

# Guidance for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping

## Notice-to-User Revisions

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November 2016



Requirements for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) Program are specified separately by statute, regulation, or FEMA policy (primarily the Standards for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping). This document provides guidance to support the requirements and recommends approaches for effective and efficient implementation. The guidance, context, and other information in this document are not required unless it is codified separately in the aforementioned statute, regulation, or policy. Alternate approaches that comply with all requirements are acceptable.

For more information, please visit the FEMA Guidelines and Standards for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping webpage ([www.fema.gov/guidelines-and-standards-flood-risk-analysis-and-mapping](http://www.fema.gov/guidelines-and-standards-flood-risk-analysis-and-mapping)), which presents the policy, related guidance, technical references, and other information about the guidelines and standards development process.

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## Table of Revisions

The following summary of changes details revisions to this document subsequent to its most recent version in May 2016

Affected Section or Subsection	Date	Description
All sections	November 2016	Removed context to help clarify guidance, updated all sections to align with SID #227 updates, clarified escalation and concurrence procedures, and discussed NFHL-only updates.

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## 1.0 Overview

A Notice-To-User (NTU) revision is used to correct errors or omissions in a Flood Insurance Study (FIS), Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), FIRM database (DB), or the National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) dataset. NTU revisions cannot be completed for corrections that are subject to an administrative appeal period or that would change the accreditation status of a levee. NTU revisions cannot change the effective date of a FIS or FIRM.

## 2.0 Escalating Errors and Omissions For Review

FEMA Headquarters (HQ) has sole authority for determining whether an error or omission may be corrected through an NTU revision. Before escalating an issue to FEMA HQ for review, the appropriate Production and Technical Services (PTS) Quality Lead should verify that the issue has been sufficiently researched and documented, and that the FEMA Regional office has concurred with all corrections that are needed.

To escalate an issue to FEMA HQ, the PTS Quality Lead should upload the Notice-to-User Request and Supporting Information Form from the Flood Risk Templates and Other Resources page on the FEMA website ([www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7577](http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7577)) and any supporting documentation to the NTU folder on the FEMA SharePoint site, fill out the tracking spreadsheet located in the same folder, and alert the FEMA HQ Due Process Lead that an issue has been escalated for review.

## 3.0 Preparing and Submitting a Draft NTU Letter

If FEMA HQ determines that an escalated issue should be resolved through an NTU revision, the PTS Quality Lead should prepare a draft version of the NTU letter that documents the corrections that were made and informs the end users why they are receiving updated versions of the products. A template letter is available on the Flood Risk Templates and Other Resources page on the FEMA website: [www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7577](http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7577).

It is important to consider the date on which the NTU letter and revised products will be delivered to the affected communities. If the NTU will be issued before the effective date of the study but after the LFD, the date on the NTU letter should be projected for approximately 2 to 3 weeks prior to the effective date of the Flood Risk Study. The revised products will not display an NTU note or NTU date.

If the NTU will be issued after the effective date of the study, the PTS Quality Lead should coordinate with the Mapping Partner and with the Map Service Center (MSC) to project a future date on which the products will be released by the MSC. The selected date will be listed on the NTU letter and displayed on the corrected products (see Section 4).

Once the date has been determined for either option, the draft NTU letter and the corrected products should be uploaded to the NTU folder on SharePoint and the FEMA HQ Due Process Lead should be alerted that the submission is ready for review.

## 4.0 Referencing the NTU Correction on Updated Products

If an NTU is released after the effective date of a study, a reference to the NTU should appear on the FIS Report, applicable FIRMs, FIRM index or in the FIRM database. There should be only one NTU note per product. If there are multiple NTUs, only the latest NTU date should be listed. The date added to the product should be the same as listed on the NTU letter. Examples are described below.

### 4.1 FIS Report

The following guidance applies to FIS reports being corrected via an NTU:

- **Cover Page:** The 2003 and 2013 format FIS reports should display a note on the cover page (Figures 2 and 3), shown is 12 point Franklin Gothic Medium reading “Reprinted with corrections on [date]”.
- **Notice-to-User Page (2003 format only):** The FIS report includes a note on the Notice-to-User page (behind the report cover), below the historical FIS date listings, using the same font as the date listings. The note should read:

This FIS report was reissued on [date] to make a correction; this version replaces any previous versions. See the Notice-to-User Letter that accompanied this correction for details.

