

The Index

Georgia Department of Natural
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www.GeorgiaDFIRM.com

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LINKS OF INTEREST:

www.GeorgiaDFIRM.com
www.FloodSmart.gov
www.fema.gov/hazard/flood
<http://msc.fema.gov>

The Index is a publication of GA DNR Floodplain Management; for editorial comments or questions, please contact Tom Shillock at 404-675-1607, or write to tom.shillock@dnr.state.ga.us

GAFM CONFERENCE APPROACHES

The Georgia Association of Floodplain Management has its 6th Annual Conference scheduled for March 21-24, 2011 at the Legacy Lodge and Conference Center in Buford, Georgia. Floodplain management professionals from Federal, State, and Local government agencies, as well as private consultants will come together to discuss various topics related to flood risk. All are encouraged to attend this conference to learn more about floodplain management activities in Georgia, FEMA's Risk MAP program developments, and to see presentations about the UCRB project. For more information, visit www.gafloods.org.



Georgia Geospatial Advisory Council (GGAC)

Perhaps as vividly as any event in recent Georgia history, the floods of 2009 affected the metro-Atlanta and North Georgia areas resulting in more than \$500 million in uninsured losses. This event validated the need for accurate maps and data depicting the risk of flooding.

House Bill 169, passed into law in 2010, created the Georgia Geospatial Advisory Council (GGAC) and gave it two primary tasks:

- 1) Use geospatial capabilities in meeting Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) notification recommendations; and
- 2) Formulate GGAC recommendations for advancing governmental data interoperability and enhancing service delivery to the citizens of Georgia through geospatial technologies.

The council roster includes 27 members representing the spectrum of Georgia's state agencies and departments as well as 29 Federal, industry association and university affiliates. The GGAC achieved consensus on the following five recommendations:

- Formalize a geospatial advisory council to the General Assembly or state governmental entity with rules making authority
- Establish Georgia Geospatial Information Office
- Execute statewide master agreement(s) for geospatial software/services/resources
- Develop a digital, statewide parcel GIS database (i.e., "property" database) Develop a current (2009 and newer), high-resolution, statewide elevation GIS database

These recommendations represent what the GGAC finds to be the most viable approach to advancing the use of geospatial technology and assets for the purpose of notification as recommended by FEMA. It will produce, for a very modest sum, a significant Return on Investment (ROI) to the taxpayers of Georgia. This ROI will be realized in the form of direct savings to state and local governments, as well as indirect benefits created via decisions made by state and local officials empowered and enlightened by geospatial information. For more information, or to view the results of the GGAC Geospatial Survey, please visit <http://map.georgiadfirm.com>

Floodplain Management Training Course (E-273) in April

FEMA's Floodplain Management Training Course E-273 was designed for local officials responsible for administering their local floodplain management ordinance as well as others involved in floodplain management activities. The course focuses on the NFIP and concepts of floodplain management, interpreting the Flood Insurance Study and Flood Map, effective administration of the local flood ordinance, and the relationship between Floodplain Management and Flood Insurance.

The course will be held April 11-14 (8:30-5:00) at the Henry County Government Annex in McDonough, GA. The course itself is free of charge. Please contact Veronica Briers for more information at 404-675-1757.

PRELIMINARY DFIRM ISSUANCE DATES HAVE CHANGED FOR THE UPPER CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER BASIN PROJECT!!!

