

CTP NOMINEE: Georgia Department of Natural Resources



Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR)

N2018-03

The GADNR is nominated for **Tools and Resources**

Background: GADNR has developed a myriad of communications tools and resources that not only help elected officials and their residents along each step of the Risk MAP Process, but also assist local floodplain managers with general floodplain management practices. GADNR has created an extremely resourceful and powerful website focused on community outreach providing immediate access to community guidebooks, toolkits, tutorials, outreach templates, and videos. A very useful tool is a property specific flood risk snapshot which displays selected flood risk information including the depth of flooding for selected storm frequencies and Changes Since Last Firm (CSLF) color coded comparisons where applicable.

Challenge: Georgia needed to develop robust communication and outreach program including the goal of increasing flood risk understanding and awareness across the state by engaging communities more frequently throughout an active flood study project and establishing capabilities to easily and effectively expand its reach to the 159 counties and 535 communities it serves.

Solutions: GADNR developed the go-to site: <http://www.georgiadfirm.com/>. The site is very easy to use and contains such a great wealth of information for property owners, community officials, and GADNR Program Officials. One can view flood data, get outreach material, submit Letter of Map Amendments/Letter of Map Changes, become more familiar with floodplain regulations, and view project statuses. GADNR has developed Guidebooks, toolkits, tutorials, outreach templates, and videos to increase awareness and knowledge of every aspect of the program from Discovery to Data Development to Preliminary Map Issuance to Post Preliminary Processing to Final Map Adoption. Communities and officials are encouraged to use the resources at touchpoints as well as during periods where there are no official Risk Map meetings scheduled. The tools have taken the officials and communities very far, and can be seen through excellence in program metrics and driven mitigation actions.

The benefits seen as a result of GADNR's focused efforts on outreach include high community participation in the NFIP, with 157 counties and 561 communities participating; more information and activities available to communities that help maximize CRS credits; successful adoption of maps with minimal comments or appeals, all 159 counties have modernized maps and 35 counties have received effective maps under Risk MAP; and lastly an excellence in program metrics and driven mitigation actions.

COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH TOOLBOX

FLOOD MAP PROGRAM WEBSITE

Georgia's website is a one-stop shop for citizens, community officials, and industry stakeholders to find a variety of information about Georgia's flood risk. It is organized by stakeholder so that a property owner, community official, or CTP representative can quickly find information most relevant to them. Highlights include the web viewer where a property owner can easily locate their property through an address search which allows them to generate a Flood Risk Snapshot providing them with their individualized flood risk. Outreach materials and resources are also served to community officials to help guide them through the flood study revision process and provide them with templated material that assist with alerting their constituents on flood mapping activities with minimal effort. Educational information for the general public is also available that aid in increasing understanding and awareness of the Georgia's Flood MAP program, the flood study revision process, and general information about their potential risks due to flooding. Please visit www.georgiadfirm.com to see more of the products and services offered. Several tools and resources are also highlighted below. There are also a few coming soon items that include hydrology and hydraulic model look-up capabilities and an improved project status page.



FLOOD RISK SNAPSHOT

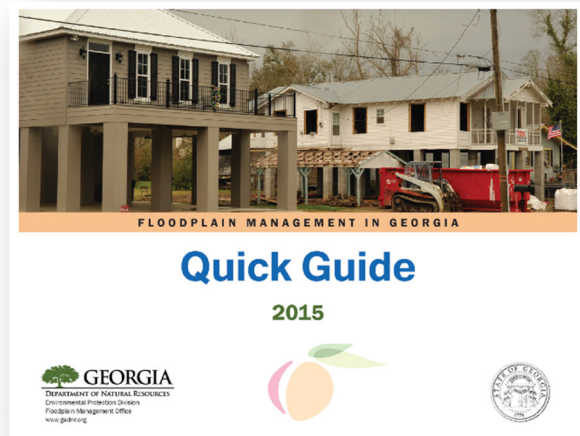
The Flood Risk Snapshot is a closer look at a property's individualized flood risk. Properties are found by an address lookup engine or by zooming into an area using the map viewer. The information provided is generated for the building footprint (as available). A property owner will learn what their base flood elevation is for the 1% annual chance flood, the LiDAR derived lowest adjacent grade, and depth of flooding for the 10%, 1% and 0.2% flood events. When a flood study project has preliminary products available then the flood risk snapshot will also map the increases and decreases in the special flood hazard area between the current effective and preliminary mapping. A change in flood zones as well as basic FIRM information is also given.



COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH TOOLBOX

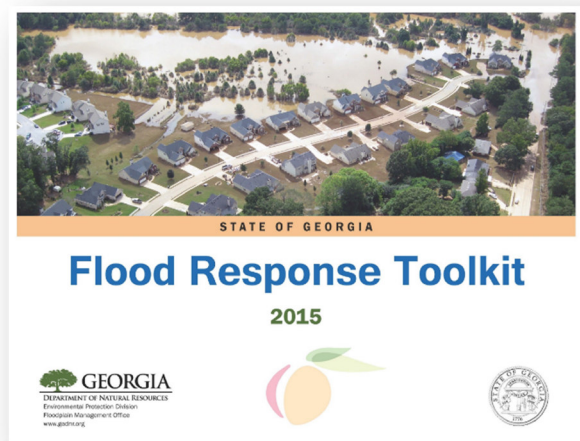
FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT QUICK GUIDE

The Floodplain Management Quick Guide is a resource that assists our community floodplain managers with many of their daily job functions. Content includes guidance on the National Flood Insurance Programs (NFIP), roles & responsibilities of a floodplain manager, the flood study products and map revision process, development and permitting procedures, and higher floodplain management practices. Also included are relevant website resources that will give more thorough direction on particular topics.



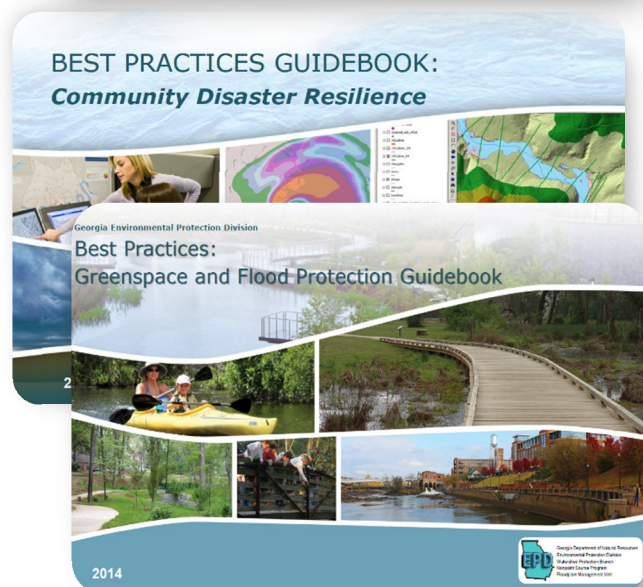
FLOOD RESPONSE TOOLKIT

The Flood Response Kit provides recommended practices and guidance on activities that floodplain managers can do in advance, during, and following a flooding event. Preparation activities include defining and mapping flood risk areas, planning exercises, outreach, flood forecasting and warning exercises, dam safety practices, and Community Rating System program participation. During an event it will cover evacuation strategies, how to keep the public and animals safe, engaging with emergency management partners, flood protection measures and public notification methods. Lastly, it will cover activities that should be considered after the flood such as safety considerations, meeting NFIP requirements, building condition surveys, damage assessments, restoration projects, clean-up, flood insurance impacts, individual and public assistance programs, and communication efforts.