- **Section 1.4 (2013 format only):** After the first bulleted item identifying that part of all of the FIS report is revised and republished, add an additional bullet which reads:

This FIS Report was reissued on [date] to make a correction. See the Notice-to-User Letter that accompanied this correction for details. This version replaces any previous versions.

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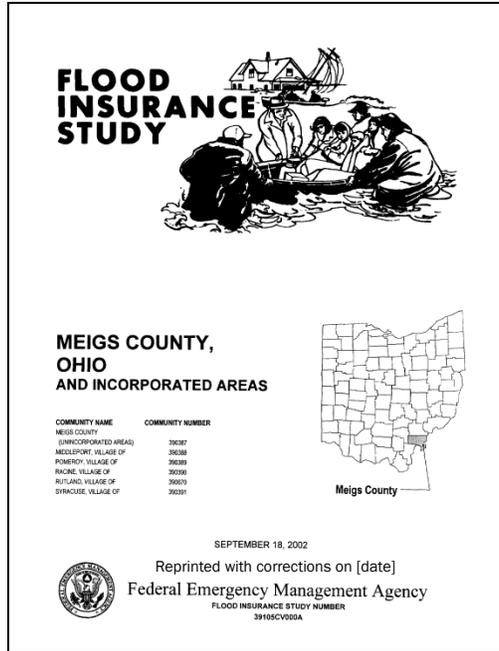


Figure 1: 2003 Format FIS Report with NTU

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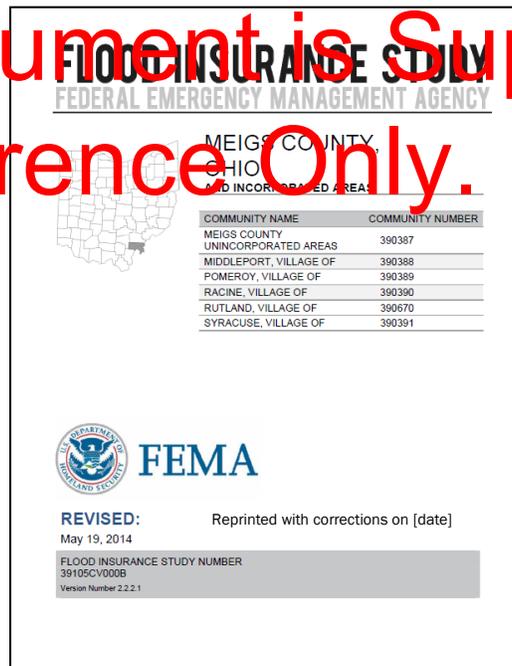


Figure 2: 2013 Format FIS Report with NTU

## 4.2 FIRM Panel and Index

- **FIRM Panel (2003 format):** The FIRM panel title block should include the following note in black 7 point Arial Caps Lower Case (CLC):

**Notice:** This map was reissued on [date] to make a correction. This version replaces any previous versions. See the Notice-to-User Letter that accompanied this correction for details.

The note should be located above the Notice-to-User note in the Title Block (Figure 4). If space is not available in the title block, the note should be located near the title block in the body of the map.

- **FIRM Panel (2013 format):** The FIRM panel title block should include the following note in 9 point Franklin Gothic Medium CLC:

**Notice:** This map was reissued on [date] to make a correction. This version replaces any previous versions. See the Notice-to-User Letter that accompanied this correction for details.

The note should be located above the version number (Figure 5). If space is not available in the title block, the note should be located near the title block in the body of the map.

- **FIRM Index (2003 format):** The FIRM Index title block should include the following note in black 7 point Arial CLC:

**Notice:** This FIRM Index was reissued on [date] to make a correction. This version replaces any previous versions. See the Notice-to-User Letter that accompanied this correction for details.

When space is not available in the title block, the note should be located as close as possible to the title block in the body of the map (Figure 6).

- **FIRM Map Index (2013 format):** The FIRM Index should include the following note above the FIRM Map Index title block in black 8 point Franklin Gothic Medium CLC (Figure 7):

**Notice:** This FIRM Index was reissued on [date] to make a correction. This version replaces any previous versions. See the Notice-to-User Letter that accompanied this correction for details.

