

Louisiana Watershed Initiative

Sustainability and resilience through science, engineering and objective decision-making

Objective

Develop a common understanding of known flood risks, vulnerabilities and priorities in Region 8

Building on previous efforts

Region 8 planning and policy professionals worked with LWI to identify these priorities based on their region's flood risk and mitigation needs.

Agenda

1. Region 8 flood risk assessment



LOUISIANA
WATERSHED
INITIATIVE

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1. Region 8 flood risk assessment
2. Break
3. Discussion—Pivoting from previous work: Inside and outside of the HSDRRS

Flood risk assessment

Each watershed region throughout Louisiana faces unique flood risks. To understand these risks and to prioritize solutions, we must accomplish the following:

1. Build a common vocabulary
2. Consider various risk factors
3. Work with nature



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Parishes In Region 8



FUND PROJECTS THAT SHIFT THINKING

SUPPORT REGIONAL WATERSHED PLANS

ENCOURAGE FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT POLICIES

FOCUS ON DATA-DRIVEN WATERSHED PROJECTS

CONSIDER FUTURE RISK IN PLANNING

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Parishes in Region 8

Working together to address risk at the watershed scale

- St. Charles Parish
- Jefferson Parish
- Orleans Parish
- Plaquemines Parish
- St. Bernard Parish



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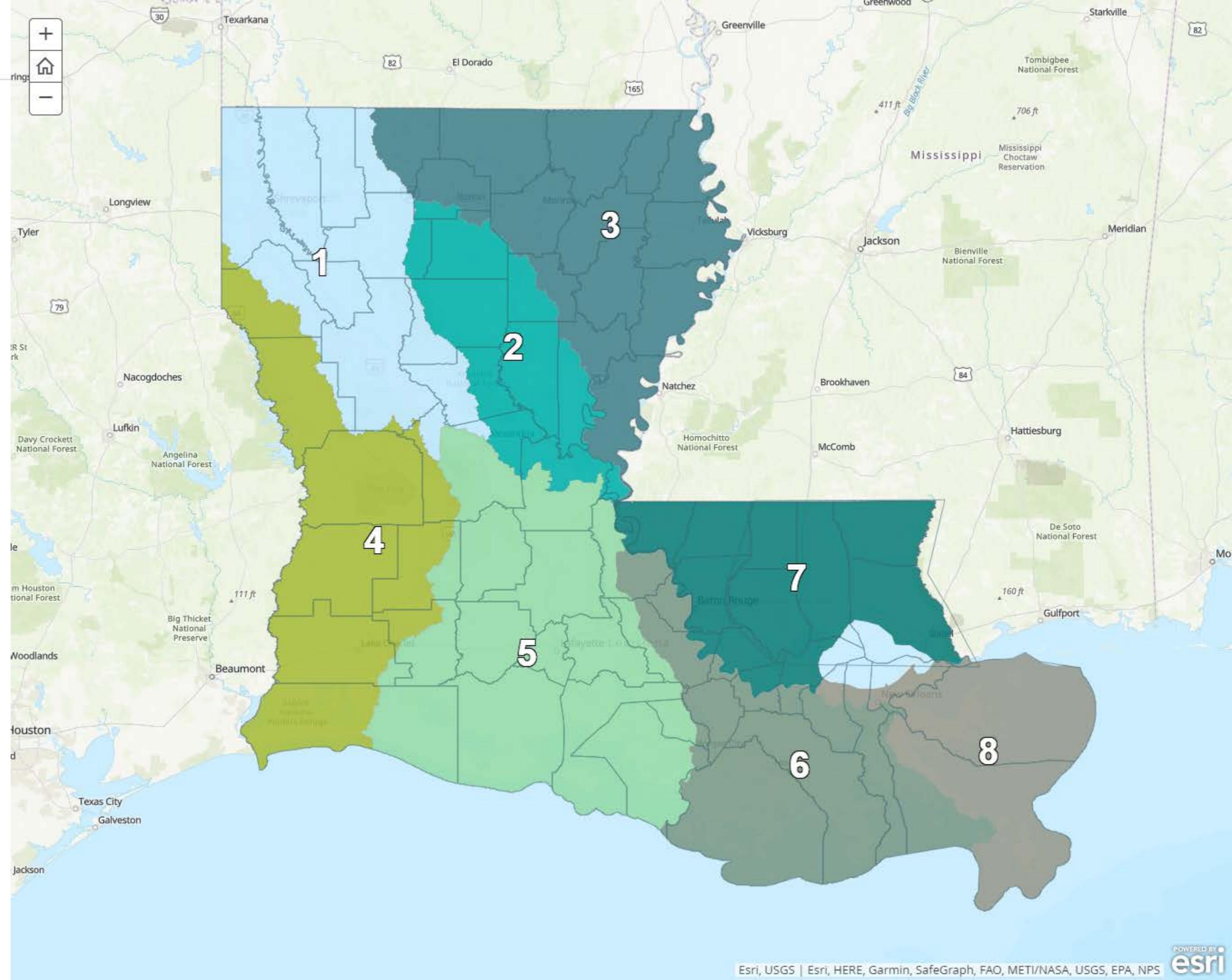
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Region 8 watersheds



