



FEMA

# Flood Risk Review Meeting Minutes Greenbrier County, West Virginia

September 15, 2020  
10:30am  
Webinar

## Welcome, Introductions, and Opening Remarks

Presenters for the meeting included:

- Robert Pierson, PMP, *Project Officer, FEMA*
- Jason Sevanick Durant, GISP, CFM, *Project Manager, Wood*
- Matt Breen, P.E, CFM, *Study Engineer, Wood*
- Tyler Good, *Community Planner, Resilience Action Partners*
- Chuck Grishaber, *State NFIP Coordinator, WV Office of the Insurance Commissioner*

There was a total of 30 attendees, 17 of whom were community, Planning District Commission, or state representatives.

## Contacts

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## Presentation

### *Where We Are – Draft Maps*

- This countywide study was initiated in response to the devastating flooding in June 2016, originally planned as a successive effort to the select “PMR” restudy reaches (which would follow an accelerated regulatory update schedule), but now consolidated as a single countywide update.
- The FRR meeting gives local officials the opportunity to review and discuss the draft study data with representatives from FEMA and the State of West Virginia. Representatives from the communities and County are encouraged to submit any concerns, questions, and suggested changes to Kevin Sneed and Robert Pierson.
- Preliminary flood maps are scheduled to be released in February 2021, and another meeting will be scheduled to help County and community representatives prepare for outreach to property owners affected by the preliminary maps. Afterwards, a 90-day appeal period for all new or modified flood hazard information will start. Maps are expected to be finalized through a Letter of Final Determination (LFD) in Summer of 2022 and will become effective six months later. However, if appeals are received the process may take longer.
- Communities can review the draft study data and submit any concerns or comments up to 30 days from the date of the FRR meeting.

### *Flood Study Update*

- This countywide study incorporates new hydrologic and hydraulic modeling and mapping for 53 miles of detailed, AE Zones (25 miles of which were studied for the PMR release) as well as new ‘QL2’ LiDAR data collected by USGS in late 2016.
- This study updates all effective Zone A areas with revised model-backed data and establishes model-backed Zone A flood hazards in previously unmapped locations that drain at least 2 square miles. The total studied Zone A mileage is 543 miles.
- Approximate study reaches in this countywide project include any streams already identified as Zone A on the effective FIRMs (which may include streams with 1 square mile or greater drainage areas) as well as any streams without previously mapped flood hazards that have drainage areas greater than or equal to 2 square miles.
- FEMA will provide Greenbrier County and incorporated communities with Flood Risk Dashboards that show how the proposed flood map updates could impact each community from a National Flood Insurance Program perspective.
- The Region III Changes Since Last FIRM (CSLF) Viewer can be accessed at this link: <https://arcg.is/1Hrmvr0>. This viewer shows the proposed changes in floodplain extent between the effective and draft FIRM.

### *Using Flood Risk Data to Reduce Risk*

- Non-regulatory Flood Risk Products (FRPs) can inform flood mitigation decisions. These non-regulatory products include the CSLF, Water Surface Elevation (WSE) grids, depth and analysis grids, and economic loss calculation tools. New FRPs associated with this update will be posted to the Map Service Center (MSC) when available.
- FRPs are helpful for managing development and for hazard mitigation planning. Since hazard mitigation planning is cyclical, FRPs can help identify hazards even after a new hazard mitigation plan is completed.



Hazard identification should consistently inform decision-making as Greenbrier County moves forward with mitigation and development projects.

- The National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL), FEMA’s Map Service Center (MSC), and the West Virginia Flood Tool available were discussed as tools to assess risk. There was a discussion clarifying that there are 3 different versions of the NFHL: Effective, Preliminary, and Draft.
- A discussion took place providing some caution on the disconnect between the WV Flood Tool effective data vs. the more accurate and newer FEMA draft/preliminary data. This disconnect will be for a brief period of time, and the WVU GIS Tech Center is working on solutions to minimize impacts.

### **Discussion**

- Hazard Mitigation Planning should incorporate the draft changes to the high-risk flood hazard areas. In areas with updated high-risk flood hazard areas, the more conservative data (wider floodplain and higher BFE) should be used for permitting.
- Following the FRR meeting, there will be a 30-day comment period for County and community officials to submit comments on the data. After the County and communities have reviewed the materials provided, FEMA and its mapping partners can be reached to answer any questions about the study.
- At this point, it is recommended that outreach be conducted to discuss future mitigation actions.
- The community will need to update their ordinances once FEMA issues the LFD (projected Summer 2022).

## **Questions/Comments**

### **Q: Why is the Town of Alderson mapped with Monroe County?**

The Town of Alderson is a multi-county community that has already been mapped in its entirety with Monroe, so it will continue that way. The new study reach of the Greenbrier River will be reflected in the Monroe County update which is in progress.

### **Q: Are there revisions to the PMR floodplains and BFEs?**

No, they remain the same as the preliminary issuance on 2/3/2020, except for a small floodway adjustment to tie into new modeling.

### **Q: Could we look at the draft data for the specific location of Tunnel Loop Road?**

Yes – according to the new draft data, the structures located at Tunnel Loop Road are in the Special Flood Hazard Area – Zone A.

### **C: Kurt Donaldson, WVU GIS Tech Center**

There will be new Greenbrier Countywide imagery available in the fall of 2020 that was funded by FEMA and flown in early 2020.

### **C: Kurt Donaldson, WVU GIS Tech Center**

The WVU GIS Tech Center is interested in gathering records on mitigated structures (new construction or improved), so that the state has an accurate record and can better assess potential flood damages.