

LOWER SALT RIVER (LSR) FLOODPLAIN DELINEATION STUDY (FDS)

Study Outcome

- The study reach extends from 4,000 feet above 91st Avenue to slightly downstream of Interstate 10, approximately 13.4 miles. The final length may change slightly based on the final upstream tie-in location.
- The study lies within the jurisdictions of the city of Phoenix and unincorporated Maricopa County.
- Proposed base flood elevations (BFEs) are lower in the study reach compared to the effective BFEs, with the exception of the lowest 9,500 feet of the study.
- Proposed increases in the 100-year floodplain extent are primarily at mining operations.
- Proposed decreases in the 100-year floodplain extent are due to lower BFEs and changes in topography due to urban development and sand and gravel mining operations.
- If FEMA approves this study, approximately 248 acres will be added to the floodplain and approximately 1,191 acres will be removed from the floodplain, resulting in a net decrease of 943 acres.
- Preliminary results show removed floodplain area over 1,209 properties, and added floodplain area over 50 properties. Nearly all properties that show added floodplain already have some floodplain shown over them.
- Preliminary results show no added floodplain over any residential areas.

Areas of Special Interest

- Additional floodplain proposed on the landward sides of embankments just upstream of 19th Avenue. These are landfill reclamation areas managed by the city of Phoenix.
- Additional floodplain proposed in the city of Phoenix Driving Course northeast of the 35th Avenue Bridge.
- Laveen Farms subdivision (south side of LSR at 75th Avenue) required careful attention; the project team determined that the subdivisions would be removed from the floodplain. The project team paid special attention to the proposed floodplain tie in with effective Cave Creek floodplain at the confluence. Some areas of effective floodplain that are not included in the proposed LSR floodplain are proposed as Zone X.

What does this mean for the residents and property owners in the floodplain?

- New development within the proposed floodplain must meet local, state and federal floodplain regulations.
- Existing and future homeowners with federally-backed mortgages may be required by their lender to purchase flood insurance once FEMA incorporates the study into its Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).
- Future sand and gravel operations within the revised floodplain may be required to obtain a floodplain use permit to demonstrate no adverse impacts to structures or surrounding properties from flow up to the 100-year event.
- None of the current sand and gravel mining permits will be negatively impacted based on the results of this study according to internal review by the District.

Next Steps

- Meetings will be held with the city of Phoenix to present study results.
- Meetings will be held with stakeholders such as the Arizona Rock Products Association and individual sand and gravel mining operators.
- A notification letter will be sent to all property owners in the new floodplain. The letter will include contacts to obtain more information on the study and announce public meeting locations, dates, and times. The upcoming public meetings are proposed to be held in the next work assignment (likely early 2015), and announcements for these public meetings will be published in local newspapers.
- Landowners will be able to discuss the results of the study and impacts to their individual parcels with District representatives at the public meetings as well as on the phone.
- The current plan is to submit the results of the Lower Salt River FDS to FEMA in order to revise the FIRMs in the next few months.