Text Version of Floodplain Mapping Video

Hi. My name is Soumya Sagarika, and I work as an engineer at STARR II Regional Service Center for FEMA Region 10. Today, we'll talk about the updated floodplain maps in your community. These maps are now ready for you to review.

Floodplain maps give helpful information to property owners and local officials. They help with important land use, development, and emergency management decisions. This process is a collaborative effort; it involves local jurisdictions, state, tribal and federal officials. Floodplain mapping determines a range of flood risks and frequencies at risk to flooding. One result is to determine the Special Flood Hazard Area. This is a high-risk flood hazard area at risk to a 1%-annual-chance flood event. This product is important because it helps to direct local floodplain regulations and federal insurance requirements. Understanding the possible risk to your property or building can help you plan for flooding events. It helps you make decisions that will protect your property.

Federal, state, tribal and/or local discussions identified your community's maps as a priority for update. The current, effective floodplain map may exist in the form of a paper product. When they were created, these maps were considered best available. That said, community boundaries may have changed, supplemental regulatory products may have been attached and flood risk data may be almost 50 years old. Even if an effective flood map is in a digital format, we may still need to update the map to capture changing conditions.

Updated floodplain mapping should be an improvement over your current flood maps. Thanks to advances in technology over the last several decades, we can collect and process more data than ever before. New flood maps can better reflect conditions on the ground. They're also more accessible than ever.

Digital flood products let you zoom directly to a location and review your specific flood risk. Web tools, like the one shown in the slide, help you understand how our understanding of risk has evolved from the previous flood map. To review how flood hazards may affect your community, please visit the "Am I At Risk of Flooding" tab. There, you can view the proposed map. You can also request a snapshot of flood risk on your property.

For most communities, flood studies will use new topographic or ground elevations. For areas where a flood study may be decades old, high-resolution topographic data provides a substantial improvement in understanding the ground elevation. The image to the right shows an area before and after we collected high-resolution data. Flood studies will also account for updated hydrology. This looks at how much water may impact a given place. For that same decades-old study, we now have a generation's worth of new flow data. Lastly, our flood studies will provide an updated hydraulic analysis. This shows how the water moves across the landscape. Improvements in technology let us see how the water will move in every direction.

Most flood studies will approach flood sources in the following ways:

1. A restudy of the existing mapped area. This approach will use new terrain data, updated flows, and the latest mapping technology to restudy the mapped reach. The regulatory impacts will be similar to effective mapping.

2. An upgrade of the existing mapped area. Similar to a restudied reach, additional resources will be spent to obtain local survey. This is done in areas where the population has grown since the prior mapping. Additional regulatory impacts may apply as a result.

3. A newly studied area will map a location that has not been mapped before. This may use a basic or enhanced approach depending on the affected population. Community officials prioritize these areas or flag them as a significant drainage area.

4. Incorporated study areas do not have a new engineering analysis and will remain unchanged, or they will have flood elevations configured to updated terrain data. FEMA has delivered the preliminary maps to your community for review. You can find more resources throughout this site. These topics include how to obtain and read a personalized map; insurance and regulatory requirements; and how to stay informed and engaged on this study effort. The resources are meant to help you learn and address your flood risk at home and within your community.

If you want to learn more about how a flood source was studied in your community, please send an email to this address (R10engineering@starr-team.com). In the email, please include your name, contact number, property address, and community name. One of our experts will reach out to you. Thank you for your time.