

The Flood Map Production Process



Background

In support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), FEMA has undertaken a massive effort of flood hazard identification and mapping to update Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Flood Insurance Studies (FIS) for the Nation. These maps are created to reflect the base flood event, defined as the flood having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year (also referred to as the 100-year flood). Map Production is proceeding on a county-by-county basis.



Map Production Phases

Mapping Needs Assessment:

- Mapping needs are identified and reported for updating FEMA's Mapping Needs Update Support System (MNUSS).
- Additional data are collected including Letters of Map Change, historical flooding data, GIS base map data, aerial photos, digital orthophoto data, and topographic maps/data. (Note: all flood map updates will be produced with digital technology for ease of use and future update and maintenance.)

Initial Scoping Meeting:

- Held by FEMA, CTPs, and their contractors, this meeting includes local officials of impacted communities, mapping contractors, and regional agencies.
- The study scope of work is discussed, resources available and needed are identified, priorities are established, and format and content are defined.
- All aspects of the project are discussed and outlined.
- A Mapping Activity Statement is prepared and signed by the participants detailing the scope of work to be studied.

Additional Scoping Meetings and Teleconferences:

- Additional meetings may be necessary to address comments and concerns following the initial scoping meeting, select study methods, identify topographic data needs and resources, and evaluate existing data.
- A schedule is developed.

Map Production Phase:

- All aerial photos, topography, field survey, and engineering data are gathered and processed to prepare a preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM).
- All engineering and cartographic data are submitted for Quality Control assessments and assurances.

Community Review Period of Preliminary FIS and DFIRM:

- Preliminary FIS and DFIRM are issued to all impacted communities.
- Community officials complete a 30-day Review Period of the preliminary DFIRM and FIS.

Public Participation Meetings:

- Community officials should host a public Preliminary DFIRM Community Coordination Meeting to explain the new maps, the review and comment process, and insurance coverage and premiums rates.
- If new or revised Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) are included in the study, two notices of BFE change are published in local newspapers. The second notice begins a 90-day appeal period, during which any property owner or lessee within an impacted community can file an appeal or protest.
 - An appeal disputes a new or revised BFE and must be based on technical and/or scientific information.
 - A protest disputes new or revised data other than BFEs.
- Appeals and/or protests are resolved. An additional 30-day comment period may begin, depending on the type of appeal or protest resolution.

Final Determination:

- A Letter of Final Determination is issued.
- Dates of the effective DFIRM and FIS are published in the Federal Register.
- Unless lawsuits are filed, DFIRM is final.
- Data may, however, be submitted at any time, and if warranted, can be updated through a Letter of Map Change process.

Final FIS and DFIRM Effective:

- FIS report and DFIRM panels are published and become effective.
- Maps are distributed to all impacted communities and many other users by FEMA's Map Service Center.
- Map Maintenance protocol is still to be determined.

More Information

For more information regarding the flood map production process, please contact your NFIP State Coordinator or your FEMA Regional Office.