

Flood Map for Surface Water

Publishing the updated map - we want your views

April 2013

We're developing our approach to publishing the national surface water flood map and want your views. As you know, under the Flood Risk Regulations we are required to publish surface water flood mapping for areas designated as 'Flood Risk Areas' (there are 10 in England) by 22 December 2013. We're considering when is best for us to publish surface water mapping for the rest of England and need to know your views on the options available. To give us all (the Environment Agency and LLFAs) time to prepare for publication we need to know what you think by the end of April.

Why do we want your views?

We're asking LLFAs for their views on the approach as you're responsible for managing flooding from surface water. We'll make it clear on our website which LLFA is responsible for the surface water mapping and direct any queries on the maps to you to answer. We'd like to hear from officers and Members on which approach you'd prefer. This consultation only applies to LLFAs in England.

Why do we want to publish surface water mapping?

We want people and communities to understand their flood risk - from all sources, not just rivers and the sea - and be empowered to take action to reduce that risk. So we want the public to have access to information on all sources of flooding and ensure we make the information we have available. Government has also made a number of commitments to publishing surface water mapping.

Why do we need to know by the end of April?

We need to start planning the publication process. In particular, the approach we take to communication and engagement depends on how we publish the information.

What are the options?

The options for publication are:

1. Publish all of England by 22 December 2013
2. Two phases of publication - December 2013 and end of January 2014
3. Phase publication from December 2013 with the last publication at the end of March 2014

For options 2 & 3 we'll need to work out the detail, but we'd expect to publish LLFAs in Flood Risk Areas and other LLFAs who are ready in December and the rest in either January or March.

What are the reasons for different approaches?

There are pros and cons to phasing publication:

Pros

- We can learn lessons from the first phase of publication and test our systems
- Some LLFAs have longer to prepare
- Publishing the map in December is not ideal as it is a difficult time to raise awareness
- This approach has worked well in the past e.g. on National Coastal Erosion Risk Maps

Cons

- It may be easier for LLFAs if mapping is all published at the same time
- LLFAs who haven't published mapping could get queries and pressure from the public

What are we doing to support publication?

There is a project in place to manage the publication of surface water information which includes representation from the LGA and LLFAs. This project is joining up with changes to the way we publish information on flood risk from rivers and the sea. We're working on a more user friendly and accessible way to access flood risk information which will include providing a simple summary on the risk from all sources in one place.

We will be working with LLFAs to develop FAQs, Q&As and lines to take. We will also be sharing our approach to dealing with questions and challenges to flood maps.

How can you comment?

We're using a number of different routes to collect your views include the Defra / Environment Agency capacity building workshops (only those in April 2013):

You can also contact us directly at: updating.fmfsw@environment-agency.gov.uk.

How can you find out more about updating Flood Map for Surface Water?

If you'd like to know more about the project to update the national scale surface water mapping, you can find briefings on the project on the [Local Government Association's Flood Risk Portal](#). We have also produced [Guidance on surface water flood mapping for LLFAs](#) (December 2012).

All LLFAs have access to the updating Flood Map for Surface Water (uFMfSW) review website (www.ufmfsw.com). We encourage District Authorities to work with their relevant LLFA in assessing the new maps. Additional logins can be requested by LLFAs or by any risk management authority by e-mailing support@ufmfsw.com.

Our local teams should be the first point of contact for LLFAs. We have a national team to support our local staff and we can respond to specific queries either on publication or on the project to update the national scale surface water mapping, please contact as at: updating.fmfsw@environment-agency.gov.uk.