

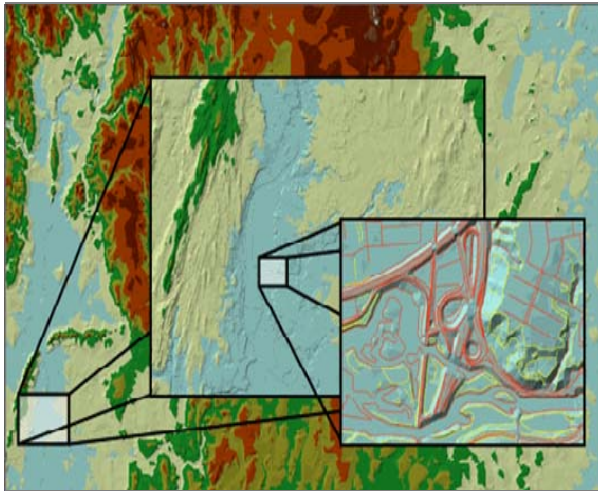


FEMA



Elevation Data Acquisition

Elevation Data, one of the foundational elements of Risk MAP, will help create a current and accurate picture of flood risk in communities. High-quality elevation data is essential for developing reliable base flood elevations, delineating flood hazard areas, and assessing risk. Digital elevation data also assists in developing actionable mitigation plans and communicating community flood risks to local officials and the public. As a critical element of Risk MAP, the data will be used to develop valuable products that address gaps in existing flood hazard data.



Elevation Data Acquisition Strategy

Starting in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will invest \$20 million annually toward the acquisition of new elevation data.

FY10 Risk MAP projects will target areas with existing quality elevation data. Within that area, FY10 elevation acquisition projects will target areas with high flood risk and those that lack quality elevation data. This approach will avoid the extension of project timelines for elevation data production.

This year FEMA will acquire new data through existing contracts and agreements within the agency and with other Federal agencies. On March 31, 2010, FEMA published a Request for Information to solicit ideas from the industry on acquisition strategies for future years.

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RiskMAP

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Elevation Data Strategy Approach

- Reuse existing available elevation data that meets the appropriate specifications
- Update elevation specifications and require elevation data to meet minimum standards
- Acquire elevation data using flood risk, need, and community contributions to establish priority areas
- Stratify elevation data requirements by flood risk and terrain
- Establish partnerships to share the cost of new elevation data collection projects

Elevation Data Partnerships

The focused investment in elevation data represents a significant shift for FEMA's flood mapping program. FEMA recognizes that elevation data is important for many Federal, State and local applications beyond floodplain mapping. The funding for the Risk MAP program must focus on addressing flood hazards and risk. Therefore, FEMA's elevation standards and priorities are different than many other potential elevation data users. A cooperative, partnership-based approach is needed to balance Risk MAP's needs with national, State, and local needs, obtain cost-effective elevation products, and appropriately share responsibilities for meeting multiple stakeholder needs. As with overall program priorities, partner contributions will be a factor in FY10 elevation data priorities and even more important in FY11 and beyond.

The FEMA Regional offices are currently identifying priority areas for FY10 elevation acquisition projects. Because this is the first year of the new approach, the timeframe for developing partnerships is limited. If your organization has resources to contribute to an elevation data project or a funded elevation partnership that FEMA could join, contact your local FEMA Regional office as soon as possible.

In addition to FEMA, State floodplain managers should coordinate with other State agencies with mapping missions or potential elevation data needs. Another good resource is your U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) State Geospatial Liaison (<http://liaisons.usgs.gov/geospatial/>).

FEMA is also developing an improved elevation partnership framework for FY11. FEMA will identify potential projects at the start of FY11, allowing for broad distribution of FEMA's requirements and sufficient time to meet with elevation stakeholders in each State to develop partnerships.



Initial Actions Taken

FEMA continues to make progress in the implementation of the Elevation Data Strategy and will continue through the summer of FY10. FEMA has completed an inventory of elevation data. The following represents some of the key activities planned for completion in the short term:

- Identify prioritized areas for acquisition of elevation data for FY10
- Establish a partnership framework
- Refine current specifications for high-quality elevation data to keep pace with the industry and other federal agencies

For more information on the Elevation Data Strategy, contact Paul Rooney (paul.rooney@dhs.gov).

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