



News Release

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New Water Science Tools Help Communities Prepare for Floods

Commemorating the Great Flood of 1913

Editors: A USGS [video](#) about the 1913 flood is available online.

New [flood inundation maps](#) are now available for Findlay, Killbuck, and Ottawa, Ohio. These maps show where flooding would occur at various high river levels. They are just one example of U.S. Geological Survey products and services developed in the 100 years since Ohio's devastating Great Flood of 1913.

The 100-year anniversary of the Great Flood of 1913 falls during the 2013 [Flood Safety Awareness Week](#).

The USGS prepared the new maps to help emergency managers and the public make more informed decisions when flooding is forecast. Flood inundation maps are connected to real-time river levels at USGS [streamgages](#) to help communities identify immediate risks during a flood. Since the historic flood of March 23-27, 1913, which caused more than 400 deaths and \$300 million in damages throughout the Ohio River Valley, the USGS has developed streamgage networks and tools to better support flood preparedness and provide flood warnings.

“The 1913 statewide flood is Ohio’s ‘Greatest Natural Disaster’. Since then, the number of USGS streamgages increased from one to about 230 currently operating in Ohio,” said Scott Jackson, USGS Ohio Water Science Center Deputy Director. “Today, the USGS and its partners maintain about 8,000 streamgages nationwide.”

This collection of stream data is necessary to flood science because it provides real-time information and a database of field-measurement data, streamflow statistics, and annual peak streamflows that are available online through the USGS [National Water Information System](#).

“The USGS and its partners are currently developing flood warning systems that serve as a foundation for making science-based decisions to better manage flood risks and mitigate flood impacts,” Jackson said.

New USGS flood inundation maps are underway for Marietta, Beverly, McConnellsville, and multiple sites in Licking County, Ohio.

Other USGS flood-related tools include:

- [WaterWatch](#), a website that displays maps, graphs, and tables describing real-time, recent, and past streamflow conditions in the U.S.;
- [WaterNow](#) which relays on-demand current conditions and water data to a user's mobile phone or e-mail;
- [WaterAlert](#) which sends an e-mail or text message when streamflow or streamgage measurements exceed user-defined thresholds.

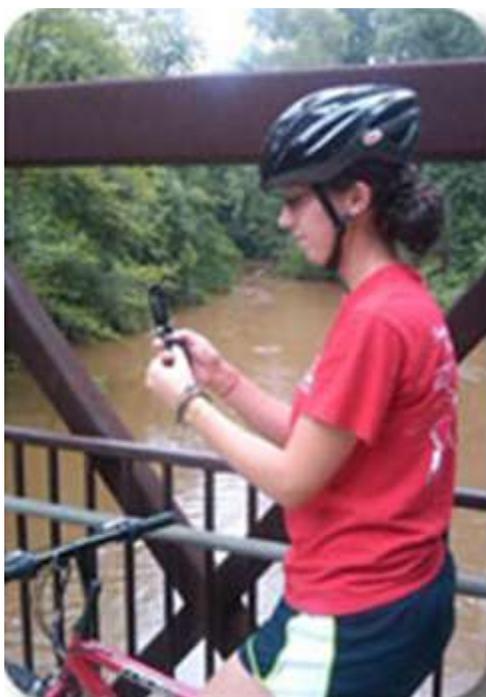
Historical information on the 1913 flood and current-day tips on flood preparedness, mitigation, and more can be found on the Silver Jackets "Flood of 1913" website. The Silver Jackets program assembles teams of local, State, and Federal [agencies](#), including the USGS, to work together to prepare and respond to natural disasters such as floods.

More information about USGS [streamgaging in Ohio](#) is available online.

