

How to Download Floodplain GIS Data using Minnesota Geospatial Commons

The Minnesota Geospatial Commons website contains floodplain data in GIS formats. Data is available for both digital flood insurance rate map (DFIRM) counties and non-DFIRM counties.

Getting Started

Visit the [Minnesota Geospatial Commons website](#) and enter “FEMA” or “DFIRM” into the search box. Click on *FEMA Digital Flood Rate Insurance Maps (DFIRM), Minnesota*. Scroll about halfway down the page and download the “ESRI File Geodatabase.”

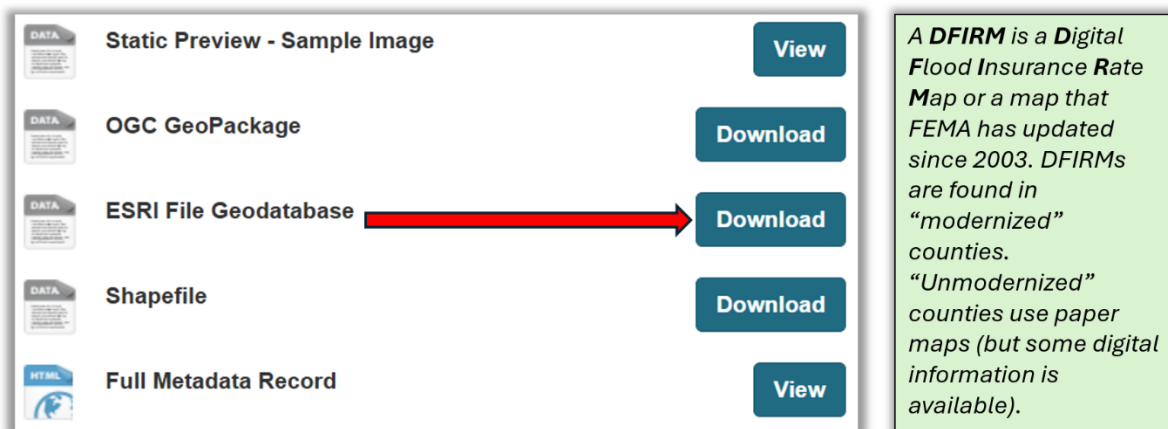


Figure 1. From the Minnesota Geospatial Commons website, a list of available FEMA digital flood rate insurance map files should be available for download.

Using Downloaded Database in ArcGIS Pro

In your ArcGIS Pro document (*.aprx), import the layer files from the location where you downloaded the database.

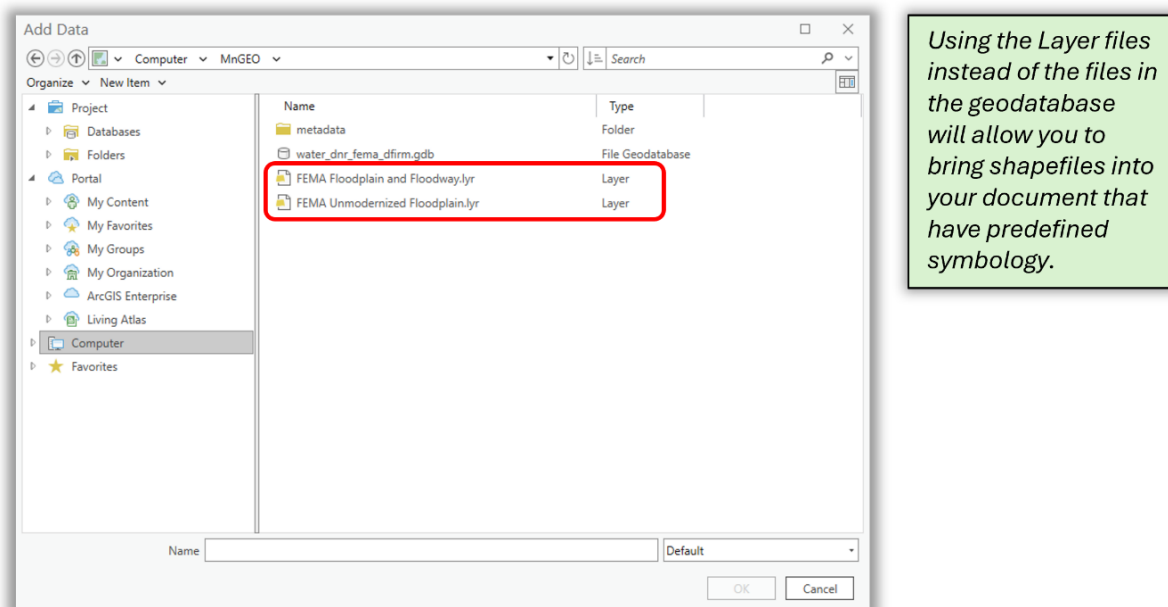


Figure 2. From the Map tab in ArcGIS Pro, use the Add Data feature to import the downloaded layer files into your project.

For DFIRM counties (communities with maps updated since 2003), the “FEMA Floodplain and Floodway” layer file should be used. This database contains effective base flood elevations (BFEs), DFIRM cross sections, flood hazard zones, and DFIRM panel numbers.

