



## FLOOD MAP PRODUCTION PROCESS

### BACKGROUND

In support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the State of Georgia have undertaken a massive effort of flood hazard identification and mapping to update Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for much of the State. These maps are created to more accurately reflect the current flood risks in Georgia flood maps. These new flood maps will help business and home owners make better financial decisions about protecting their property and will assist community officials, engineers, builders and others in making important determinations about *where* and *how* new structures and developments should be built.

### FLOOD MAP PRODUCTION PHASES

#### Mapping Needs Assessment:

- Mapping needs are identified and reported to the State Floodplain Management Office for updating FEMA's Mapping Needs Update Support System (MNUSS).
- Additional data are collected including future file information, Letters of Map Change, other historical flooding data, Geographic Information System (GIS) data, aerial photos, digital orthophoto data, and topographic maps/data. (Note: In Georgia, all flood map updates will be produced with digital technology for ease of use and future update and maintenance.)
- FEMA and the State hold a Preliminary Mapping Needs Assessment Meeting.

#### Initial Scoping Meeting:

- Held by the State, meeting will include local officials of impacted communities, mapping contractors, and regional agencies.
- Discuss study scope of work, identify resources available and needed, establish priority levels, and define format and content.
- All aspects of the project are discussed and outlined.

#### 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.
- Develop a schedule.
- Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is sent and signed by the community and the State detailing the scope of work to be studied.

#### Map Production:

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

### Community Preliminary Review Period:

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

### Public Participation:

- Community officials host a public Preliminary DFIRM Community Coordination Meeting. FEMA and State officials explain to community officials the new maps, the changes in building and flood insurance requirements, and the review and comment process. An Open House is then held for the public to view the new flood maps, to see how they may be affected, and to ask questions of local and State officials as well as FEMA.
- If there are modified Base Flood Elevations (BFEs), two notices of BFE changes are published in local newspapers. The second notice begins a 90-day appeal period. 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 occur depending upon appeal or protest resolutions.)

### Letter of Final Determination (LFD):

- LFD issued by the State of Georgia and FEMA to communities and county.
- Dates of the effective DFIRM and FIS are published in the Federal Register.
- Within six months of the LFD date, County and communities must pass an ordinance adopting the new flood maps (or face suspension from the NFIP).

### Final FIS and FIRM Effective:

- FIS report and FIRM panels are published and become effective.
- Maps are distributed to all impacted communities and many other users by FEMA's Map Service Center.
- Changes in federal requirements for flood insurance become effective.
- Data may be submitted at any time, and if warranted, update the maps through a Letter of Map Change process.

**For more information regarding the flood map production process, please visit [www.georgiadfirm.com](http://www.georgiadfirm.com) or contact your Georgia Floodplain Management Office at:**

**Collis Brown, CFM**  
**Georgia Floodplain Mgmt Coordinator**  
**Georgia Dept of Natural Resources**  
 Environmental Protection Division  
 Seven Martin Luther King Jr., Drive Suite 440  
 Atlanta, GA 30334  
 404-656-6382  
 404-656-6383 fax  
 Collis\_Brown@mail.dnr.state.ga.us