BEST PRACTICE GUIDEBOOKS

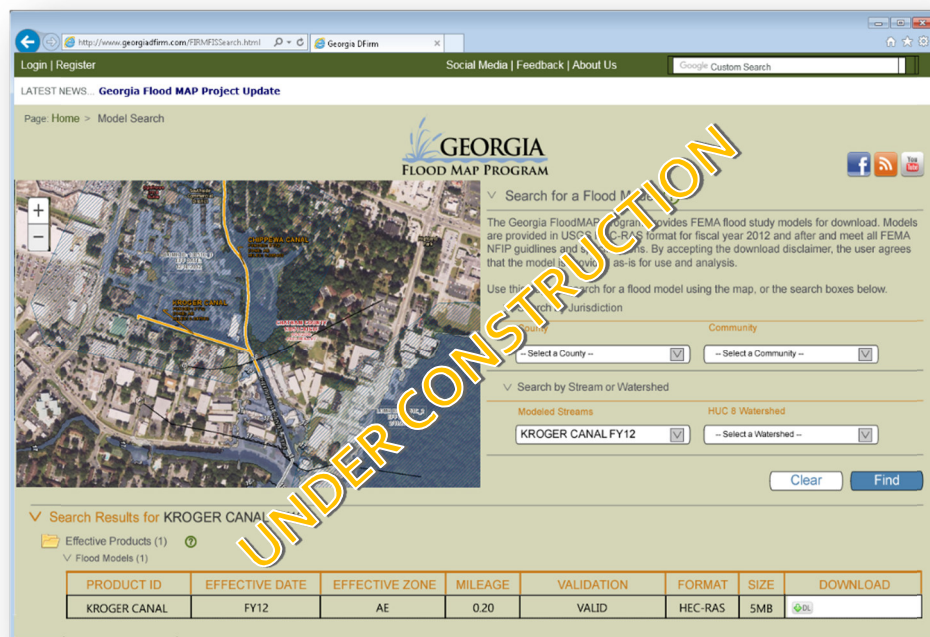
The Best Practice Guidebooks for Community Disaster Resilience and Greenspace and Flood Protection give a closer look at similar projects throughout Georgia. They provide more details on the when, what, why, and how these projects have been done. Some items include planning, partnerships, code enforcement, CRS benefits, funding resources, compatible uses, permitting challenges, program integration, regulations, construction types, mapping, preservations, and outreach.



COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH TOOLBOX

MODEL SEARCH & DOWNLOAD

Georgia's engineering community will soon have the ability to search and download all modeling developed and mapped as part of FEMA's flood insurance study projects. This will further establish the website as a one-stop-shop for all of the state's flood study related products. These models will aid in Letter of Map Change (LOMC) projects, BFE determinations, storm water planning and design, and mitigation projects, just to name a few.



MODEL ORDINANCES

Georgia has developed three (3) types of model ordinances to meet the different needs of their communities. The first is the Metro North Georgia Ordinance. This ordinance includes higher floodplain management standards and is required for a 15-county, 95-city region around the Metro Atlanta area. The second is the Model Coastal Ordinance and it contains language specific to coastal conditions and applicable requirements. Lastly is the Model Riverine Ordinance that is appropriate for the remaining areas of Georgia. While all communities are able and encouraged to adopt higher standards, these model ordinances provided the minimal requirements that is expected by the NFIP. These model ordinances are available through the website along with fact sheets on what a floodplain management ordinance is and the recommended process to follow for adopting an ordinance. Georgia is also an auto-adoption state which helps to minimize the steps and effort that otherwise would be required by a community to adopt an ordinance during the map adoption stage of a FEMA flood study project.



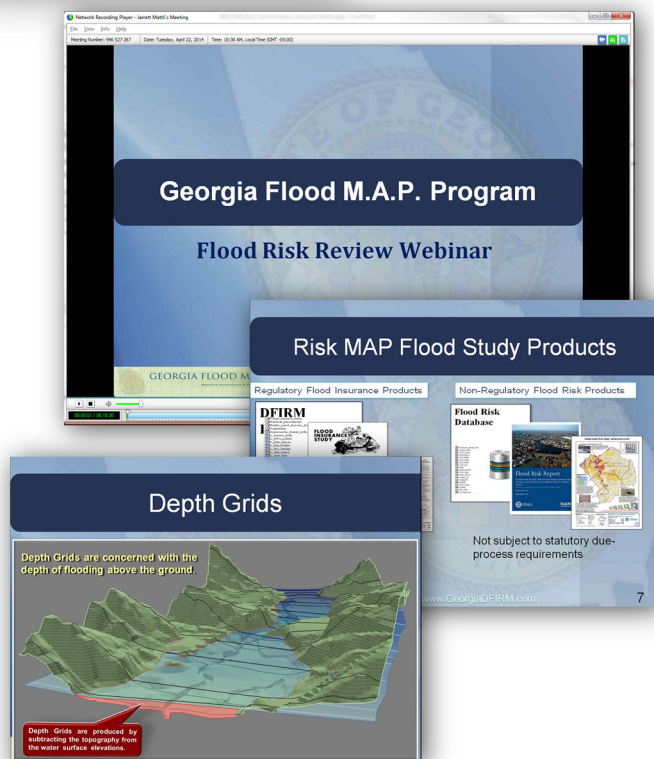
COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH TOOLBOX