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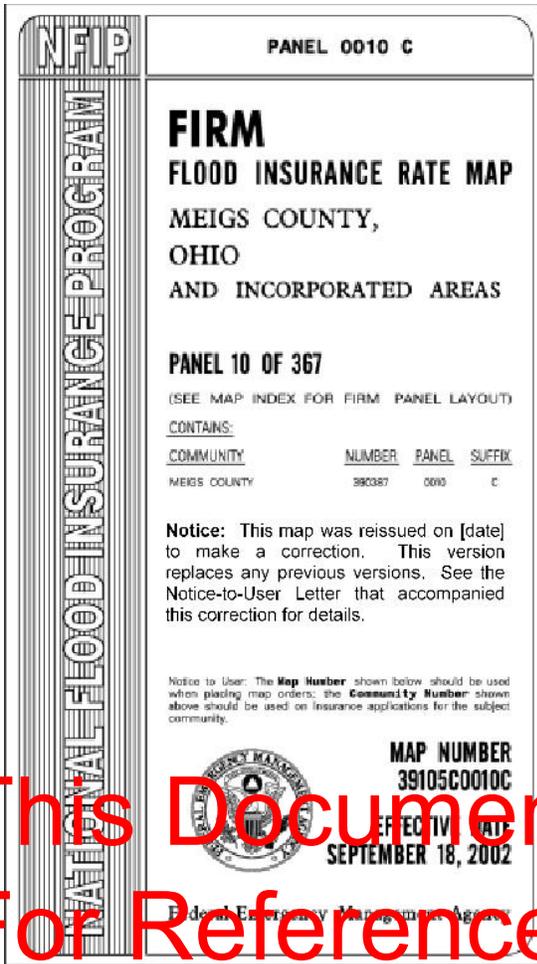


