



FEMA

Tropical Storm Allison Recovery Project: Map Modernization Outreach

The State of Texas - In June 2001, Tropical Storm Allison ravaged 31 counties in Texas, including Harris County. The storm caused \$5 billion in damage in the City of Houston, the county seat of Harris County. Working under a Cooperating Technical Partner agreement, FEMA and the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) conducted a flood studies leading to the remapping of 1,200 stream miles in 22 watersheds encompassing all 35 of the flooded communities. Because the individual community must adopt the new flood maps, a coordinated outreach plan involving all the affected communities was key the project's success.

The Tropical Storm Allison Recovery Project (TSARP) was created through the partnership of FEMA and the HCFCD. To generate community involvement in the project, the team invited all 35 communities to participate in the mapping process. The TSARP held frequent meetings. Communities also participated via advisory committees and stakeholder groups. In this way, effective two-way communication was achieved.

Outreach tools utilized by the Team included a TSARP web site for posting presentations, reports, educational resources and guidance documents; publications such as the "Off the Charts" report, which was distributed by the Houston Chronicle; community visits by the HCFCD Communication Department; the use of a public outreach consultant to lead media and public relations; clear, concise messages customized for specific audiences; the development of training courses for flood insurance agents; and presentations to civic organizations, real estate groups, homeowner associations, business and environmental groups throughout Harris County.

A TSARP poll of 500 citizens found that 82 percent supported the map update efforts, while only four percent opposed. Through a coordinated, integrated public outreach program, the TSARP Team was able to make people understand and support the idea that updated, more accurate maps will help the HCFCD reduce the risk and impact of future flooding.



State-wide,
Texas



Quick Facts

Sector:

Public

Cost:

Amount Not Available

Primary Activity/Project:

Education/Outreach/Public Awareness

Primary Funding:

Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP)