



Introduction

The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA’s) flood hazard maps are one of the essential tools for flood mitigation in the United States. Unfortunately, many of these maps in Georgia have become outdated, especially in high growth and development areas. FEMA has established a broad goal of modernizing flood hazard maps nationwide.

As part of a Cooperating Technical Partner (CTP) Agreement with FEMA, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) under the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has accepted delegation and responsibility of the Map Modernization Program for the State of Georgia. This includes 159 counties and 531 communities throughout the State of Georgia.

How the Map Modernization Program Will Be Managed

The EPD will facilitate the implementation of FEMA’s Map Modernization Program through direct management and support of all regulatory, engineering, and mapping activities within the State of Georgia. EPD is committed to developing a fully integrated floodplain management program that incorporates:

- ❖ Mapping needs assessments,
- ❖ Project scoping,
- ❖ Hydrologic and hydraulic modeling,
- ❖ Floodplain delineation,
- ❖ An internal Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) process for all aspects of the program,
- ❖ Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) production,
- ❖ Post preliminary DFIRM processing, and
- ❖ Long-term map maintenance.



For its management plan to be effectively implemented, the State will need the full support and involvement of user communities. To ensure the full engagement of its partners, the State will commit a significant amount of resources to manage stakeholder expectations through up-front coordination, outreach, and customer service.

The EPD vision for the Map Modernization initiative is to develop a statewide program that provides more accurate and complete flood hazard information for

counties and communities within the state. At the end of the Map Modernization process, all 159 counties and 531 communities in Georgia will have updated Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) that incorporate new detailed studies, approximate studies, and/or updated base mapping. The new DFIRMs will be in a countywide format.

How Georgia Communities and Citizens will benefit from this program:

- ❖ The updated flood hazard data will provide current, accurate information for Georgia communities and property owners to make sound siting and design decisions when rebuilding after flood disasters, when building new structures and infrastructure, and when retrofitting existing structures.
- ❖ The use of updated flood hazard data by communities for floodplain management will dramatically reduce long-term flood losses in the State of Georgia.
- ❖ Updated flood hazard data will alert those at risk of flooding of the need to purchase flood insurance.
- ❖ It will be faster and cheaper to update DFIRMs.
- ❖ Current, updated base maps and the digital format of the DFIRMs will allow users to make more precise flood risk determinations.
- ❖ The digital format of the DFIRMs will utilize the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) computer programs for analysis and planning.
- ❖ The digital GIS format will allow online access to all maps 24 hours a day.
- ❖ The community's Digital Elevation Models (DEMs) utilized in the DFIRM production will be useful for many engineering and planning application, such as site design, Stormwater management, transportation planning and design, and spill response.

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