

# Floodplain and Shoreland Management

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# Notes

## Map Modernization: the Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map Phase

The Map Modernization process has three phases: scoping; preliminary FIRMs; and Letter of Final Determination. Frequently communities are unsure of their role in the preliminary FIRM phase.

Preliminary FIRMs are draft Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) created by either digitizing existing maps and data, developing new maps from new data or a combination of existing and new maps and data. The maps created are draft and subject to revision after public review.

When the preliminary FIRMs are completed, FEMA sends copies of the draft maps to all the communities in the county being updated. A meeting with local officials and a public meeting are then scheduled. The purpose of the local officials meeting is to review the draft maps, explain the next steps in the map adoption process, outline the local officials responsibilities, explain the 90-day Comment and Appeal period and answer any questions. The purpose of the public meeting is to allow the public to review the draft maps, explain the 90-day Comment and Appeal period and answer any questions.

Local officials have three primary responsibilities: maintain the preliminary FRMs for public review, review the draft maps for any needed changes and act as the point of contact for all comments and appeals.

Any proposed changes to the preliminary FIRMs are either comments or appeals. The comments and appeals are collected by the local officials and then submitted to FEMA for review. Comments are typically minor in nature and do not involve

changes to either flood zone boundaries or base flood elevations. Changes that are defined as Comments are municipal boundary corrections, relocation/renaming of streets, typographical errors, etc.

Appeals are technical in nature and are challenges to the underlying engineering process or data used to create the map. Appeals can result in changes to flood zone boundaries or base flood elevations. In order to be considered, appeals must follow a specific procedure as outlined in 44 CFR 67 *Appeals From Proposed Flood Elevations*. To download a pdf of the appeal process go to <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/retrieve.html>. Click on *Browse and/or Search*. Then scroll down to *Title 44 Emergency Management and Assistance, checkoff October 1, 2007* and then click *Continue* at the bottom of the page. Click on *Parts 0-399* and then on 67. This will bring up pdfs of each section of Part 67.

FEMA notifies communities in advance of the start of the 90-day period. Comments and appeals can be submitted only during the 90-day Comments and Appeal period. The comments and appeals must be submitted through the local community. The local community then submits them to FEMA for review. Any comments or appeals which are accepted by FEMA are then incorporated into the final FIRM.

For more information on the Map Modernization process, visit the DNR website <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/dsfm/flood/mapping.htm>.



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