CTP Webinar: National Weather Service Flood Inundation Mapping Services - November 20, 2025

Question	Answer
I am not a flood plain person but am working on a DoD program to enhance readiness and resilience of military installations in El Paso Colorado. One large concern is the risk of a post wildfire flood event, which we have experienced before. Does this office deal with modeling post wildfire flood risks and mitigation opportunities?	Paul, great question but not one we'll likely be able to address today. I recommend emailing the presenters separately after the presentation: derek.giardino@noaa.gov, jeffrey.dobur@noaa.gov
I am not a flood plain person but am working on a DoD program to enhance readiness and resilience of military installations in El Paso Colorado. One large concern is the risk of a post wildfire flood event, which we have experienced before. Does this office deal with modeling post wildfire flood risks and mitigation opportunities?	Hey Paul, yes hydrophobic soils post fires is something very recently we have experimented modeling and providing flood mapping for in response. Its internal testing right now, will likely be part of our probabilisitic flooding which will be out hopefully next year. The key will be in these burn scars you will see flood mapping extent chances be wider than in normal forestation.
In relation to places that have less than 1 hour to evacuate, have you ever computed the percentage of floodplains that meet that description? It would be very beneficial for policy discussions to know how much of our currently occupied floodplains fall into that category.	We have computed roughly utilizing the National Water Model in terms of rapid onset, but that is 6 hours or less, not 1 hour or less. This is definitely a good future work to have areas of high alert pre-marked for increased situational awareness and for policy.
We have had a few projects in Kansas performed by Silver Jackets for FIM. Do you use those in your sites?	Not in Kansas but I will inquire with COE about them. We work with University of Kansas and have a few Jayhawks on our team. We do work with Silver Jackets in PA and TX. So looking into KS is something we should look into.
I noticed the GIS viewer has a coastal exclusion zone. Is there a plan to show the coastal inundation at some point?	Yes, we are testing out a new model for the coastal zone that better captures the flat terrain and tidal influence, we are hoping to have that to update our Flood Maps along the coast next year.
The NWS annotation and integrated maps and images are really powerful and helpful for public knowledge. Can you estimate how many NWS staff are needed to create those?	We have over 150 offices staffed 24/7 with 20+ employees monitoring weather including flooding and developing these decision support messages that help in decision making.
Have modeling 'Best Practices' been compiled for external/partner agencies looking to ensure 1D or 2D models currently in development are compatible with the current and future versions of FIM/Ripple?	This is a great question and is being worked on, they just updated the ripple algorithm which relaxed many of the 1D requirements being able to accept more, so we don't have that ready. 2D will likely not be ready for another year, but 2D in general will have an easier acceptance rate cause its method is less subjective than cross section 1D versions

Stokka Brown here from Baton Rouge, LA. Is there or will there be capability to view the recent history of maxFIM forecasts to understand trends in the forecast further helping decision making?	Yes, we have that capability with the hydrographs currently on each gage site. The hope is the likelihood FIM will have a previous run options so you can see the trend of recent probabilities (probability increasing or decreasing). Unfortunately this is in the queue but not likely till 2027
Has the flood inundation mapping data been updated with the effects of the recent history of more intense more frequent storms being experienced or is it constantly being updated with new actual flood data?	Great question. Atlas 14 return periods were actually generated and then Harvey and Imelda happened and they adjust all the rainfall return period information. They are working on atlas 15 now which will incorporate the more frequent flooding and rainfall impacts. So in short yes, as for our flood mapping it is agnostic from historical data and ready to show worst case scenario across the country
Is it possible for public users to access mapping library for non-current (or non-forecasted) conditions? Can I view flood maps for much larger flooding than is currently forecast, for use in planning activities?	Currently no, only really cause of the confusion that may be caused by having our static mapping against the FEMA Insurance mapping. Once we work with our partners to overcome the conflict of expectations, we will look to publish static mapping sometime in the near future hopefully.
Is there a way to download the historical innunation maps for several months or years or we can only view them?	Not at this time, our internal offices are testing some capabilities now with historical data archive tools. You can download current mapping through the open source map service site, but we will have to look into historical options that are cost effective.
It seems so weird to me that the deepest water is not darker colored - why make the deep light blue and shallow dark blue or purple? Shouldn't that be reversed?	Right now flood mapping is all one color, the percentages are the annual exceedance chances so the higher magnitudes are the darker blues and purples. The flood mapping is just extent for now
can these maps be projected based on a hypothetical rain event. Like a 4inches per hour rain?	Eventually yes, we have a project with a research group with northeastern university with some test options for this to be available. So another question in development, with hopes we can release it in the future.
WHAT IS THE WEB SITE ADDRESS FOR THE FLOOD INUNDATION MAPPING	water.noaa.gov Use the dropdown menus on the right hand side to click on flood inundation
Can this be used as a web service that can be overlayed in our local GIS enviornment?	absolutely! I think he will show that website where you can grab the web services themselves and bring into your own platforms
It seems to me that this is good inundation mapping and it wouldn't be very hard to simulate standard recurrance interval storms (100-Year). Why wouldn't FEMA be interested in this if for nothing else, replacing really old floodplains or bad Zone A floodplains, or to add Zone A floodplains where no current special flood hazard area exists?	We are working with them right now pretty closely, but it really breaks down to the actual law enacted for responsible parties and protections. However, we meet with that team monthly to share modeling methods and actual models so neither of us are using different models. Currently we are working towards a common modeling platform
Could this data be posted as a web service that could be digestible by ArcGIS Online or other local GIS systems?	Yes! I think Jeff will point to the end point web service site here shortly
Could this data be posted as a web service that could be digestible by ArcGIS Online or other local GIS systems?	maps.water.noaa.gov

Will these questions/answers be shared in the recording/follow-up?	live answered
GO BACK TO THE WEBSITES ADDRESSES	live answered
For state/local partners looking to enhance FIM output or minimize uncertainty of results for our particular area of operations, who should we contact to collaborate on identifying what local data/analysis would have the biggest benefit to the FIM for particular areas? National FIM team, river forecast offices, etc?	live answered
Is model skill information available at gaged locations in New Jersey?	live answered
I'm new to this. It seems we have to have a forecasted weather event to see any of this in our community if covered. But what about if you want to look at this model to forecast potential flood prone areas. There doesn't seem to be a map unless rain is actually in the forecast	live answered
Can you discuss the communication strategy with state and local communities on sharing this information and hwo to best utilize it during a flood event? Or for planning purposes?	live answered