NFHL Data Now Updated Continually

On July 14, FEMA started daily updates of the National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL). New Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) data appear online on their effective dates, providing users with access to the most current flood hazard information. NFHL services including the MapViewer - Web, NFHL Web Map Service (WMS), and NFHL Google Earth™ utilities provide up-to-date access to effective flood hazard data immediately.

The updates also are included in the releases of NFHL Geographic Information System (GIS) data, which is packaged by State and available through the FEMA Map Service Center (MSC). As of July, FEMA began monthly updates to the NFHL GIS data.

In June, FEMA also started adding location points of Letters of Map Amendment (LOMAs) and Letters of Map Revision Based on Fill (LOMR-Fs) to the MapViewer–Web. By clicking on the point, users can access the LOMA and LOMR-F determination documents that the Map Service Center makes available for online viewing. Coverage of LOMAs and LOMR-Fs is incomplete for LOMAs and LOMR-Fs issued before 2000. FEMA only displays LOMAs and LOMR-Fs where the NFHL has flood hazard data.

For more information about these NFHL products, visit the FEMA MSC Web site at http://msc.fema.gov or call the MSC toll-free at 1-800-358-9616.

Source: Mike Domaratz, (703) 317-6269

Simplified Data Capture Standards Posted Online

FEMA has developed a revised draft specification for the Data Capture Standards (DCS), which are located in Appendix N of FEMA’s Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners. FEMA will implement the new DCS, in coordination with mapping partners, immediately on some existing and future task orders.

Based on the feedback describing difficulty of implementing the existing specification, FEMA has produced a new version that is simpler and better documented. The new strategy and data structure implemented by the new version of the DCS will bring significant savings and better archiving of study data.

The new specification also contains guidance for collecting base map, coastal, alluvial fan, redelineation, and digital conversion technical data not previously referenced in the DCS. FEMA and the MOD team are continuing to create the scoping section of the DCS.

To ease the impact on projects implementing the new specification, FEMA is providing an enhanced level of support through the MOD team to address questions that arise. FEMA is maintaining an online discussion forum where mapping partners can post questions and comments and allow the FEMA and the MOD team to provide answers and clarifications.

The revised document will be available for public review and comment until September 30, 2008. FEMA encourages public comment from all interested parties regarding the feasibility of implementing the proposed specifications, the utility and completeness of the finished proposed product, and the usability of the DCS document itself.

For information on accessing this Web forum, the revised DCS document, and implementation guidance, please go to www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/gs_dcs.shtm.
Key Flood Insurance Stakeholders Receive Map Mod Update
This month, FEMA and the MOD team met with two key flood insurance associations, the Flood Insurance Producers National Committee (FIPNC) and the Institute of Business and Home Safety (IBHS) Flood Insurance Committee. The committees shared information on insurance-related issues with FEMA, which in turn provide updates on the Severe Repetitive Loss Program, FloodSmart, NextGen, and Map Mod.

FEMA Federal Insurance Administrator David Maurstad presented some of his insights into the program and challenges faced, such as the Midwest flooding and how it revealed the low number of non-participating communities and the low penetration of flood insurance policies, especially in Special Flood Hazard Areas.

FEMA Program Specialist Vince Brown presented an update on Map Mod at FIPNC, FEMA Program Specialist Claire Drury presented the same at IBHS, and Jeanette Hanfling and Bruce Bender represented the MOD team at both meetings.

Vince and Claire provided updates on Map Mod’s progress, the next step after Map Mod (i.e., Risk MAP), the National Flood Hazard Layer and some of its benefits for agents (i.e., identification of Letter of Map Amendments, levee information and the ability to overlay it with Google Earth™), the MIP Ad-hoc Reporting System (MARS) and how the MOD team and FloodSmart team will be working together to create a report that will help keep insurance professionals up-to-date on map changes, historic maps, and FEMA’s digital as official policy. New outreach material on understanding map changes for insurance professionals was also distributed.

FIPNC is a committee of representatives from three insurance agent associations that meets three times a year for half of a day to share National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)-related flood insurance concerns and issues with FEMA. The IBHS Flood Committee, composed of representatives from Write Your Own (WYO) flood insurance companies, also meets three times a year for half of a day for the same purpose.

The MOD team will continue to work with both organizations to keep them informed and updated on Map Mod. Their next meetings will be held in October.

