

Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard Designated Floodplain and Wetland

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that the Responsible Entity under 24 CFR Part 58 has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order(s) 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and Executive Order 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection, to determine the potential effects that its activity in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain and wetland will have on the environment. This evaluation was conducted for the Auburn Public Safety Facility Project at 550 Minot Avenue, Auburn, Androscoggin County, Maine, an activity funded under FY 2022 Community Project Funding (No. B-22-CP-ME-0428).

The City of Auburn is proposing to construct a new Public Safety Facility (Proposed Project) that would integrate multiple critical functions and provide a centralized, modernized hub for the city's Fire Department, Police Department, and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with additional support spaces. The Proposed Project is not expected to result in emergency service interruptions or delays. The project aims to consolidate and enhance the City's emergency services infrastructure to better serve the community's evolving public safety needs.

The FFRMS floodplain was determined using a freeboard value approach (FVA). As the project includes the development of a public safety facility (police and fire), it is considered a critical action. Therefore, an additional 3 feet of elevation from the 100-year floodplain is included to establish the appropriate FFRMS floodplain elevation, which is 215 feet for this location.

The Proposed Project would directly affect approximately 3,299 square feet (0.08 acres) of the mapped 100-year floodplain and approximately 23,213 square feet (0.53 acres) of the FFRMS floodplain through placement of fill and construction of a retaining wall and facility parking area. The Proposed Project activities will also have wetland impacts to approximately 2,440 sf (0.06 acres) of temporary impact to an existing unnamed streambed, and approximately 7,485 sf (0.17 acres) of permanent impact to existing contiguous palustrine forested (PFO) wetland. However, the Proposed Project will create approximately 2,913 sf (0.07 acres) of restored streambed and approximately 6,003 sf (0.14 acres) of restored riparian buffer, which would result in approximately 962 sf (0.02 acres) of net wetland habitat loss.

The City of Auburn evaluated practicable alternatives to locating the project within the floodplain, including alternative sites and the no-action alternative. Alternative locations were determined to be impracticable due to insufficient site size, traffic conflicts, potential site contamination, higher acquisition and infrastructure costs, and greater environmental impacts. The no-action alternative was also rejected because existing police and fire facilities are outdated, undersized, and operationally deficient, presenting substantial risk to the delivery of essential emergency services. Based on this evaluation, the City determined that there is no practicable alternative to partially locating the Proposed Project within the FFRMS floodplain.

The project has been designed to minimize adverse impacts to lives, property, and natural and beneficial floodplain and wetland values. All occupiable space will be located above the FFRMS elevation. Flood-resilient site grading, a retaining wall, best management practices for erosion and stormwater control, and implementation of a Wetland and Stream Restoration Plan will reduce flood risk and improve ecological conditions. A deed restriction will protect restored stream and riparian areas, and the project will comply with all applicable state and local floodplain and wetland protection requirements.

Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and Executive Order 11990 are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

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

Written comments must be received by the City of Auburn at the following address on or before February 6, 2026: the City of Auburn, 60 Court Street, Auburn Maine 04210 and (207) 333-6600, Attention: Dan Goyette, Director of Engineering and Capital Projects. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Thursday at the address above and www.auburnmaine.gov. Comments may also be submitted via email at dgoyette@auburnmaine.gov.

Date: January 29, 2026