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Region 8 watersheds

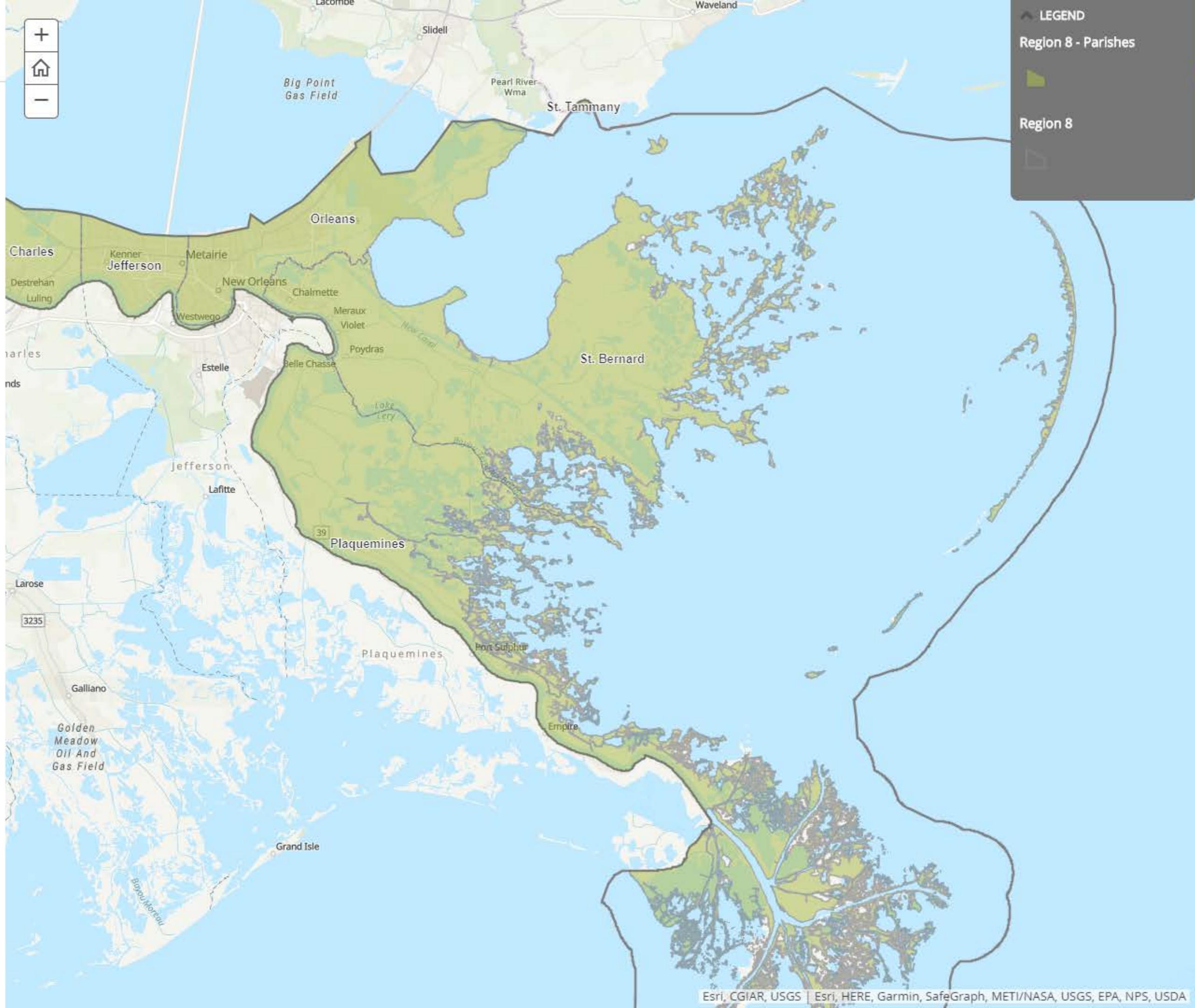
Hydrology: a science that deals with the properties, distribution and circulation of water on and below Earth's surface and in the atmosphere

Types of flood risk

We must consider all types of flood risk to effectively manage flood risk within Region 8 watersheds.

