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Risk MAP Success Story: Coweta County, Georgia Enhances Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan Using Flood Risk Products

This page describes the successes that came about from implementing the Risk MAP process at Coweta County, Georgia. It is intended for state and community officials, mitigation and urban planners and other individuals interested in how the Risk MAP program and project cycle can benefit their community in identifying and mitigating flood hazards.

Georgia's unique geographic location exposes the state and its citizens to severe weather and flooding at any time of the year. The State of Georgia has averaged a federal disaster declaration about once a year in the last fifteen years.

A Hazard Mitigation Plan forms the foundation for a community's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The planning process creates a framework for risk-based decision making to reduce damages to lives, property, and the economy from future disasters. In Georgia, Hazard Mitigation Plans are updated every five years, and the updating process can take 12 to 18 months. Coweta County was directly involved with updating its Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Approach

In December 2012 the first Risk MAP Resilience Meeting in FEMA Region IV was held in Newnan, GA. Newnan, the county seat of Coweta County, is located about 35 miles southwest of Atlanta. Coweta County and City of Newnan officials were impressed with the Risk MAP flood risk products demonstrated at the Resilience Meeting. The County Administrator and the director of development and engineering were so engaged with the Risk MAP data layers that they added an appendix to their county Hazard Mitigation Plan

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with a greater emphasis on a flood mitigation action plan to reevaluate land use patterns in relationship to the data layers they received from the Flood Risk Database.

It was a multi-agency effort to hold a successful Resilience Meeting. Meeting attendees included FEMA associates, Georgia Cooperating Technical Partners, the Department of Natural Resources Floodplain Management Unit, Georgia Emergency Management Agency's Director of Mitigation, Coweta County and Newnan city representatives, and the Department of Community Affairs' [HAZUS](#) specialist.

The Georgia Risk MAP study contractor presented an overview of Risk MAP products and datasets. During the meeting, hands-on demonstrations were provided to local officials to familiarize them with the [flood risk products](#) contained within the Flood Risk Database. During the presentation, floodprone areas were highlighted via the Changes Since Last FIRM dataset, identifying the number of structures and population counts impacted by changes to the special flood hazard boundary. One alarming issue of concern at the Resilience Meeting was discovering that nine critical facilities in Coweta County are located in high-risk flood-prone areas.

Impact

Following the Resilience Meeting, Coweta County used the newly obtained flood risk products as a guide to update its countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan. Coweta County officials are taking action steps to make existing and future construction less vulnerable to the effects of flooding through the enforcement of effective building and zoning codes. They also are identifying and analyzing a range of other mitigation options.

Risk MAP Project Phases

This success story is relevant to the [Risk MAP project phases](#) listed below:

- Discovery
- Resilience Meeting
- Flood Risk Products

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More Resilient Communities

- Risk MAP Success Story: Robust Outreach Leads to Expedited Updates to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the New Orleans Area
- Risk MAP Success Story: The Herbert Hoover Dike Presented a Unique Challenge; FEMA Responded With a Unique Solution
- Project Lifecycle
- Engineering Library
- Regional Contact Information
- Map Service Center
- National Flood Hazard Layer
- Status of Map Change Requests
- Forms and Documents
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Guidelines and Standards for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping
- What's New
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- ▶ Tutorials and Training
- ▶ Living with Levees
- ▶ Numerical Models
 - Meeting the Minimum Requirements
- ▶ User Groups
 - Coordinated Needs Management Strategy

→ High Water Mark Initiative

→ Hazus

→ Dam Safety

→ National Preparedness

→ Preparedness (Non-Disaster) Grants

→ Assistance To Firefighters Grant Program

→ Hazard Mitigation Assistance

→ Continuity of Operations

→ Integrated Public Alert & Warning System



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