



**FEMA Region VI
Risk MAP News and Information**
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LINKS OF INTEREST:

- www.rampp-team.com
- www.floodsmart.com
- www.floodsmart.gov/toolkits
- www.fema.gov/hazard/flood
- <http://msc.fema.gov>

The Voice is a publication of FEMA Region VI.

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Nobody knows your community better than you.

We ask for your participation as part of a diverse team representing federal, state, local, and private interests with one important goal in mind:

Let's keep our community safe from the risks associated with flooding.

Communities and FEMA Working Together to Update Flood Insurance Rate Maps

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, has directed a unique team of experts to begin the process of preparing a study for your community. This may be the first time that you have been made aware of this important Program that is being undertaken by FEMA in coordination with local communities. FEMA and the Risk Analysis Mapping and Planning Partners (RAMPP) Team will be contacting you and asking that you join the team in developing the project scope for this study.

Scoping the Project for Your Community

The process of developing a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) begins with the project scoping process. The key to any successful project is including local communities early on in the process of preparing the project or study plan. This will be accomplished by your participation along with FEMA and the RAMPP Team in a scoping meeting. FEMA is looking to achieve the “best value” for the community by identifying and prioritizing its mapping needs during this meeting.



Ortho-based FIRM

Developing the scope of work for a FIRM study is comparable to detective work. Creating up to date and reliable flood maps requires the Team to collect large amounts of data from a variety of sources. So that we are better prepared to meet with you during the scoping meeting, we have reviewed your community’s current effective FIRM, the stream networks that run through your community, and any disaster declarations that have been made in your community. The Team is looking to the local community to work with us so that we better understand the information that we have already gathered, and to identify additional sources of information that we can use in the study process. Examples of additional data we will be gathering include elevation, hydrologic, and hydraulic data; and base maps showing road and stream lines.

It is important that the local community is engaged with our Team at the onset and as the study progresses. An important role that you can play is serving as a liaison between local, state, and federal stakeholders, so that at the completion of the study, there is a comprehensive understanding and acceptance of study results.

How can you help?

You are an important and necessary partner in updating your community's FIRM. Current and accurate information that is reflected in the updated FIRM will result in an important benefit to your community—you will be better able to assess your risk of flooding. This is especially vital as local development occurs within your community, and as a decision maker, you will be better prepared to make wise decisions so that people, homes, and businesses in your community are protected in the face of future flooding.

Your local knowledge and understanding of the physical characteristics of land and water features will play an important role in helping the Team complete the study process, resulting in the most accurate maps for your community. Here are some questions that you may be able to help us answer:

- What areas have been mapped in the past and what data is available for these areas?
- Do you have any local data sets that the Team can use in preparing the FIRM?
- What areas of your community have experienced a high degree of growth in the last decade? Are these areas primarily residential? Commercial? Industrial?
- Have new roads or bridges been built that cross streams or rivers?
- Are there areas that have experienced natural physical changes within a floodplain, such as subsidence or extreme erosion?



FEMA Region VI meeting with county and community officials to discuss the status of their flood study.

Why New Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps?

Many of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps that are currently in effect were developed in the early 1970s. Since then, many flooding events and changes to land masses and waterways have occurred. FEMA has recognized the need to update the Flood Insurance Rate Maps with this new data so that the information about flooding, not only in your community, but in communities across the country, is accurately represented. Providing accurate, up-to-date flood hazard data and risk information is the first step in preventing future damage and reducing flood losses. Decisions that will mitigate or offset impacts associated with flooding rely heavily on current, accurate flood hazard data.

