How to Share Initial Damage Assessment Geospatial Datasets with FEMA

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FEMA can accept initial damage assessment (IDA) geospatial datasets from state, tribal, and territorial (STT) governments. The dataset will be uploaded to FEMA's Field Assessment and Collection Tools (FACT) System for review by the FEMA Regional Office as part of a virtual Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) or to inform and coordinate an in-person Joint PDA.

Digital Damage Assessment Surveys

- FEMA utilizes a digital damage assessment survey to collect damage information during Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDA).
- The templates for FEMA's surveys are publicly available on online for state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) jurisdictions to use when seeking to adopt digital damage surveys for their initial or windshield assessment operations.
- SLTT jurisdictions may edit the templates and add any additional questions, as desired. As posted, the templates allow jurisdictions to collect the same data during the IDA that FEMA will need to review, assess, and validate during the Joint PDA.

Process for Submitting IDA Data to The FEMA Regional Office

- Following a disaster, an STT may choose to use the digital survey template for the initial assessment of damages, as outlined in 44 CRF § 206.33(a), to request a Joint PDA.
- When requesting a Joint PDA, STT emergency management officials may choose to coordinate with their geospatial information systems (GIS) counterparts in order to download a file geodatabase (.gdb) version of the IDA dataset. This file format is the most efficient way for FEMA to review IDA data.
  - A file geodatabase file format of the data is especially helpful as it allows FEMA to review photos associated with each damage location on the map.
  - Excel files (.csv) are a secondary option but are not preferred since this format will not transmit photos. Without photos, FEMA cannot visualize

damages to inform the strategy of a field operation or virtually assess damages during a remote assessment.

- Once FEMA has uploaded the STT's file geodatabase (.gdb) into the FACT System, the Regional Office will determine, in coordination with the STT, whether the Joint PDA will be in-person, virtual, or a hybrid of each.
  - For virtual PDAs, the STT file geodatabase dataset can be validated directly within the FACT System in conjunction with a pre-arranged virtual collaboration/meeting platform.
  - For in-person PDAs, the FEMA PDA Coordinator and Field Assessors can review damage points on the map in order to build a common operating picture prior to before deploying to the field.