

FEMA Region II NY and NJ Coastal Restudy Newsletter

JANUARY 2020 UPDATE



WHAT IS THE FEMA REGION II NY AND NJ COASTAL RESTUDY?

The NY and NJ Coastal Restudy will re-examine the flood hazards for coastal New York and New Jersey. The study area includes Cape May, Atlantic, Ocean, Monmouth, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, and Union counties in New Jersey; Westchester County, NY; and the five boroughs of New York City.

New storm surge analysis and wave modeling will produce revised flood maps for many coastal communities in the study area. The restudy is being conducted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in response to New York City's 2015 appeal of the 2013-2014 preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the area.

WHERE ARE WE IN THE RESTUDY PROCESS?

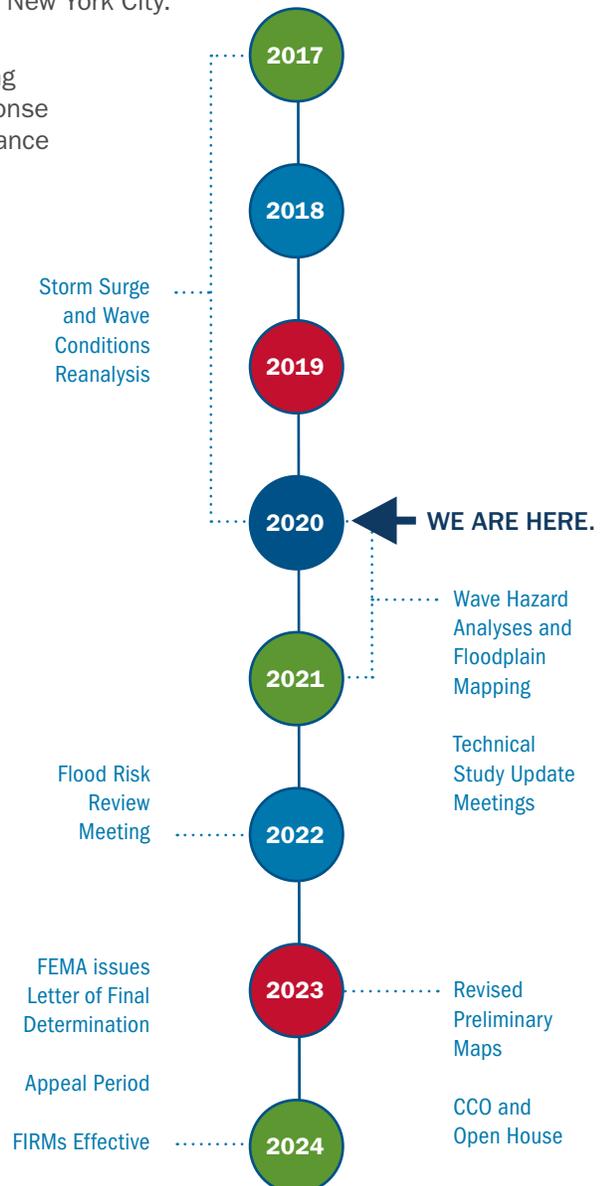
In late September and early October of 2019, FEMA Region II held seven in-person meetings and one webinar to provide updates on the NY and NJ Coastal Restudy to communities across the study area. Over 200 stakeholders, including floodplain managers, local elected officials, planners, engineers, and congressional representatives attended these meetings.

During the meetings, FEMA summarized the Intermediate Data Submittal (IDS) 1 report, and how the reanalysis has been enhanced to provide better hazard information and data:

- EXTENSIVE MODEL VALIDATION FOR ALL EXTRA-TROPICAL CYCLONES
- IMPROVED REPRESENTATION OF TIDAL EFFECTS
- INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL AND RECENT STORM EVENTS

A preview of IDS 2 and IDS 3, which are projected to be complete in 2020, was also shared during the meetings along with details of the remaining project timeline. The Flood Risk Review meeting, an opportunity for communities to review the draft work maps, is targeted for 2022. FEMA will continue sharing information about these project milestones through in-person meetings and these newsletters.

During these meetings, there were numerous questions from the audience on a variety of topics, including future conditions, clarification of technical details, and access to study documentation. This newsletter provides answers to the most common questions received.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1 WILL THE UPDATED MAPS REFLECT FUTURE CONDITIONS, SUCH AS THE EFFECTS OF SEA LEVEL RISE?