KPIs 1 and 2 for Quarter 3
FEMA relies solely on information in the Mapping Information Platform (MIP) to report Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 1 and 2. Therefore, it is important for updated project information to be entered regularly in the MIP. FEMA uses KPIs to measure the progress of Map Mod in quantifiable numbers.

It is important that Mapping Partners enter actual preliminary and effective dates among other data by the fifth business day of each month, which is when the data is “pulled” from the MIP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance Indicator (KPI)</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>% of population with digital GIS flood data (preliminary maps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>% of population with effective maps that meet quality standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FEMA HQ and the MOD team staff closely coordinate with the FEMA Regional Offices to manage the progress toward meeting the KPI 1 and KPI 2 goals. The MOD team prepares a monthly report on national progress, which allows FEMA and the MOD team to proactively take steps to achieve program goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance Indicator (KPI)</th>
<th>National Target (FY08)</th>
<th>Actual Result (Q3 FY08)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DCS (continued from page 1)
FEMA will provide enhanced support through September 30, 2008. At that time, all the questions, comments, and answers collected will be integrated into a final specification to be published in the late fall or winter.

In addition to the changes described above, the revised version of the DCS attempts to consolidate the DCS deliverables and the Technical Support Data Notebook (TSDN) to reduce the overlapping requirements for mapping partners. To ensure that FEMA retains complete documentation of studies, all FEMA-contracted studies must comply with either the existing or the revised draft DCS and will continue to require the TSDN as a final deliverable at the end of the project. The submittal of the TSDN requirement will continue until the revised DCS is finalized and published late fall or winter.

For users interested in a summary, FEMA will periodically publish a digest of common questions and answers on FEMA’s Flood Hazard Mapping Web site www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/gs_dcs.shtm.

Source: Turgay Dabak, (703) 317-6286
Source: Katie Bennett, (703) 317-3069
Earned Value Training

A group of 20 representatives from FEMA HQ, the Regional Offices, contractors, and mapping partners were given a first-hand look at the advantages of Earned Value (EV) as part of the recently completed Earned Value Management (EVM) training session. The training was co-hosted by the MOD team and ASI, a FEMA acquisition and management contractor, on July 16.

The training, which was a follow-up to last summer’s EVM Road Show, was designed to increase the knowledge and use of EVM by FEMA and to convey the value of EVM to contractors and mapping partners. To allow for national audience participation, FEMA held the training online through Web Ex.

EV is a recognized project management best practice for monitoring and managing work in a systematic manner. EV results are reviewed at the program level by FEMA HQ and by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and at the Regional level during Joint Program Reviews. OMB and DHS have developed new guidance on EV and will be using the information more in the upcoming year to assess program progress.

EVM provides early warning capability to identify and control potential problems with the cost and schedule. This allows the project management team to implement corrective actions. The MOD team focused on how the Mapping Information Platform (MIP) uses and captures EV data to be implemented as a project and program management tool.

FEMA has incorporated this methodology into the MIP to calculate the performance of study projects on a monthly basis. Through MARS, the MIP Ad hoc Reporting System, EV Reports can be compiled to provide each FEMA Region with an actionable process to manage study projects.

These same reports can be developed and customized for contractors and mapping partners and emailed on a regular basis to provide up-to-date EV data.

For more information on MARS please visit hazards.fema.gov > MIP User Care > Guides and Documentation > Recent and Upcoming Service Packs > MARS Overview April 2008.

Source: Luis Rodriguez, (703) 960-8800 x5274

ASFPM – NAFSMA – NSP Focus Group Meeting

Representatives from the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM), the National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies (NAFSMA), and the MOD team participated in an all-day focus group meeting on July 22.

The meeting provided an opportunity for the stakeholders to update FEMA and the MOD team on flood hazard mapping issues from their perspectives.

The meeting was held in Madison, WI, and was attended by MOD team members Dwight Beranek and Ed Thomas, who acted as the meeting’s moderator. Several other key representatives joined via phone from the MOD team office in Alexandria, VA. FEMA representatives Roy Wright and Kelly Bronowicz, also attended in Madison as observers.

The group discussed many big picture areas, such as FEMA’s Digital Vision, levees, lessons from the recent flooding in the Midwest, and pending legislation. Association participants included Alan Lulloff, Larry Larson, Jeff Stone, Diane Brown, and Tim Trautman of ASFPM, and Bill DeGroot and Susan Gilson of NAFSMA.

Source: Nat Elliott, (703) 960-8800 x5527