

FEMA Region II NY and NJ Coastal Restudy Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2019 UPDATE



WHAT IS THE NY & NJ COASTAL RESTUDY?

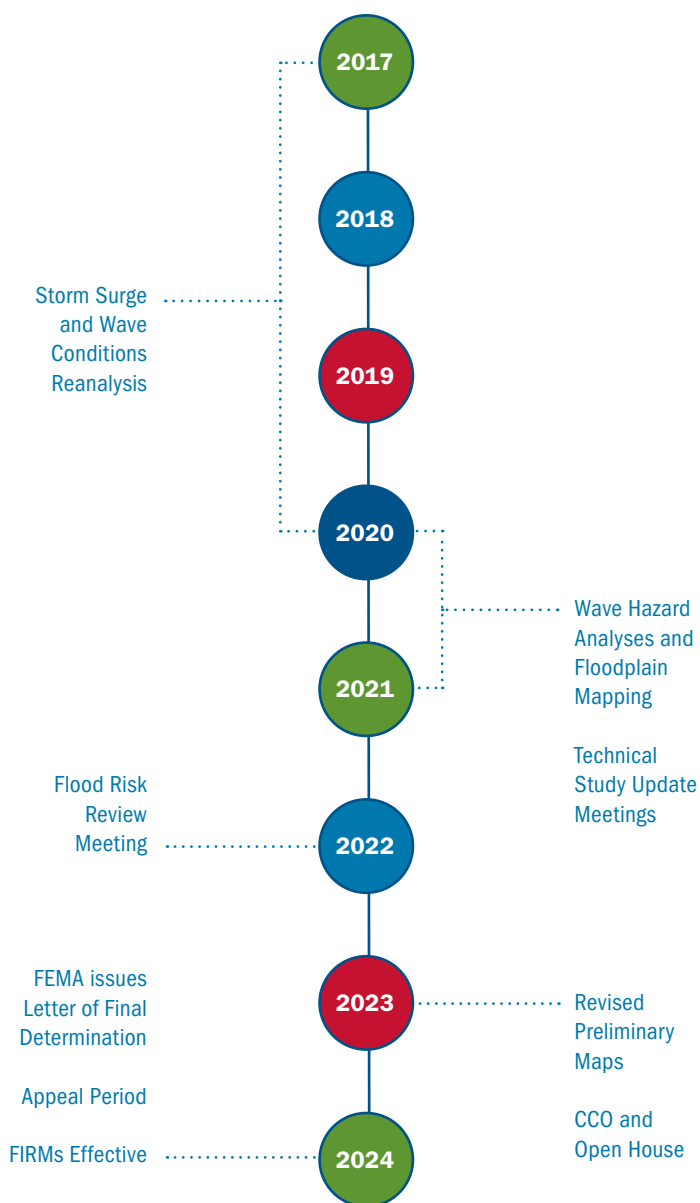
The Coastal Restudy, which began in November 2017, will re-examine the flood risk information for communities in New York and New Jersey. New storm surge analysis and wave modeling will produce revised flood maps for New York City, Westchester County, New York, and coastal communities in New Jersey (Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, and Union counties).

WHY IS A RESTUDY NECESSARY?

FEMA issued preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the area in 2013-2014. New York City appealed the maps in 2015, citing concerns with aspects of the storm surge analysis. FEMA responded to the appeal and is conducting a restudy of the coupled storm surge and wave modeling, overland wave height and runup modeling, and floodplain mapping.



WHAT IS THE PROPOSED TIMELINE?



WHAT IS NEXT?

Four key elements of the restudy are in progress:

1

UPDATING THE DIGITAL ELEVATION MODEL (DEM)

A DEM is a map of ground and sea floor elevation that is used in the storm surge and wave models. The updated DEM will integrate the latest elevation data. Sources include the most recent topographic and bathymetric data provided by local, state, and federal agencies. The inclusion of these new data creates a more accurate representation of conditions on the ground and under the water, which is important to correctly model how storm surge and waves move across the land.

2

UPDATING THE STORM SURGE MODEL

Many aspects of the storm surge model are being updated to improve its estimate of storm surge in future events. Additional assessments of beach nourishment, seawalls, and other coastal features will be added to the model to better capture how water will flow through and across the restudy area. Information from storm events since the last study, including Hurricanes Sandy and Irene, is also being added. In addition, special emphasis is being placed on communities that submitted appeals prior to the preliminary Flood Insurance Study. These updates will generate high resolution modeling results and more accurate floodplain mapping.

3

MODEL VALIDATION

Model validation is used to make sure that the model works. Measured data collected from tide gauges and high water marks during historic events is compared to storm surge elevation estimates reproduced by the model. For the restudy, the validation effort will compare the surge and wave model results with data from 5 tropical cyclones and 50 extra-tropical cyclones.

4

FIELD RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

Between May and June 2018, the restudy team conducted storm surge field visits across New Jersey and New York to document study area characteristics and coastal features. Future field surveys will document features that impact wave height, run-up, and overtopping.

Five Intermediate Data Submission (IDS) reports will document the restudy – three focused on the storm surge restudy, one for the overland wave hazard analysis, and one for coastal mapping. The first IDS report, “Data Acquisition and Technical Approach,” is projected to be complete by summer 2019.





HOW ARE STAKEHOLDERS HELPING THE RESTUDY?

FEMA Region II has developed an engagement process for the NY and NJ Coastal Restudy that provides a detailed level of review for all key stakeholders, including communities in New York and New Jersey, as well as the Port Authority of NY and NJ. The engagement process includes monthly meetings of the Coastal Advisory Panel (CAP) to discuss critical technical elements and decisions, allowing stakeholders to ask questions and provide comments throughout the process.

HOW CAN I HELP MY COMMUNITY AND RESIDENTS?

In April 2018, FEMA extended the Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) deadline. This means that policyholders with a Standard Flood Insurance Policy have until October 2021 to utilize ICC coverage. This coverage pays up to \$30,000 toward the cost of flood-proofing (non-residential only), relocating, elevating, or demolishing an insured building required to become compliant with State or local floodplain management laws or ordinances following a flood loss. For more information, visit <https://bsa.nfipstat.fema.gov/wyobull/2018/w-18010.pdf>.

The National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary incentive program for communities that recognizes and encourages floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. As a result, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk. For more information, visit <https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-community-rating-system>.

WHO MAY I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

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