



Transportation Department

2525 13th Street, Suite 203 • Boulder, Colorado 80304 • Tel: 303.441.3900 • Fax: 303.441.4594
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 471 • Boulder, Colorado 80306 • www.bouldercounty.org

Boulder County Floodplain Remapping Information

**By Erin Cooper, Floodplain Specialist
Boulder County Transportation Department**

The Colorado Hazard Mapping Program (CHAMP) was established after the 2013 floods to enable the state to take steps toward long-term planning and resiliency efforts for flooding and other natural hazards such as erosion and debris flow events. Boulder County is supporting this initiative because accurate floodplain maps provide detailed information for property owners on their own flood risks and enable proactive measures to protect people and property before the next significant flood event. Currently, CHAMP is conducting technical surveys and stream modeling to inform new floodplain maps throughout the greater St. Vrain Creek watershed. The streams within this watershed are being studied in two phases – Phase I draft floodplain maps are currently being developed, and Phase II maps will be drafted in 2017.

Draft map data from the state's remapping team – including engineers with AECOM, a nationally-recognized engineering firm, and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) – has been released to local governments for review. This current data set includes new information for the currently mapped and extended reaches of the following Phase I streams within unincorporated Boulder County:

- Cabin Creek
- North – Middle – South St. Vrain Creek(s), St. Vrain Creek
- North – Middle – South Boulder Creek(s), Boulder Creek
- Upper Fourmile Canyon Creek
- Two Mile Canyon Creek
- New Dry Creek
- Dry Creek No. 2
- Rock Creek
- Coal Creek

Data for Phase II streams, including Left Hand Creek, James Creek, Fourmile Creek, and the Little Thompson River will be delivered in the fall of 2017. Upon receipt of the maps, Boulder County will follow the same review process for Phase II, including holding community meetings in these areas.

What the county is doing:

Boulder County's Floodplain Management team is reviewing CHAMP data and draft maps for accuracy and is providing technical comments to the CHAMP team for review and integration into the information that will ultimately be sent to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The county will host public hearings before the maps are locally adopted and during the formal FEMA appeals period, before the maps are incorporated on the FEMA Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs).

We want the draft maps to accurately reflect local conditions and, for this reason, are looking for your input on the draft map data. We hope that you can attend an upcoming

community meeting where Boulder County staff will guide attendees through the draft map information and collect comments to provide to the CHAMP team as additional input for their next iteration of modeling. We are looking for feedback on structure location and recent land use changes that may not be indicated by the draft data. This information is critical for accurate mapping not only on your property but for the entire river corridor.

How you can get involved:

Community meetings to review draft maps and provide comments on the proposed map changes will be held in the coming months for Phase I areas. Look for follow-up information coming soon with dates, locations, and more details about how you can provide your comments to Boulder County if you can't attend a community meeting.

Why are floodplains being remapped – or being mapped for the first time?

The 2013 flood significantly changed creek size, shape, and location in many areas throughout Boulder County. The flood also provided new hydrology information that will be used for future floodplain maps. It is important to have updated mapping to accurately portray risk, which helps property owners determine if their property is at threatened by flooding, if the property is within a regulatory floodplain, if any structures on one's property are impacted, and if one should obtain flood insurance. Properties that fall within the existing regulatory floodplain must continue to comply with all FEMA and county floodplain regulations during this remapping phase.

What is the purpose of a floodplain map?

Boulder County has 13 major drainages with mapped floodplains that provide the foundation for Boulder County's floodplain management program. Boulder County is supporting the state's remapping initiative because accurate floodplain maps provide detailed information for property owners on their own flood risks and enable proactive measures to protect people and property before the next significant flood event.

Be Prepared with Flood Insurance

All Boulder County residents are eligible for flood insurance because even homes not located near the floodplain may suffer flood damage. You can learn more about flood insurance and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) at www.floodsmart.gov .