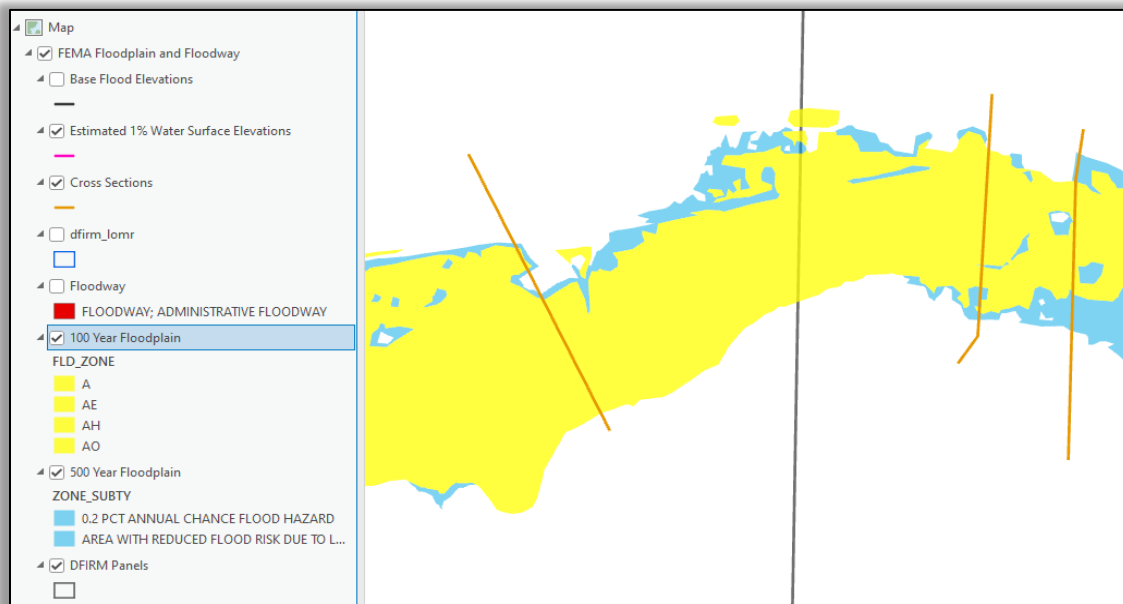


Figure 3. Example DFIRM county showing a Zone AE area

The “FEMA Floodplain and Floodway” layer file also includes model-supported elevation data for Zone A floodplains. These cross sections are often called “pink lines” due to the default color of the lines. They represent the Estimated 1% Annual Chance Water Surface Elevations and can be used as the “best available data” if a BFE is needed for floodplain management purposes or if requesting a letter of map change.

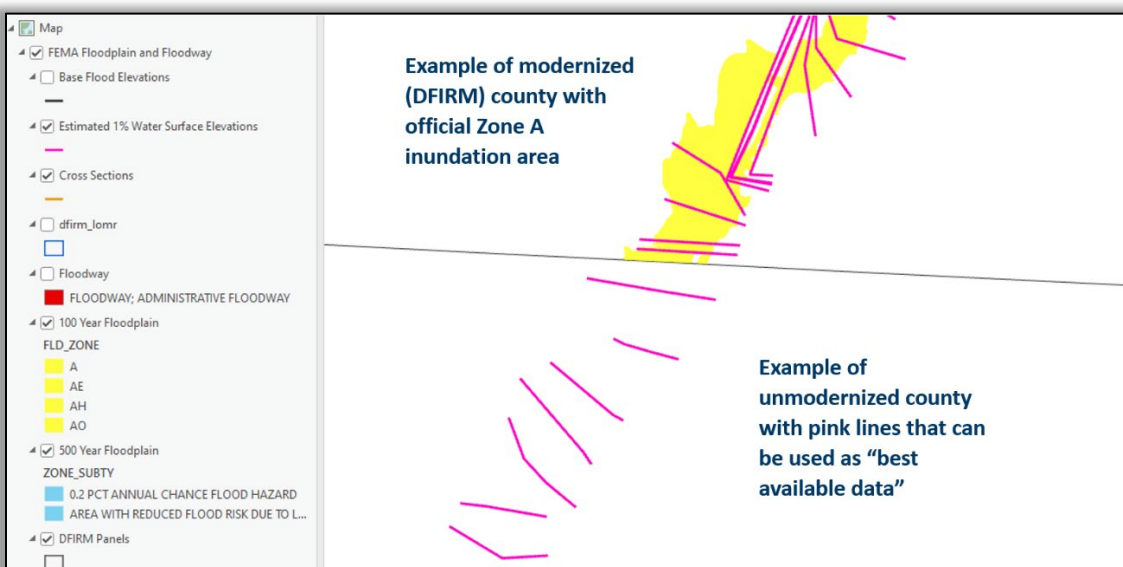


Figure 4. Example DFIRM county with pink lines associated with the official Zone A inundation area.

For non-DFIRM counties, the “FEMA Unmodernized Floodplain” layer should be used. Note that these counties may also have some “pink lines.” The unmodernized floodplain boundary is not the official FEMA layer but may be used for planning purposes.