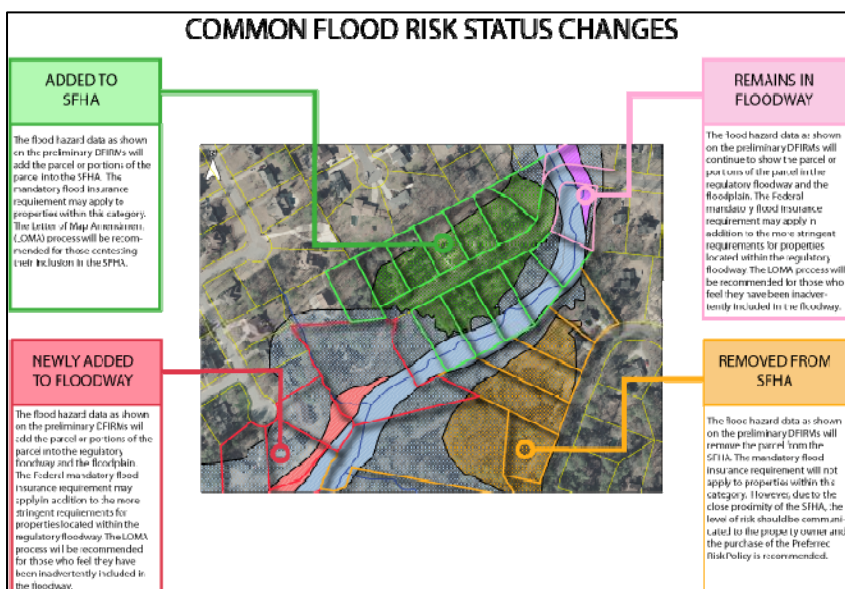
Please see www.GeorgiaDFIRM.com for latest schedule updates. Also, effective data for 153 of Georgia's 159 counties are now available through the website's GIS Map Viewer. Lots of useful outreach support material is there as well!

FEMA's Early Demonstration Projects

As part of FEMA's Risk MAP effort, new flood risk products and datasets are being created to help communities better understand and communicate the changes in flood risk. These products can also aid in identifying areas where to focus on mitigation efforts to reduce those risks. Georgia DNR has been chosen by FEMA to help test the products and the concepts behind them. The two projects that have been chosen by FEMA are GA DNR's Early Property Notification Project and Dam Inundation project. Lessons learned from the early demonstration testing will be applied to updating guidance and further refinement of the concepts and products.

Early Property Notification Project

A common theme heard during Map Modernization was that the public was unaware that the flood maps were changing and the potential effects of those changes. Recognizing this and attempting to provide better tools for communities to help communicate the level of risk to property owners, GA DNR proposed the following pilot project: Early Property Notification. The UCRB counties that have expressed interest to participate in this pilot project include Forsyth, Fulton, and Douglas. The specific objective of this GA DNR Early Demonstration project is to provide additional outreach and risk communication support after the release of the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) for communities within the project area.



When preliminary DFIRMs are issued, GA DNR will analyze the Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) as shown on the preliminary maps and compare that back to the SFHAs as shown on the current effective maps. Using the preliminary DFIRM data and newly acquired parcel data¹, a report will be created that categorizes each parcel within the project area as to how it is affected (e.g., mapped into an SFHA; mapped out of an SFHA). Individual template letters can then be sent to each property owner, notifying them of the change to the flood risk on their parcel and encouraging them to contact the local floodplain administrator or attend information meetings scheduled during the mapping process to present the preliminary flood maps. This enhancement to flood risk communication is intended to help increase interest and participation at the community level. It will also help the local community communicate the change in flood risk to the public before property owners start to receive notifications about mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements from their insurance agent and lender. The sooner communities are able to act and communicate flood risk changes to their citizens, the better off everyone will be about knowing their status and being able to proactively make decisions about how to properly address their flood risk.

More information about this process will be coming soon to communities who have expressed interest in testing this process once their preliminary data has been developed. Meanwhile, if you are interested in this project, please contact Tom Shillock at tom.shillock@dnr.state.ga.us.

Dam Inundation Project

GA DNR is also developing innovative new concepts in digital dam breach inundation mapping and risk assessment for two high hazard dams in Georgia. These new concepts include the development of digital inundation zones that also communicate depth, arrival time, time to peak, peak elevation, and velocity associated with dam breach floods. These products will be valuable tools to assist State Dam Safety Programs and the local emergency responders with determining the consequences, effectively analyzing the risk, and planning emergency response measures in the event of a dam breach.

¹ Local parcel data will need to be acquired for the entire project site from the local government. In cases where the parcel data will not be released to GA DNR, a step-by-step guide will be delivered to the local government to run their own analysis.