

**COMMISSIONER TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING ON FLOODPLAIN MAP AND FLOOD RISK
INSURANCE**

Commissioner Bill Kendall will hold a public meeting on the draft of the new proposed Towns County floodplain maps by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources.

The enhanced FIS and its preliminary DFIRM will be presented during an Open House for the public, to be held on **Thursday, December 17th, 2009 from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.** at the Towns County Courthouse – 48 River Street, Suite B, Hiawassee, GA 30546. During the Open House, representatives from local government, DNR and FEMA will provide the most current information regarding Towns County's flood risk, flood insurance, floodplain development regulations, floodplain mapping, and timeline for DFIRM adoption. The enhanced countywide floodplain maps will be displayed.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), has completed an enhanced Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) for Towns County and all its municipalities including: Hiawassee and Young Harris. This FIS includes charts and a narrative report of local flooding to be used by permit officials for development in the floodplain.

Commissioner Kendall explained the importance of citizens attending the meeting and familiarizing themselves with the map and have input in correcting any errors that may need to be made with the new maps. A new proposed Ordinance will be discussed which Towns County must adopt in 2010 if citizens living in a floodplain are to be eligible to acquire flood insurance at a discounted rate.

Kendall re-emphasized the importance that citizens attend the meeting who have or want to apply for a federally backed loan; that they could in the future receive a letter from the lender stating they are in a flood plain and will be required to obtain flood insurance to get or keep their loan.

Citizens attending the meeting will have an opportunity to inspect and correct any error that FEMA mapping may have made. **It will be too late to make any changes in the maps prepared by FEMA after the hearings.**

Property owners, individuals living in or near the 100-year floodplain, realtors, lenders, and insurance agents may find this Open House particularly informative. All interested persons are welcome. For information, contact: ***Commissioner Bill Kendall 706-896-2276 or e-mail townscommissioner@windstream.net***