



# BOULDER COUNTY FLOODPLAIN REMAPPING NEWSLETTER

## 10<sup>th</sup> Edition - Winter 2020

In response to the 2013 flood event, the state-funded [Colorado Hazard Mapping Program \(CHAMP\)](#) and FEMA are updating local flood hazard information for the Front Range's most affected waterways, including Boulder County stream reaches. Visit [www.BoCoFloodplainRemapping.com](http://www.BoCoFloodplainRemapping.com) for the latest information. This is the county's final project newsletter.

### READ PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS

Visit [www.BoCoFloodplainRemapping.com](http://www.BoCoFloodplainRemapping.com) and navigate to 'Floodplain Mapping - How to Stay Informed' for all past editions and to join the listserv.

## JANUARY 2020 COMMUNITY MEETING SCHEDULE

### **Preliminary FIRM Community Meetings:**

#### **Tuesday, Jan. 14 – Lower Boulder Creek, New Dry Creek, Coal Creek, and Rock Creek**

- 5 to 6:30 p.m. (presentation at 5:15 p.m.)
- Boulder County Recycling Center – 1901 63<sup>rd</sup> Street in Boulder County

#### **Thursday, Jan. 16 – Saint Vrain Creek, Lower Left Hand Creek, Dry Creek #2, and Little Thompson River**

- 5 to 6:30 p.m. (presentation at 5:15 p.m.)
- Boulder County Parks and Open Space Ron Stewart Building – 5201 St. Vrain Drive in Longmont

#### **Tuesday, Jan. 21 – North, Middle, and South Saint Vrain creeks and Cabin Creek**

- 5 to 6:30 p.m. (presentation at 5:15 p.m.)
- Highlands Presbyterian Church – 1306 Business Highway 7 in Allenspark

#### **Thursday, Jan. 23 – North and South Saint Vrain creeks and Saint Vrain Creek**

- 5 to 6:30 p.m. (presentation at 5:15 p.m.)
- Lyons Regional Library – 451 Fourth Ave. in Lyons. This is a joint meeting between Boulder County and the Town of Lyons

#### **Tuesday, Jan. 28 – Little James Creek, James Creek, Upper Left Hand Creek, and Geer Canyon**

- 5 to 6:30 p.m. (presentation at 5:15 p.m.)
- Jamestown Town Hall – 118 Main St. in Jamestown. This is a joint meeting between Boulder County and the Town of Jamestown

#### **Thursday, Jan. 30 – Fourmile Canyon Creek, Two Mile Canyon Creek, Gold Run, Fourmile Creek, Boulder Creek and North, Middle, and South Boulder creeks**

- 5 to 6:30 p.m. (presentation at 5:15 p.m.)
- Boulder Public Library Main Branch, Boulder Creek Room – 1001 Arapahoe Ave. in Boulder

As part of the final phase of the CHAMP floodplain remapping project, Boulder County will host six open houses in January at various locations around the county to review the FEMA appeals process and flood insurance requirements related to FEMA's Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Preliminary FIRMs). Representatives from FEMA, the CHAMP team, and Boulder County will be present at each session. Each open house will focus on specific reaches, but residents are invited to discuss any stream at each meeting.

### **What are Preliminary FIRMs?**

Preliminary FIRMs are flood maps produced by FEMA during the remapping process that allow the public an early opportunity to review and comment on proposed floodplain mapping changes. Without the additional outreach surrounding draft CHAMP maps performed by the county from 2016 to 2018, this would have been the first opportunity for the public to view revised floodplain maps. These *preliminary* maps and data are used to create the *final* effective FIRMs that identify local flood hazards and determine flood insurance ratings. The Preliminary FIRMs will become FEMA's final FIRMs in 2021, pending any appeals received by FEMA.

### **Preliminary FIRMs Adopted by the County**

In 2017 and 2018, the county adopted comprehensive zoning map amendments to the Floodplain Overlay Zoning District based on draft CHAMP data for streams in unincorporated Boulder County. The draft data were also submitted to FEMA, which released Preliminary FIRMs in September 2019, refining the draft maps that were previously adopted.

Boulder County adopted the Preliminary FIRMs into the Floodplain Overlay Zoning District in December 2019 after public hearings with the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. Locally adopting the Preliminary FIRMs allows the county to base floodplain regulations and permitting on maps that will be most similar to FEMA's and the county's final floodplain mapping, as opposed to waiting two or more years for FEMA to adopt the new FIRMs. Local adoption of the Preliminary FIRMs did not impact flood insurance requirements and rates.

