

January 2015

Dear Sun Valley Resident:

This letter is being posted on our website for informational purposes because certain properties situated along Trail Creek are located in the 100-year floodplain, also known as the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). In an effort to better educate and assist citizens about developing and living in the SFHA, the City is working on ways to increase its circulation of information that pertains to the floodplain. Please take time to read the material below, and if you have further questions, or would like additional information, please contact the City or refer to the additional resources provided at the end of this document.

Overview and Causes of Flooding in Sun Valley

The City of Sun Valley features Trail Creek, which is susceptible to seasonal flooding and can potentially pose threats to safety and cause property damage. Snow melt from the Pioneer Mountain range contributes substantially to flooding and generally occurs in the month of May when temperatures rise and the overnight freezing cycle at higher elevations subsides.

Flood Insurance

The City of Sun Valley participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) that makes available federally backed flood insurance for all structures, whether or not they are located within the SFHA. Following the purchase of flood insurance, NFIP imposes a 30-day waiting period, so residents should purchase insurance before the onset of the spring run-off to ensure coverage during the flooding season.

Membership within NFIP — and the availability of flood insurance to Sun Valley residents — requires the City to manage its floodplain in ways that meet or exceed standards set by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The City's floodplain management goal is to promote public health, safety, and general welfare while minimizing both public and private losses due to flood conditions. NFIP protects two types of property: building and contents. Building coverage includes the foundation, walls, floors, insulation, furnace and other items permanently attached to the structure. Contents coverage protects homeowner possessions and can include clothing, furniture, dishwashers, microwaves, and other valuable items. Flood insurance also pays a portion of the costs of actions taken to prevent flood damage.

Floodplain Regulation

Understanding the ways that the floodplain functions and how the City regulates this area is crucial in order to protect both property and lives. Maintaining the flow capacity in streams that cross City properties requires citizen cooperation and assistance in order to prevent flooding and bank erosion. The following are suggestions to follow in order to reduce the potential for flood damage in Sun Valley.

Do not dump or throw anything into ditches or streams: A plugged channel cannot carry water, and when it rains, the excess water may flood the surrounding area. Trash and vegetation dumped into a stream degrades water quality of both the stream itself and its receiving waters. Every piece of trash thrown into ditches or streams has the potential to contribute to flooding.

Remove debris, trash, loose branches and vegetation: Keep the stream bank clear of brush and debris in order to maintain an unobstructed flow of water within the stream channels. Do not, however, remove vegetation that is actively growing on a stream bank. Streamside vegetation is integral to the health of riparian areas and is controlled by local, state, and federal regulations.

Obtain a floodplain development permit and/or building permit, if required: To minimize damage to structures during flood events, the City requires all new construction in the floodplain to be anchored against movement by floodwaters, resistant to flood forces, constructed with flood-resistant materials and flood-proofed or elevated so that the first floor of living space, as well as all mechanical and service areas, are at least 1 foot above the elevation of the 100-year flood. These standards apply to new structures and to substantial improvements of existing structures. The City defines a Substantial Improvement as any repair, reconstruction, or improvement to an existing structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the structure's market value. Prior to undertaking any development activity within the floodplain, contact the Community Development Department at (208) 622-4438 for further information.

Recognize the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains: Floodplains are a natural component of the City environment. Understanding and protecting the natural functions of floodplains helps reduce flood damage and protect resources. Floodplains are scenic and valued wildlife habitat. Poorly planned development in floodplains can lead to stream bank erosion, loss of valuable property, increased risk of flooding to downstream properties, and degradation of water quality.

City Floodplain Information Services: The City can determine the relationship of a particular property to the floodplain, including: 1) whether the property is located within the Special Flood Hazard Area; 2) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Zone for property; and 3) Base Flood Elevation for property, if available. Contact the Community Development Department at (208) 622-4438 for further information.

For More Information Visit

- City of Sun Valley: <http://www.sunvalley.govoffice.com>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): <http://www.fema.gov/nfip/>
- Floodsmart.gov: The official site of the NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program) <https://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/>