Figure 3: 2003 Format FIRM Title Block with NTU Notation

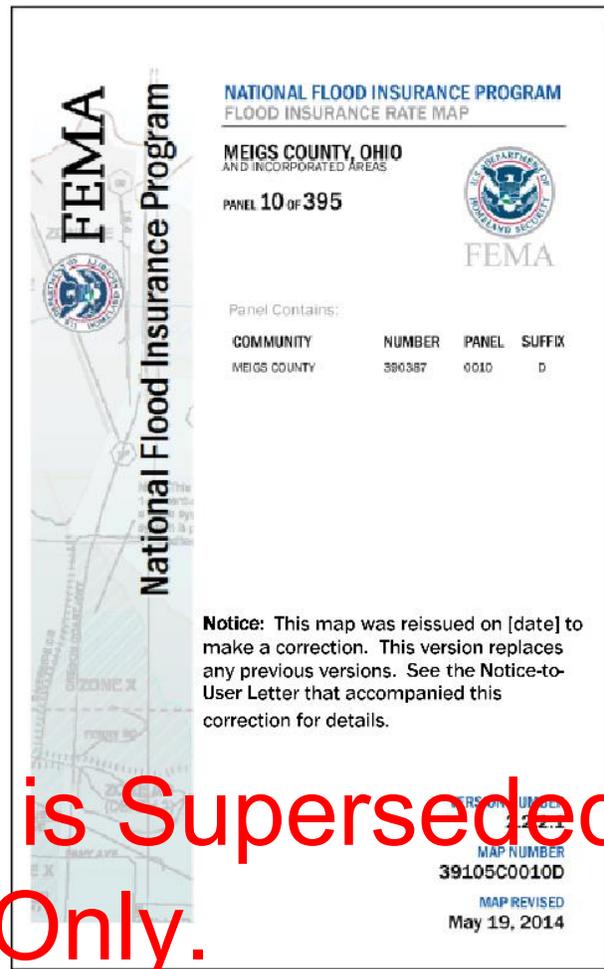


Figure 4: 2013 Format FIRM Title Block with NTU Notation

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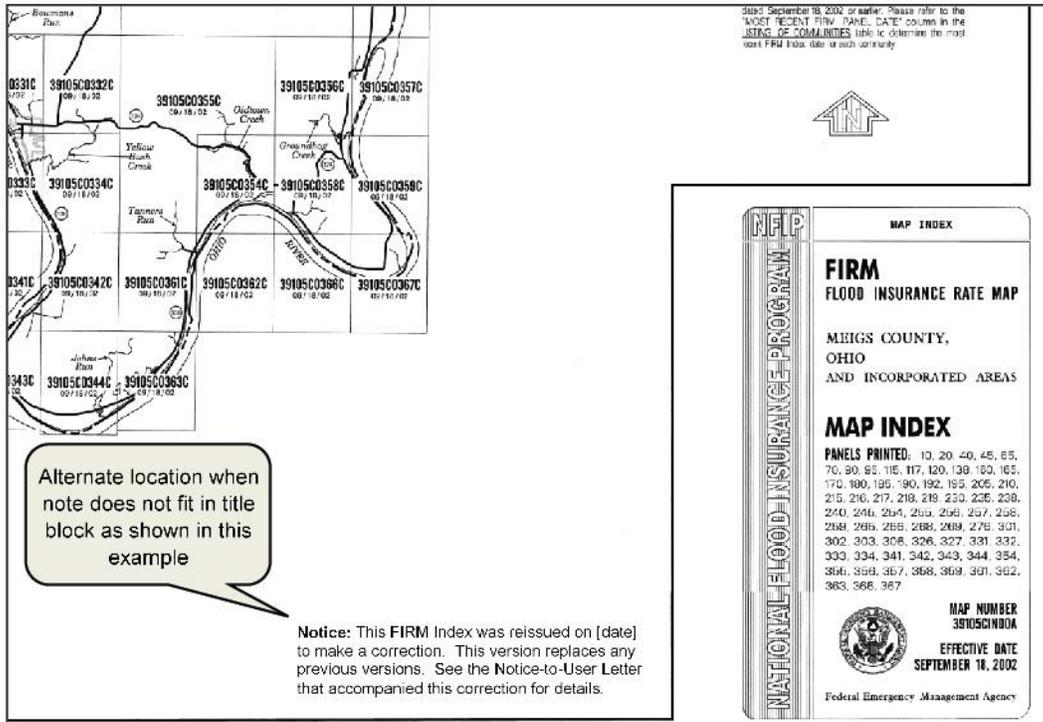
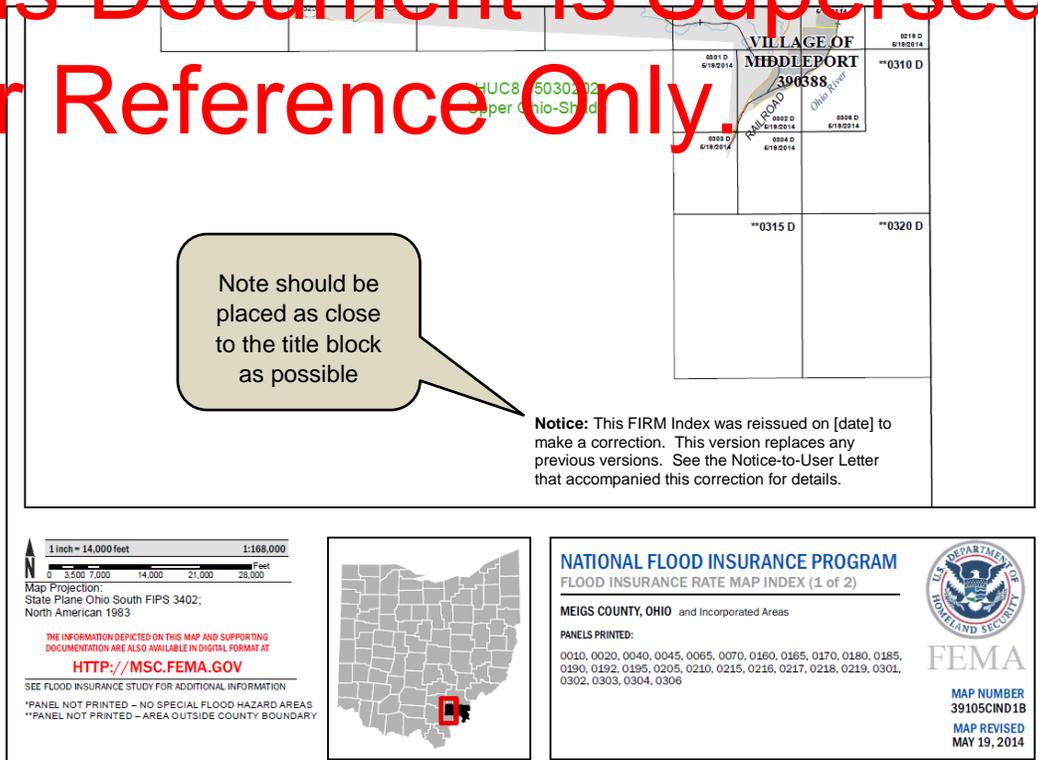