### **View Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps online:**

Visit [www.boco.org/FloodplainMapUpdate](http://www.boco.org/FloodplainMapUpdate) to access the map review platform

## THE FEMA APPEALS PROCESS

FEMA will accept public input on the Preliminary FIRMs and associated report through an appeals process that will include a 90-day public appeal period in the spring of 2020. Detailed information on the appeals period, including start and end dates, will be available on the Floodplain Remapping Project website: [www.BoCoFloodplainRemapping.com](http://www.BoCoFloodplainRemapping.com).

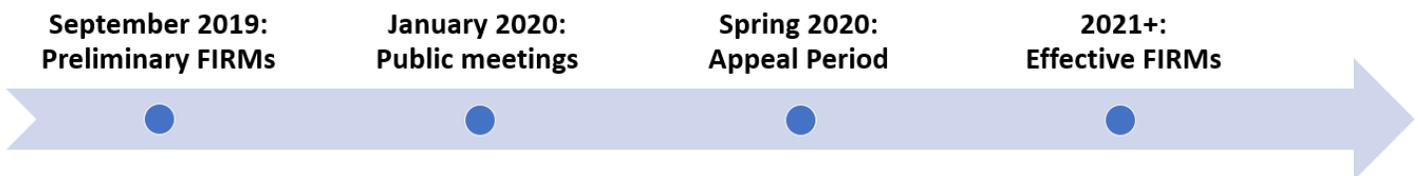
During the FEMA appeal period, Boulder County will track and gather technical data and non-technical comments to be submitted to FEMA at the end of the 90-day window. If warranted, FEMA will revise the Preliminary FIRMs and/or reports to reflect information submitted in support of the appeal(s) and provide the applicant with an appeal resolution letter.

### An appeal and its supporting data must be related to:

- ◆ New or modified Base Flood Elevations (BFEs)
- ◆ Base flood depths
- ◆ Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) boundaries
- ◆ SFHA zone designations
- ◆ Floodways

Challenges received by FEMA from the county that do not address this subject matter will be considered comments only. All data submitted for appeals must adhere to FEMA's standards for hydraulic modeling, topographic data capture, and related guidance.

## ESTIMATED FEMA TIMELINE:



## BE PREPARED AT HOME

It's never too early to begin thinking about the next flood season. Although flood season does not officially begin until April, there are many important things you and your family can do to prepare for floods:

- ◆ Know your neighborhood's flood history and locations of low-lying areas.
- ◆ Determine if your home and workplace are in a floodplain.
- ◆ Stay alert for changing weather conditions.
- ◆ When conditions indicate the potential for flooding, get out of low-lying areas, canyons, and areas downstream from dams.
- ◆ If flooding becomes likely, consider filling up sinks, bathtubs, and other containers with clean water.
- ◆ Store valuables and insurance papers upstairs in waterproof containers.

You can buy flood insurance no matter where you live or what your flood risk, but you should not wait until the rainy/flood season (April - September) to make a decision. There is a 30-day waiting period before coverage goes into effect. By law, flood insurance is issued as a separate flood insurance policy through the Federal government, and can be purchased through your existing insurance company and agent. Go to [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov) to find an agent and to learn more.

All Boulder County residents are eligible for flood insurance. Even homes not located near the floodplain can suffer flood damage. Learn more about flood insurance at [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov).



## STAY INFORMED ABOUT FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

### Website

Visit [www.BoCoFloodplainRemapping.com](http://www.BoCoFloodplainRemapping.com) to find information about regulatory floodplains, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and CHAMP activities.

### Newsletters & Listserv

This is the final Floodplain Remapping Project newsletter. All previous project newsletters are available on the [project website](#). Subscribe to the email listserv to receive any future project updates.

### Social Media

Important news will also be distributed via Boulder County's social media outlets on Facebook and Twitter at [www.Facebook.com/bouldercounty](https://www.facebook.com/bouldercounty) and [www.Twitter.com/BoCoDOT](https://www.twitter.com/BoCoDOT).

### Contact

Floodplain Remapping, Boulder County  
Kelly Watson  
720-564-2652  
[floodplainmapscomment@bouldercounty.org](mailto:floodplainmapscomment@bouldercounty.org)