:

- Accept the AFTF mission, scope and methodology.
- Establish a common factual base and vocabulary in order to address issues of common concern.
- Develop a thorough understanding not only of their own interests but also the interests of the other parties at the table.
- Negotiate satisfactory and realistic agreements, which satisfy as many of the varied interests as possible.

It is understood that all the parties must continue to operate under their own guidelines and timetables. As such, some members may need to take action related to those requirements that could have a negative impact on the discussions taking place. Even so, members agree to work in good faith within the process.

### **Groundrules**

The group will use standing groundrules regarding meeting protocol and may modify them as appropriate. The group agrees to:

- Come with an open mind, and respect for others' interests and differing opinions.
- Treat one another with courtesy.
- Let one person speak at a time.
- Be honest, fair, and as candid as possible.
- Think outside the box and welcome new ideas.
- Respect time constraints, be succinct.
- View disagreements as problems to be solved rather than battles to be won.
- Respect that AFTF members may talk with the media at any time, but will represent only their own perspective and not to speak for any other member or the AFTF as a whole.

### **AFTF Member Ground Rules for Media Contact**

When discussing the recommendations or negotiations with anyone outside of the AFTF, members may relate the history and purpose of the AFTF, the problem statement, the list of participating Stakeholder Groups, and the general underlying interests, which have been expressed. In addition, members may discuss more specific aspects of the recommendations or negotiations, and in so doing, shall be careful to present only their own views and not characterize the motivations or values of any other member or Stakeholder Group. AFTF members shall avoid the temptation to quote other members, attribute comments to other members, or discuss other members' statements or positions.

### **Attendance**

Given the volume of information to be considered and the short time frame, regular attendance by the member or his/her designated representative is essential. If an AFTF member is unable to attend a meeting, a designee must be identified in advance, fully briefed and able to represent the member during a meeting including any decision making.

### **Communication During AFTF Process**

The Water Resources Institute will provide minutes of the AFTF meetings to Task Force members within 10 days of a meeting.

Constituents - Task Force members will be responsible for sharing information related to the AFTF with their respective constituents and for bringing forth issues and options from their constituents to all AFTF members.

Media – All media briefing materials will be prepared and distributed by the AFTF Coordinator after approval by DWR.

Decision-Makers – Key decision makers will be kept informed through written correspondence and formal briefings.

Public – The public is welcome to attend all AFTF meetings. The Coordinator and Facilitator will be available to provide presentations of the group's work at meetings, conferences or other forums. AFTF members are strongly encouraged to provide presentations about the group's work wherever feasible to increase awareness of the AFTF's work. Press kits and media releases will be available to the members.

### **Products and Deliverables**

Based on the work of the AFTF the Water Resources Institute at CSUSB will deliver a report containing the land use guidelines and a model ordinance for future development on alluvial fans in the 10 counties of Southern California to the Department of Natural Resources before December 15, 2008.

DWR will review and forward the report to the State Legislature and release it to the public. In addition to developing recommendations, products will include GIS maps of alluvial fans, videoed educational presentations, briefing memos, academic literature references, and reports from technical resource consultants. It is the intent of the AFTF that planning tools should be adopted locally.