

PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP FOR FLOODPLAIN MAPPING

When floods strike, individuals and communities are subject to significant economic and social costs. Many British Columbians are unaware of the flood risk they face, due to out-of-date floodplain maps.

Effective flood management is complex, and floodplain maps are a logical starting point. A floodplain map shows areas subject to high flood hazard, and helps guide land use decisions. Ongoing changes in hydrology, land use and

climate require maps to be updated regularly, but that hasn't happened in most parts of BC. Outdated floodplain maps compromise the ability of decision makers to effectively assess and manage flood risks, putting BC communities in jeopardy.

Unfortunately, there hasn't been a coordinated program in BC to create and/or update floodplain maps for many years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The BC Government should:

1. Work with the federal and local governments to create a province-wide plan to map flood hazards for all BC communities, and ensure those maps are reviewed every five years—as part of community planning cycles—and updated as needed.
2. Provide local governments and First Nations with financial and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of local governments to develop floodplain maps and implement flood management. Technical assistance should include checklists, templates and other resources that are updated as new information becomes available.
3. Develop, and review every five years, floodplain mapping guidelines and specifications to reflect current technologies and realities, improve consistency, and build technical capacity to support the use of a broader suite of technical tools.
4. Develop a firm understanding of the consequences of wildfires on flood risks and provide technical support to communities that have experienced wildfires to help mitigate the expected flood damage.

CONTACT

If you would like to discuss these recommendations further, please contact **BCREA Vice President of Government Relations and Stakeholder Engagement Trevor Hargreaves** at thargreaves@bcrea.bc.ca or **604.742.2798**.