COMMUNITY OUTREACH GUIDEBOOK

In 2008, at the conclusion of FEMA's Map Modernization Program, the Georgia CTP Program was faced with the mapping and adoption of 63 counties in just a short 2-year period. Because of the volume and short timeframe to produce, an approach was needed that would help the CTP Program quickly educate the communities on the flood study mapping process and empower them to communicate with stakeholders about the project. The solution was the Community Outreach Guidebook. The Community Outreach Guidebook is a walk-through of mapping activities from start to finish; from Discovery phase through map adoption. In addition, a variety of additional resources is given for each stage of project as well as templated outreach materials. Template outreach material includes items such as talking points, targeted fact sheets for lenders, realtors, builders, advertisements for open houses, press releases, letters, sample news articles, and examples webpages.

VIDEOS & WEBINARS

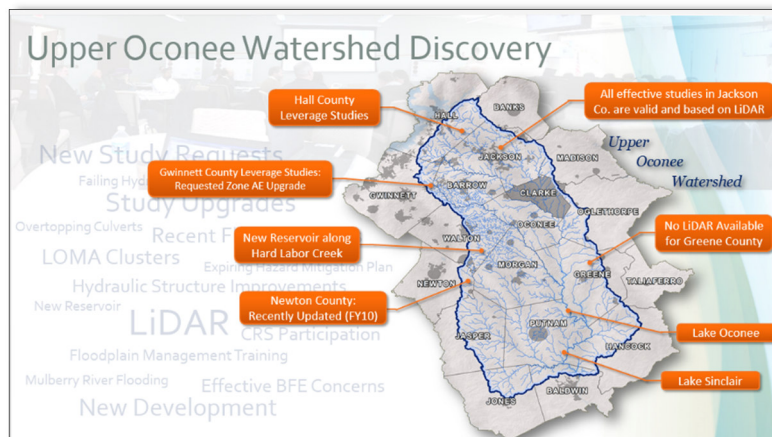
On the website community officials can find videos that further explain activities such as outreach and the Community Outreach Guidebook and recorded webinars on how to use flood study products.



COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH TOOLBOX

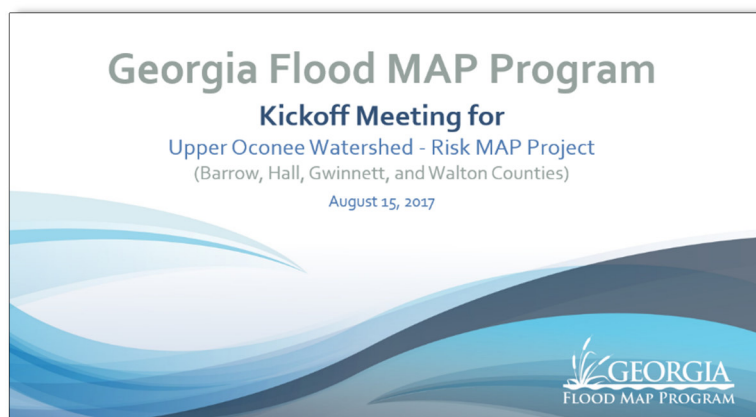
DISCOVERY MEETING

Preceding our Discovery meetings we conduct individual community surveys with follow-up interviews for the project area. The findings from those activities are analyzed and summarized during the Discovery meeting. The feedback received will ultimately be considered as part of the project selection process. Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) is responsible for the state's mitigation program and they often participate in the Discovery Meetings. As a result, we are able to initiate discussions about mitigation opportunities and actions at the beginning of the flood study project.



