



FLOOD FACTS

1 inch of water in your home can cause up to **\$25,000 in damage**.

20% of flood claims come from properties **outside of high-risk zones**.

Source: FloodSmart.gov

Flooding is the most common natural disaster in the country and can be caused by storms, dam or levee breaks, and even new development changing the natural flow of waterways. Homeowner and rental insurance generally does **NOT** cover damage from flooding.

The National Flood Insurance Program is part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and was created more than 50 years ago to help property owners recover from flood damage. Policies are available through local insurance agents with costs typically based on "relative risk", which is determined from FEMA's floodplain mapping. Since maps are updated at regular intervals to account for changes in a local area, staying on top of these changes can help property owners better manage their potential flooding risks and recovery needs. Visit FloodSmart.gov to learn more.



NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT ALONG THE GREENWAY

With the rainy season traditionally spanning Fall and Winter, residents can expect flooding on the Big Creek Greenway. Flooding usually happens at least a few times a year after a heavy rain. While it's an inconvenience for walkers and cyclists who use the popular trail, it also demonstrates effective floodplain management by the County.

The stream buffer along Big Creek extends 50 feet* from the banks. This means the area must be covered with native vegetation to support the creek's health and water quality. This also keeps the natural floodplain intact.

The County intentionally placed the greenway in the floodplain to offer the community an amenity in an area where nothing could be built and ensure that when the creek does inevitably flood, potential damage is drastically reduced.

**50 feet encompasses the state buffer plus the County buffer.*



Greenway under Majors Road bridge during normal conditions.



Greenway under Majors Road bridge during flood conditions.

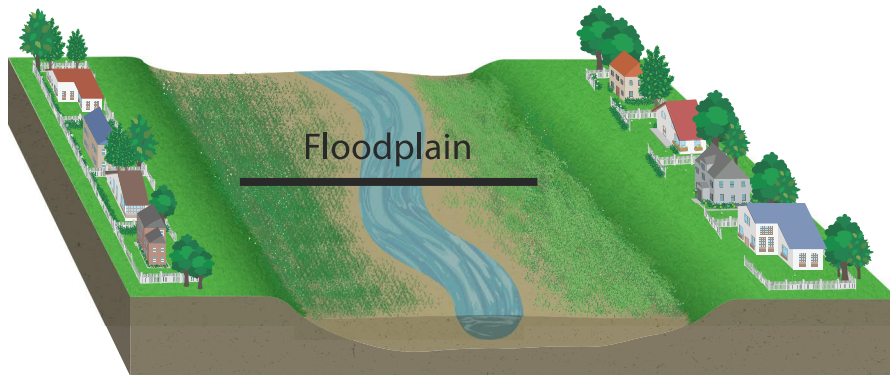


The Department of Engineering publishes *The Resource* on a regular basis to build community knowledge and understanding of our shared water resources.

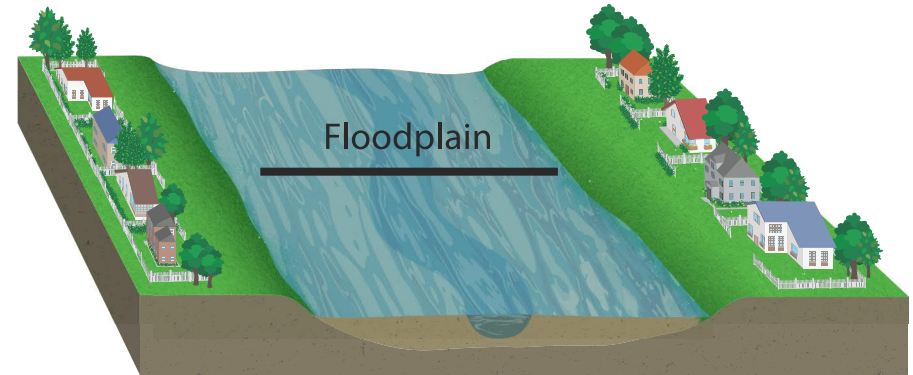
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The floodplain is the flat area along a river or creek. During flooding, water overtops the banks and covers the land. The floodplain provides a natural space to hold excess water during floods and allows for water to gradually recede back into the river or stream once conditions return to normal. Building in the floodplain or filling it in or even altering the flow of the waterway can lead to more intense flooding and erosion that could affect properties outside of the floodplain.



Normal Conditions



Flood Conditions

MAPPING AND MANAGING THE FLOODPLAIN: LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL EFFORT

Floodplain management involves identifying flood-prone areas and managing how that area is used. In Georgia, the state Environmental Protection Division (EPD) coordinates with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to regularly update flood risk and hazard maps. However, the time between mapping efforts can be several years so it may not keep up with the level of development in a community.

Forsyth County's Stormwater Division (part of the Engineering Department) invested in updating FEMA floodplain maps to meet the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD) requirements, which mandated that new maps be developed over a 10-year period. These efforts resulted in new FEMA mapping that clarifies the flood risk picture for the County, helps residents better understand their flood insurance needs, and improves the County's administration of its flood-prone areas. These maps also feed into updated and refined development standards and ordinances for new land development projects and home improvements.

The County's Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) supports these efforts as well by ensuring state and federal requirements are incorporated into the County's new floodplain management ordinance that safeguards local floodplains. Effective floodplain management helps reduce flooding impacts on private and public property, protects water quality, and preserves greenspace and habitats that may serve as local amenities.

Know Your Flood Risk

EPD manages Georgia's Flood MAP Program to help people better understand the how and why of local floodplain management. Visit www.georgiadfirm.com to learn more about your flood risk based on location. You can also see the County's maps by visiting the Engineering Department at the County Administration Building.