

Faculty. Flores¹, A.B., K. Faculty. Larson¹, S. Faculty. Meerow¹, and S. Student. Gyanwali¹. *Comparing Perceptions of Flood Risk in FEMA and Federally-Overlooked Flood Zones in Metropolitan Phoenix, Arizona.*

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This study examines differences in flood risk perceptions among residents in FEMA-designated 100-year flood zones, federally-overlooked flood zones, and low flood risk areas in 12 Phoenix, Arizona neighborhoods. Using household-level survey data, we applied descriptive and inferential statistics to examine differences in flood risk perceptions and experiences across flood zone contexts and their associations with socio-demographic characteristics. Results indicate that residents in federally-overlooked flood zones perceive flooding as less of a problem for their households, whereas residents in FEMA-designated flood zones perceived flooding as a greater problem for their households and as a more significant future threat. Residing in federally-overlooked zones did not significantly influence perceptions of future flood threats. Past experience with local flooding was the strongest predictor of higher risk perceptions overall, while older individuals and women were more likely to perceive household flooding as a problem compared to younger residents and men. Hispanic residents perceived greater future flood threats than White residents. Our findings that residents of federally-overlooked flood have lower flood risk perceptions is important because it suggests these households may be less likely to adopt protective measures, making them more vulnerable to the impacts of flooding. This study highlights the need for more inclusive flood risk communication strategies that improve risk awareness in flood zones not recognized by federal risk maps.

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