FEMA FIRMs are based on the best information currently available. Evolving hazards are not incorporated into FIRMs because, for insurance purposes, Congress requires that flood maps reflect current hazards. Therefore, FIRMs cannot be based on the potential effects of proposed projects or climate change. In coastal areas of the restudy, sea level rise that has already occurred is reflected in the current data and will be reflected in the updated FIRMs.

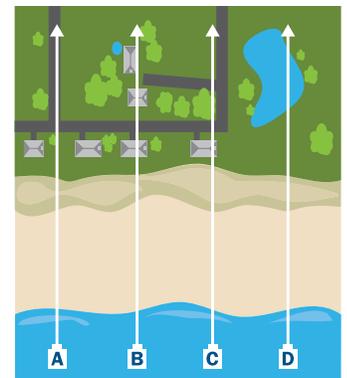
The 1-percent-annual-chance floodplain and Base Flood Elevations are the regulatory minimum for informing floodplain management decisions. FEMA encourages communities to take more proactive measures, such as using the 0.2-percent-annual-chance floodplain and flood elevations to implement more restrictive local requirements or regulations.

FEMA Region II recognizes that communities throughout the restudy area are interested in supplementing FEMA's FIRMs with information about future hazards. Many Federal, State, and local agencies; academic institutions; and nonprofit organizations are in the process of assessing future flood risk. FEMA encourages communities to reach out to these stakeholders for more information.

2 HOW WILL THE TRANSECTS BE ENHANCED FOR THE OVERLAND WAVE ANALYSES?

Transects are cross-sections generally placed perpendicular to the shoreline and used in the overland wave hazard analyses. The restudy will build on the transects used for the 2013-2014 preliminary FIRMs. On average, 20 percent more transects will be added to each county to enhance the assessment of wave hazards. Adding transects gives the study team a more detailed understanding of how wave hazards affect different locations along the shore. Transects will be added in strategic locations where there is new construction and/or enhanced coastal protections to capture recent changes in the study area.

To confirm that the location of these new transects are appropriate, the study team will conduct field visits. The placement of these transects will then receive three rounds of review by the study team, in addition to review by FEMA and the Coastal Advisory Panel.



3 HOW WILL THE RESTUDY INCORPORATE NEWLY AVAILABLE DATA AND PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED INFORMATION, SUCH AS LETTERS OF MAP AMENDMENT (LOMAS)?

The study team will work to incorporate the best available data throughout the study process. This includes updated elevation data, incorporating recently completed shoreline protection projects, and using data provided during the previous appeal period, where appropriate. Coastal modeling and mapping is a step-by-step process, so data made available today generally cannot be incorporated into a part of the study that has already been completed. However, the study team is still collecting information from the communities that may be used in future phases of the study. To submit additional data, you can contact FEMA Risk Analysis Branch Chief Mike Foley at michael.foley3@fema.dhs.gov.

As is standard practice, effective Letters of Map Change (LOMCs) will be reviewed during the creation of new maps to determine whether they are still valid. The findings of the LOMC review are summarized within the Summary of Map Actions (SOMA) document. The SOMA will list which LOMCs are incorporated into the updated maps, which are superseded by the new maps, and which will be revalidated when the updated maps become effective.

4 WHEN WILL DATA FROM THE NY AND NJ COASTAL RESTUDY BE SHARED?

Once the draft work maps become available, which is estimated to be in 2022, study data will be shareable.





HOW CAN I HELP MY COMMUNITY AND RESIDENTS?

Though updated flood maps are not yet available, flooding can happen anywhere and at any time. There are many opportunities for communities and individuals to proactively reduce their flood risk. Start by visiting [floodsmart.gov](https://www.floodsmart.gov) for information about flood insurance and tips on how to prepare for flood events.



The FEMA Region II Coastal Analysis and Mapping website ([region2coastal.com](https://www.region2coastal.com)) features a [What's MY BFE? tool](#) that allows officials and residents to compare the effective and revised FEMA flood hazard data by searching for an address.

WHO MAY I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

FEMA REGION II	RESILIENCE ACTION PARTNERS – COMMUNITY OUTREACH
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