

Flood Map Modernization

New Data for Managing Risk

Flood Map Modernization (“Map Mod”) is FEMA’s multi-year effort to update and transform flood maps into more reliable, easy-to-use, and readily available digital products. Map Mod enables communities and citizens across the country to more efficiently obtain flood hazard data, learn about their flood risk, and make informed decisions about development, floodplain management, and mitigation projects.

MAPPING FLOOD RISKS

The first step in preventing and reducing flood loss is to obtain reliable information about flood risk. Flood hazard maps, also known as Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), indicate areas at risk of flooding. However, flood risk changes over time and many maps no longer reflect current risks, due to land development and changes in the environment.

Map Mod is producing more reliable, up-to-date flood data by using the latest mapping technology, incorporating data into current models, and delivering it in a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based format. Digital maps can be updated easily and at less cost, as flood risks change.

New flood maps have been produced for jurisdictions representing about 39 percent of the Nation’s population. Maps currently under development represent an additional 50 percent of the population.

The goal is to produce new flood maps that cover 92 percent of the Nation’s population by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2008.

NEW MAPS MEAN A SAFER PUBLIC

Map Modernization makes flood hazard information available to a wide range of users, including: the public, floodplain managers, developers, and the insurance industry. With the new maps, communities can more efficiently manage flood risks, land use, water resources, disaster mitigation, and disaster recovery operations.

Property owners can more reliably assess their flood risks and make decisions about flood insurance based on those risks.

FLOOD HAZARD MAPS AND THE GULF COAST

With flood hazard maps ranging in age from two to more than 25 years, counties and parishes along the Gulf Coast are actively involved in, or are scheduled to begin, the re-mapping process.

Mississippi – FEMA produced high-resolution maps that show flood impacts from the storm for portions of Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties. These maps show preliminary high water mark flood elevations and flood inundation limits from Hurricane Katrina as well as the Advisory Base Flood Elevations that were developed following the storms.

Louisiana – FEMA produced high-resolution maps that show flood impacts from the storm for portions of Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany, and Tangipahoa Parishes, and portions of Plaquemines Parish. Areas where Hurricane Rita’s coastal flooding was documented as being more severe than that of Katrina were mapped separately.



MAP MODERNIZATION FUNDING PROCESS

Congress appropriated funding to update flood maps across the entire country. FEMA maintains a five-year planning horizon for Map Mod, anticipating that during the five-year period from FY 2004 to FY 2008, Congress will appropriate \$200 million per year. Augmenting the Congressional appropriations are fees from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Through FEMA's Cooperating Technical Partners initiative, many communities are taking a proactive approach to Map Mod, and are contributing funding or in-kind services.

NATIONWIDE ROLLOUT

FEMA has developed the Multi-Year Flood Hazard Identification Plan (MHIP), a five-year road map for the modernization of the flood hazard maps. Local, state, regional, and national participants collaborated on the plan which is updated twice yearly based on feedback from stakeholders. The plan provides a forecast of flood mapping activities and respective funding amounts at the county level. For more details, go to www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/mh_main.

LEARN MORE ABOUT FLOOD HAZARD MAPS

Properties located in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) – areas along the coast, along rivers, and in other low-lying areas and floodplains – are at the highest risk for flooding, but everyone is at some risk. Current flood maps can be viewed on the FEMA Map Service Center website at <http://msc.fema.gov>. To speak with a FEMA map specialist, call 1-877-336-2627. To learn more about flood insurance, visit www.FloodSmart.gov.