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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public Meeting to Be Held on Preliminary Floodplain Map for Flathead County

Kalispell, Mont. -- The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Water Resources Division, in cooperation with Flathead County and the City of Kalispell will be holding a public open house regarding the new flood hazard maps for Flathead County. The open house will be at the Earl Bennett Building, 1035 First Ave. West, Kalispell on Monday July 17th, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. with **mapping** presentations being held at 4:00 p.m., 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. The public is invited and encouraged to attend **to also learn more about flood insurance, floodplain rules and regulations, and floodplain management in general.**

The open house will serve as a preview of preliminary maps to obtain initial public comment regarding the data used for the maps. New maps that will be incorporated are the study areas in a portion of Ashley Creek, approximate study of the North Fork River above Columbia Falls, the restudy of portions of Trumble Creek and Spring Creek north of Montana Highway 35. These studies are just one aspect of a larger federally funded project to generate digital flood hazard information maps for Flathead County.

Staff from the DNRC Floodplain Program, DNRC's study contractor (PBS&J), Flathead County and the City of Kalispell will be on hand to answer questions, provide an overview of the floodplain management studies, and provide information about the entire countywide digital flood hazard mapping project.

"Although flood elevations have not changed along existing flood hazard maps, better topographic information has allowed for better refinement of flood boundaries," explained Traci M. Sears-Tull, the Flathead County Planner who is coordinating the Floodplain Program. "The new floodplain maps are intended to provide reliable and more detailed information to Flathead County in an effort to guide future development in flood-prone areas."

After this initial review of the maps, the data gathered during the open house will be used to refine the maps. Later this summer, the public will be provided an opportunity to comment on the refined maps before they are finalized for future development in Flathead County.

For further information contact Traci M. Sears-Tull, Flathead County Floodplain Coordinator at 406-751-8200 **or Millie Bowman, DNRC Map Modernization Coordinator, at 444-6656.**

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