



FEMA



# Seclusion Mapping

## *Information for Local Community Officials*

Recently, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) implemented a new mapping process known as Seclusion Mapping. The Seclusion mapping is intended to move forward flood hazard mapping projects that have been on hold because a portion of the study area is impacted by a non-accredited levee system.

The Seclusion mapping process will allow Federal, State and local investments in updated flood hazard analyses to be released for use by local officials who are enforcing floodplain management ordinances. Additionally, Seclusion mapping will allow FEMA to provide community officials, residents, and business owners with more up to date information about their local flood hazards and associated risks.

Updated flood hazard information assists community officials in sound development and floodplain management decision making and allows residents and home owners to understand their current flood risk so that they can make better personal and business decisions related to hazard preparedness and hazard mitigation.

### **When will FEMA consider using the Seclusion mapping process?**

The Seclusion mapping process is not appropriate for all flood hazard mapping projects currently on-hold because of a non-accredited levee system. A number of factors are considered by FEMA in order to determine if the Seclusion mapping process can be applied.

FEMA considers the following factors prior to contacting communities about the possible application of the Seclusion mapping process:

- The non-accredited levee system was previously identified on a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) or credited on a FIRM with reducing landward side flood risk.
- Significant changes are being made to the flood hazards for newly studied flooding sources outside of the levee-impacted area.
- The Preliminary FIRM for the affected area was about to be issued or had already been issued when the study was placed on hold. FEMA would like to work with community officials to release revised FIRM panels reflecting the updated flood hazard analysis on to allow up-to-date information to be used for floodplain management purposes.
- A community understands and supports the application of the Seclusion Mapping process.

### Definitions

**Levee:** Manmade structure, usually an earthen embankment, designed and constructed in accordance with sound engineering practices to contain, control, or divert the flow of water so as to provide protection from temporary flooding.

**Levee System:** Flood protection system that consists of a levee, or levees, and associated structures, such as closure and drainage devices, which are constructed and operated in accordance with sound engineering practices.

**Non-Accredited Levee System:** Levee system that has not demonstrated it meets all requirements outlined in Section 65.10 of the NFIP regulations.

### Resources & Related Links

#### **Levee System Accreditation:**

The Code of Federal Regulations can be accessed at:  
<http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov>  
Levee System Accreditation is outlined in 44CFR65.10.

#### **Living with Levees:**

For more information on levees, please visit:  
<http://www.fema.gov/living-levees-its-shared-responsibility>

#### **New Analysis and Mapping Procedures for Non-Accredited Levees:**

To review the suite of procedures, please visit:  
<http://www.fema.gov/final-levee-analysis-and-mapping-approach>

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## What is being secluded?

The Levee Seclusion Area (noted by a solid black line on the FIRM, see Figure 1) delineates a boundary and acts as a study limit to allow communities to understand the limits of the revision area affected by the on-going update.

- **Inside the Levee Seclusion Area** – Flood hazards related to the levee system(s) will be defined as depicted on the current effective FIRM.
- **Outside the Levee Seclusion Area** – Flood hazards may be modified and updated by the current revision and study efforts. *A county/parish-wide database will be provided at preliminary and effective issuance for communities to review the flood hazards in their vicinity. Community officials should consult their current effective FIRM to determine the areas that have been modified.*

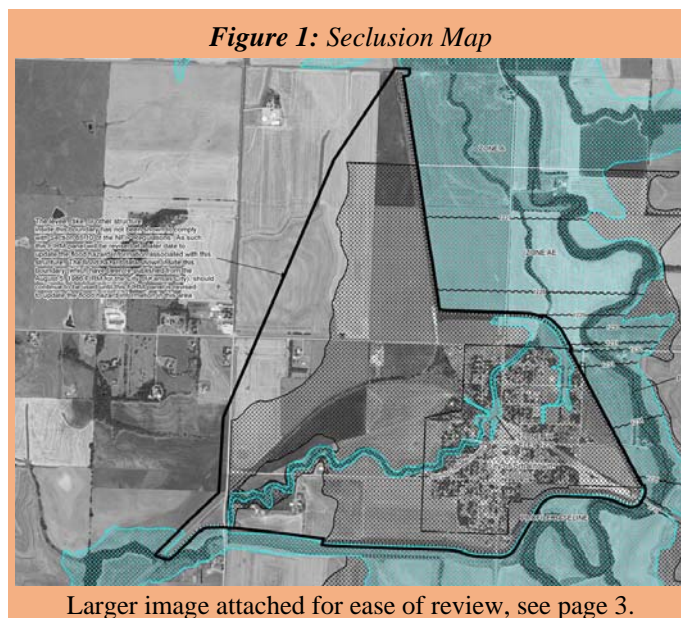
The Seclusion mapping process will result in an updated set of effective FIRMs for the community. Community Officials who are interested in using the “Seclusion” process to complete your study, should contact their FEMA Regional Office to determine the applicability of the Seclusion mapping process.

## When will FEMA analyze the flood hazard associated with the Levee system?

Communities should understand that the use of the Seclusion mapping process does not preclude the levee system from being analyzed with the new *Levee Analysis and Mapping Procedures (LAMP) for Non-Accredited Levee Systems*, or from communities seeking levee system accreditation (44CFR65.10).

On July 12, 2013, FEMA released its new approach which will be used to update flood hazard analysis and mapping in the vicinity of non-accredited levee systems nationwide. Communities who utilize the Seclusion mapping process will not be removed from the queue of studies that FEMA will update using the new analysis and mapping procedures for non-accredited levee systems. Each fiscal year, FEMA will apply the new approach to another round of non-accredited levee systems until all studies and non-accredited levee systems are addressed.

FEMA will remain in contact with levee owners and community officials to identify studies which will be analyzed using the new approach, and the mapping update related to levee flood hazard update will be completed on a separate release schedule to the Levee Seclusion project.



## What does a Levee Seclusion Map Look Like?

A FIRM that applies the Seclusion mapping process will include the following information:

- A Seclusion Boundary – Noted by a thick black boundary line to define the area of Seclusion
- Flood hazard information *inside* the Seclusion boundary will be depicted based on the information shown on the current effective FIRM panels.
- Flood hazard information *outside* the Seclusion boundary will be depicted on the FIRM based on the revised analysis for the county/parish-wide study area.

A note will be added in the vicinity of the Seclusion boundary to indicate the levee system depicted has not been demonstrated to meet the NFIP requirements cited at 44CFR65.10. The note also indicates that the flood hazard information shown within the seclusion boundary is from the current effective FIRM. Finally, the note explains that this area will be revisited to apply the updated approach for non-accredited levees at a later date.

## Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012

Signed into law by the President in 2012, this act extends the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) for five years, and outlines significant program reforms. Once effective, maps produced using the Seclusion mapping process will be used to review and rate insurance policies in your community. It is essential that community officials understand the affects of the NFIP Reform Act.

FEMA continues to refine its implementation of this reform, for the most up to date information on the Reform Act, visit:  
<http://www.fema.gov/bw12>

# Seclusion Map Exhibit – Flood County and City of Smalltown

