

Portland, OR — Senator Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) and Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) applauded this week's announcement by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that it will soon complete its update of 100-year floodplain maps in Johnson Creek. The maps are expected to be finished in December of this year. Senator Smith and Congressman Blumenauer contacted FEMA earlier this year, asking that the maps be updated.

"This action on the part of the federal and local governments reduces the threat of floods and the devastating damage they can bring," said Smith. "Updating the floodplain maps is common sense environmental progress that improves Johnson Creek and aids the economy."

"I congratulate FEMA and the City of Portland for their excellent partnership and diligent efforts to improve Johnson Creek," said Blumenauer. "This project will produce immediate benefits to the citizens of Portland and the watershed environment. It also continues with supports our long term investment to improve the overall health of Johnson Creek for generations to come."

The new maps will accurately reflect Johnson Creek's revised jurisdictional boundaries and new roads and will maximize the benefits of the City of Portland's \$600,000 investment in the floodplain map update. It will also enable the City of Portland to apply a 20% reduction in flood insurance premiums to area floodplain residents earned under FEMA's Community Ratings System (CRS), a program that rewards local communities for taking steps to reduce potential flood damages beyond minimum FEMA standards.

In 1998, Blumenauer worked with FEMA to secure a federal Project Impact designation which leveraged federal seed money to create more disaster-resistant communities in the Portland area. The Project Impact designation was part of a sustained effort by Blumenauer and local policymakers to focus attention and resources towards restoring Johnson Creek and making its communities safer. Recognizing the critical need for accurate and updated floodplain maps in its work, Smith and Blumenauer joined together to support Portland's request to FEMA for funding the map revision project.

"The City of Portland 'really gets it' when it comes to aggressive pre-planning to protect its citizens from natural disasters," said DHS FEMA Regional Director John Pennington. "Their enduring dedication to sustained pre-disaster mitigation is a natural fit for upcoming Department of Homeland Security all-hazards planning initiatives."

“The updated floodplain maps will result in a cost savings for Portland flood insurance rate payers and will benefit our local citizens through environmental resource protection, public health and safety, and well informed planning and development”, said Portland City Council member Dan Saltzman. “Portland appreciates the efforts of our Federal partners to get things done here at the local level.”