Figure 5: 2003 Format FIRM Index with NTU Notation

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### 4.3 FIRM Database

When correcting the FIRM database through an NTU, the following steps should be used to affirm that a corrected database is issued.

- **2003, 2011, and 2013 Schema FIRM Database:** A new record is added to the L\_PAN\_REVIS table for each corrected FIRM panel.
  - If this table was not previously part of the FIRM database, a record is created and the table submitted with the other NTU products (if applicable).
  - If the FIS or the FIRM Database is revised as part of the NTU, “FIS” or “FIRM DB” is entered in this table in the FIRM Panel ID field. All fields in this table are required.
  - The REVIS\_DATE matches the NTU reissuance date on the FIRM panels, FIRM Index, and FIS report (if applicable).
  - The same revision note used on the actual FIRM, FIRM Index, or FIS report is placed in the FIRM DB REVIS\_NOTE field in the L\_PAN\_REVIS table for revisions to these products. The REVIS\_NOTE for FIRM Database revision reads:

**Notice-to-Users:** This FIRM database was reissued on <date> to make a correction. This version replaces any previous versions. See the Notice-to-User Letter that accompanied this correction for details.

○ NTU J notations in FIRM DB will stack in the L\_PAN\_REVIS table if there are multiple NTUs for a dataset.

- PTS RFHL teams incorporate FIRM database revisions into the NFHL, update the DB\_REV date as usual, and send the revision to the CDS NFHL team with a submission type of “NTU” in the delivery manifest. This submission type notation is necessary for the CDS QC tool to correctly check the DB\_REV against the highest date value in the L\_PAN\_REVIS table instead of the S\_FIRM\_PAN table as with normal submissions.

### 4.4 NFHL

When correcting the NFHL via the NTU process, the Region NFHL team should update the DB\_REV date and send the revision to the NFHL team with a submission type of “NTU” in the delivery manifest. This is necessary for the CDS Quality Control (QC) tool to check the DB\_REV against the highest date value in the L\_PAN\_REVIS table instead of the S\_FIRM\_PAN table. See section 4.3 for more information on managing the FIRM database corrections associated with an NTU.

## 5.0 Submittal to the Map Service Center

After FEMA HQ Due Process Lead approves the draft NTU letter and the corrected products, the PTS Quality Lead should provide a copy of the approved letter and corrected products to the MSC for distribution, and to the NFHL Team Lead for the incorporation of applicable NFHL revisions. The PTS Quality Lead should coordinate as needed to address any related quality concerns that may be raised by the MSC or NFHL Lead.

If the FIRM database is affected by the NTU, the entire database (all tables and layers, not just the corrected ones) should be provided as part of the NTU. The delivery should include all database formats previously delivered as part of the original Flood Risk study. If the NTU only affects the FIRM database and/or NFHL, the MSC will only issue the NTU letter to the impacted communities. The letter will direct users to the MSC where they will be able to obtain the most current version of the NFHL.

The PTS Quality Lead should coordinate with the MSC to confirm that the NTU letter and corrected products are submitted early enough to ensure timely delivery to impacted communities, even if the MSC has already been consulted to project the date on the draft NTU letter. If timely delivery cannot be achieved, the PTS Quality Lead will need to request approval from the FEMA HQ Due Process Lead to update the NTU letter and corrected products with a new correction date.

After the NTU letter and corrected products have been issued, the PTS Quality Lead or MSC should confirm the distribution date with the FEMA Regional Office and the FEMA HQ Due Process Lead.

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