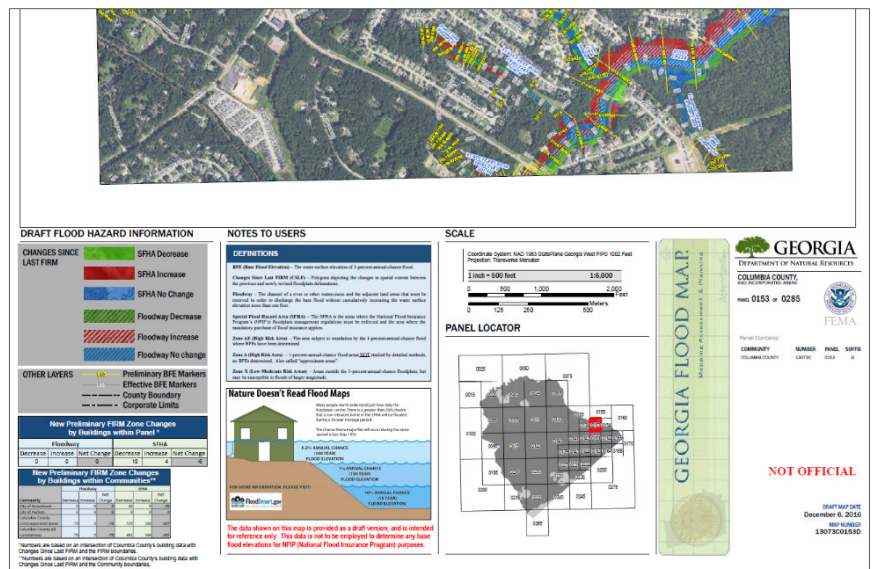
COMMUNITY KICKOFF MEETING

Georgia has been conducting Community Kickoff Meetings for the past eight (8) years. Often, many months or even years can pass before a flood study project is initiated. The community kickoff meeting was introduced help bridge the time spent with communities between Discovery Meetings and the Community Coordination Officer (CCO) / Preliminary DFRIM Community Coordination (PDCC) Meetings. It is also meant as a time to share the planned work before data development begins and provide background of the project for any new community officials that did not participate in the Discovery Meeting. Information provided include the scope of work such as streams selected for study, level of engineering analyses, types for modeling methods, unique challenges, partnerships, known relevant projects, and project schedule.



In response to requirements originating from the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act (HFIAA) and checked as part of FEMA's Key Decision Point 1 (KDP1), which gives communities 30-days to review and comment on the proposed engineering methods, Georgia developed a Proposed Engineering Methods Report that is provided to communities at the Community Kickoff Meeting. The report describes the considerations given in the modeling selection process and lists the selected study areas and the method chosen for each. The community is given 30-days to review. Once the review period has ended, the community is contacted once again to see if there are any concerns with the proposed methods. Once the modeling has been completed, a report will be provided to communities summarizing the results. These results will further be presented and discussed during the Flood Risk Review meetings. Providing a report of the results earlier on in the process gives us the opportunity to address any concerns before too much work has been completed and also keeps the communities engaged throughout the production process.

Georgia has been providing draft maps and review meetings since the beginning of FEMA's Risk M.A.P. Program. After engineering and draft mapping has been completed, a set of draft maps are sent to the community officials at least 30-days in advance of the Flood Risk Review Meeting. The draft maps illustrate the changes between the current effective mapping and proposed preliminary mapping. Changes are also quantified in acreage of flood zone types, number of parcels impacted, and number of buildings impacted. Similar information along with a more technical overview of the engineering modeling is presented during the flood risk review meeting.

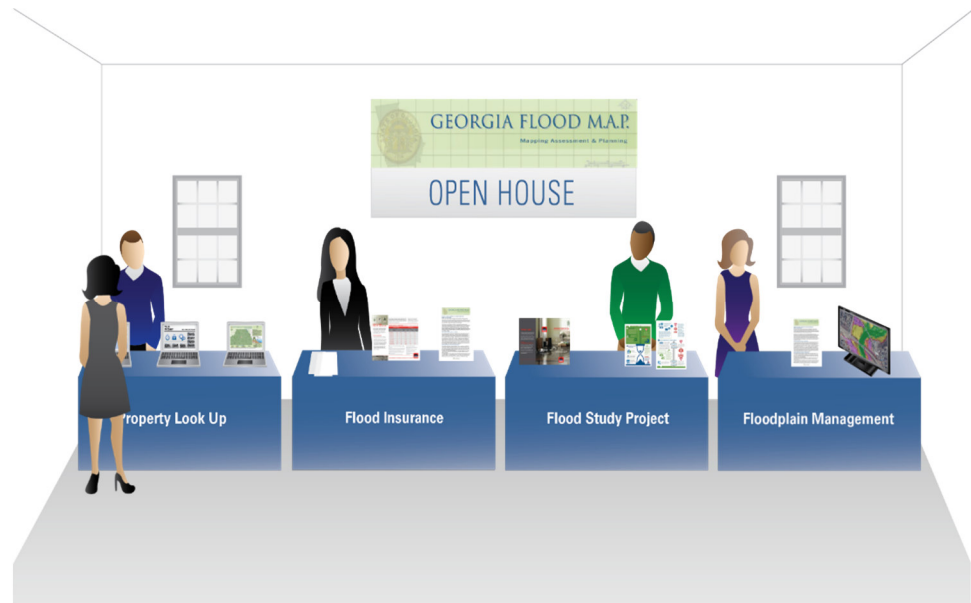


COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH TOOLBOX

FLOOD RISK OPEN HOUSE AND PRE- PLANNING MEETING

Georgia introduced Public Open Houses during FEMA's Map Modernization Program. The Open House is typically held following the release of the Preliminary maps. The Public Open House format has evolved quite a bit since the early days. Most notable, is the addition of the property look-up station. Upon arrival, property owners are able to sit at a computer station with someone from our program and look up their property and generate a Flood Risk Snapshot. A copy of the Flood Risk is printed for them right there which helps with facilitating conversations with their local

floodplain manager, the CTP Program staff, or with FEMA Insurance representatives. In addition, we have recently introduced Pre-Planning Meetings with the local floodplain managers prior to scheduling the Public Open House meetings. These are typically held by a webinar type conference call. During this call we discuss timeframes for the meetings, locations, open house format and logistics, and the type of notification process they community would like to have occur in advance of the Open House.



INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY NOTIFICATION

Individual property notification began for Georgia as a pilot project early on in FEMA's Risk M.A.P. Program. The idea was generated due to proposed state legislation at the time requiring individual notification. Georgia wanted a better idea of the level of effort that would result from this requirement, how it would be done, and who would be responsible. This service is now being offered to communities as part of the Open House planning as a standard practice. The service is optional, but we do encourage communities to participate since we have found that it generates a higher attendance to the Open House Meetings and potentially lowers the volume of calls the floodplain manager will receive once the maps are issued effective. Georgia will identify the parcels or buildings being impacted and generate the post cards. The communities are responsible for mailing out the notifications.

POSTCARD BACK



Address Here



POSTCARD

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RESILIENCE MEETINGS

The last of the project meetings provided are the Resilience Meetings. These are typically held following the issuance of the Letter of Final Determination (LFD). The placement of the meeting is strategic since it allows for the focus of discussion to be on mitigation strategies and actions and no longer on the regulatory mapping products. GEMA also plays a large role in this meeting providing information on mitigation projects, funding, planning resources, and technical assistance. An important component of this meeting is the presentation of Areas of Mitigation Interest (AOMI). We typically generate hundreds of AOMIs when developing the flood risk datasets. While not all are presented at the meeting that are included in the flood risk database. We also demonstrate through GIS exercises different applications of the flood risk datasets for further refining and prioritizing of AOMIs.

