



Progress Report—Planning to Avoid Disaster: Action Plan to Update Floodplain Maps in British Columbia

December 2013

On March 8, 2013, with financial support from the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia, the British Columbia Real Estate Association (BCREA) hosted a workshop in Vancouver, to examine the state of floodplain maps in BC. The Floodplain Maps Action Plan was the key output of the workshop, and this report summarizes progress made since September 2013.

The complete Floodplain Maps Action Plan and previous progress reports are available online at: www.bcrea.bc.ca/government-relations/flood-protection.

| Category | Action | Potential Partners | Proposed Timeline | Status |
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| High-level | 2. Engage key organizations and associations to help with coordinated communications and awareness raising among decision makers. | Working Group to lead | ongoing since June 2013 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation to Climate Change Team at Simon Fraser University is involved with the Coastal Cities at Risk project, which is designed to build capacity for managing climate change in coastal megacities: www.act-adapt.org/special-projects October, the Planning Institute of BC sent letters to Ministers Thomson and Polak encouraging the province to update floodplain maps November, report of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services included a recommendation to continue investing in severe weather adaptation and protection measures, such as BC flood maps |

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| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November, Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen held a workshop for local government employees and emergency responders about preparing for floods and fires • November, Canadian Water Resources Association – BC Chapter held a workshop about sea level rise • November, Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium held a workshop to discuss its future products and services related to regional climate impacts • April 2014, Livable Cities Forum will focus on resilient communities: www.livablecitiesforum.com • May 2014, BC Land Summit will include a water and land theme: www.bclandsummit.com |
| High-level | 3. Assess current technical and financial capacity of local governments to develop floodplain maps and seek provincial and federal government resources (financial, technical expertise, standardized data) to address gaps and priorities by strengthening the capacity of local governments to develop floodplain maps and implement flood management. | Working Group to lead | begin by January 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September, during the Union of BC Municipalities Convention, 103 representatives from 76 communities completed BCREA’s informal survey during the UBCM Convention; nearly 70% of them had concerns about flooding |

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| Technical | 7. Facilitate a GIS pilot project to explore how to improve data-sharing protocols and procedures, and to resolve related technical and institutional issues, including proprietary interests and data management requirements. | Working Group to lead | revisit in February 2014 | As of fall 2013, projects underway or proposed by other organizations may fulfill this action. |
| Technical | 8. Assess best available flood hazard information and other data inputs necessary to develop flood hazard maps, identify data gaps, propose a plan to fill data gaps (e.g., LiDAR topography, hydrometric data, oceanographic data, inventory of natural hazards) and suggest ways to integrate climate change into planning and hydraulic analysis during floodplain mapping. | Working Group to lead | deliver by June 2014 | In June, the Working Group identified this as a priority, and a subset of the Working Group continues to refine the project description. In August, Public Safety Canada issued a request for proposal for a study regarding floodplain maps best practices and the current state of floodplain mapping in Canada: https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/tender-notice/PW-13-00385371 . |
| Technical | 11. Develop a rough overview flood risk assessment—with vivid visuals, if possible—to raise public and political awareness of the issue (especially the social and economic implications of flooding), and to promote the need for more detailed flood hazard information to inform management decisions. Provide to identified stakeholders and release publicly. | Working Group | begin after June 2014 | To assist with presentations, BCREA is collecting animations, photos and video footage of flood events and flood scenarios. To make contributions, contact Norma Miller at nmiller@bcrea.bc.ca . |
| Political | 14. Educate elected decision makers (local and provincial governments) to raise awareness and understanding about the importance of floodplain mapping / flood hazard management, and to support the allocation of the necessary resources. | see action 2 | begin in September 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fraser Basin Council (www.fraserbasin.bc.ca), through its work on the Regional Flood Management Strategy and its Joint Program Committee, conducts this work on an ongoing basis. April 2014, BCREA Government Liaison Days conference will focus on floodplain maps |

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| Political | 18. Ask the provincial government to clarify liability and access to emergency funds, with respect to local governments and residents, in designated floodplains. | BCREA | October 2013 | Discussions continue with provincial government representatives. West Coast Environmental Law is examining legal tools to help communities adapt to climate change: www.wcel.org/our-work/community-climate-action-o . |
| Financial | 19. Conduct/commission research on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> opportunities for new, innovative sources of funding to develop floodplain maps, and opportunities to incentivize floodplain mapping and management. | BCREA, Fraser Basin Council, Insurance Bureau of Canada, Okanagan Basin Water Board, Real Estate Foundation of BC | begin research by January 2014 | The Real Estate Foundation of BC approved a grant of \$10,000 for BCREA to complete this project, in collaboration with the project partners. Sustainability Solutions Group (www.sustainabilitiesolutions.ca) will conduct the research and deliver a report in early 2014. |