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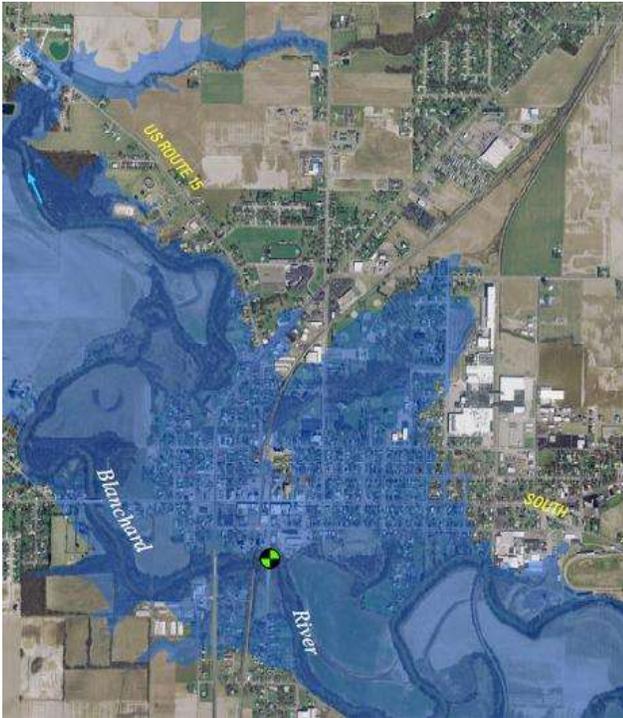
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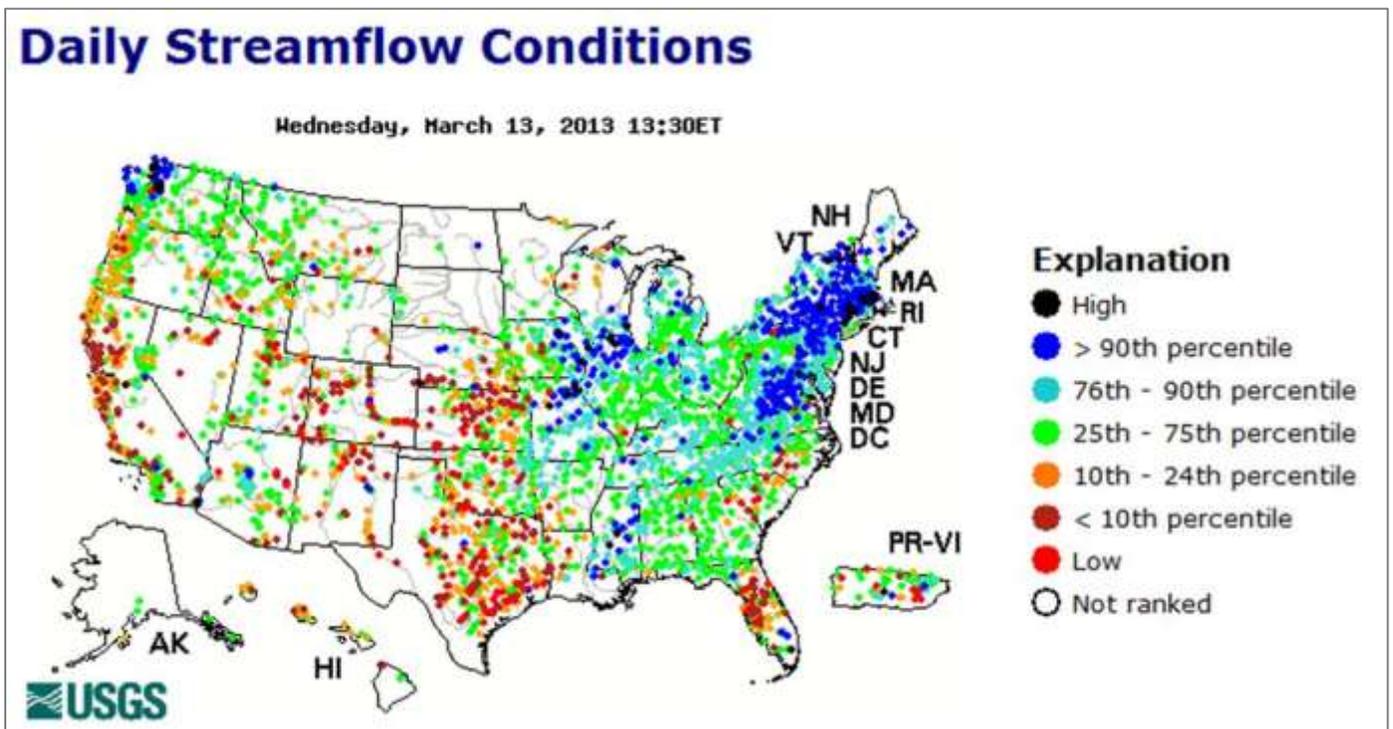
The [WaterNow](#) allows you to send an email or text message containing a USGS current-conditions streamgaging site number and quickly receive a reply with its most recent observation(s).



The [USGS network](#) of about 8,000 streamgages are used to track rising water in order to minimize or mitigate flood damages.



A flood-inundation map library contains a series of aerial maps that help communicate where flooding may occur over a range of river levels. The library can be connected to real-time and forecasted river levels at USGS streamgages to help emergency managers make informed decisions when flooding is imminent. This is an aerial map of the Village of Ottawa, Ohio, showing the areas underwater when the [Blanchard River stage is at 31.4 feet](#).



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