Types of flood risk

- Fluvial floods: river floods
- Coastal floods: surge and tidal



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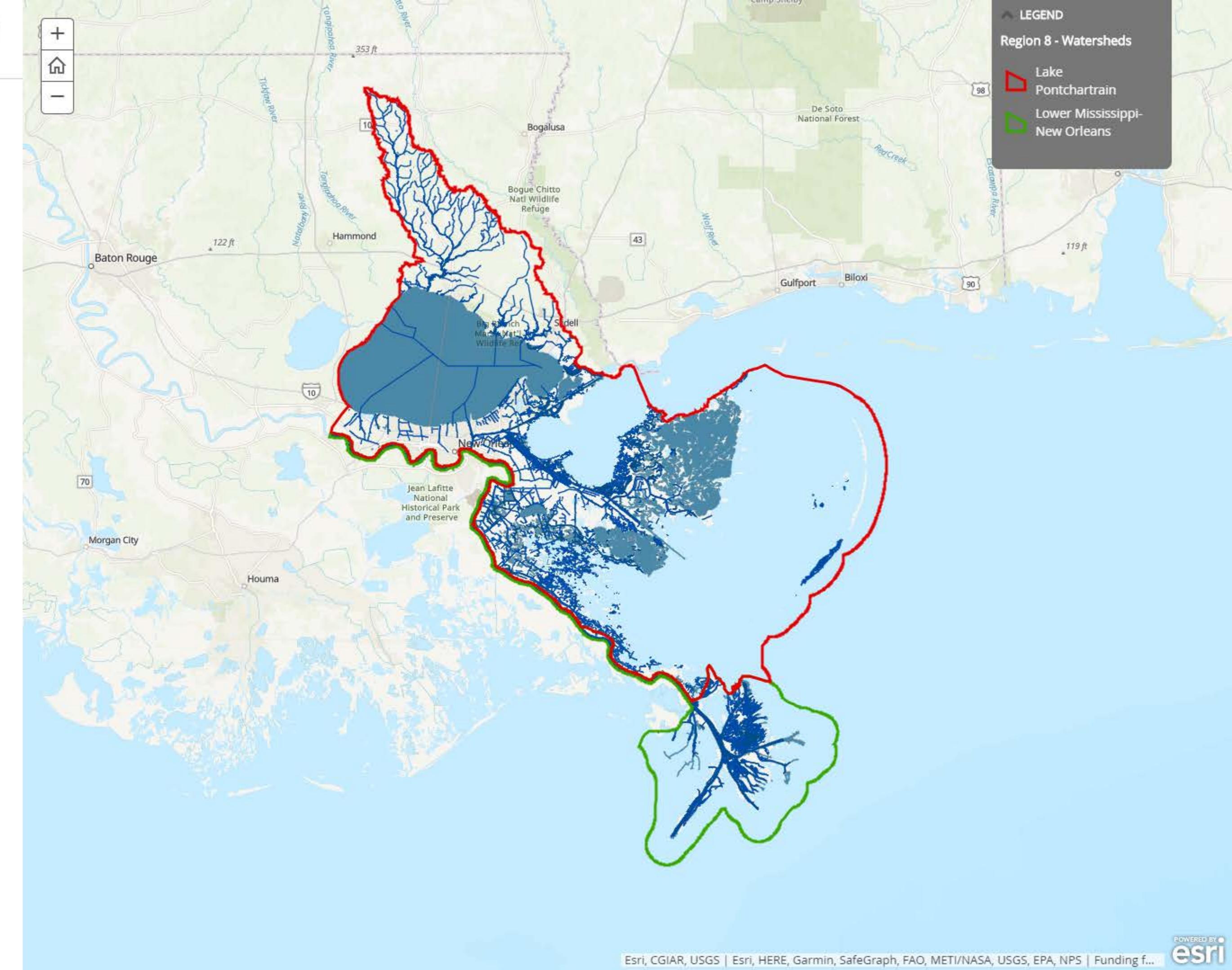
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- Coastal floods: surge and tidal
- Pluvial floods: rainfall-induced flash floods and urban flooding

Fluvial floods

Fluvial floods occur when excessive rain falls over an extended period of time and causes a river to exceed its capacity. A river's capacity is often monitored by checking the height of a river's crest. These events can cause dams and dikes to break and inundate nearby areas.

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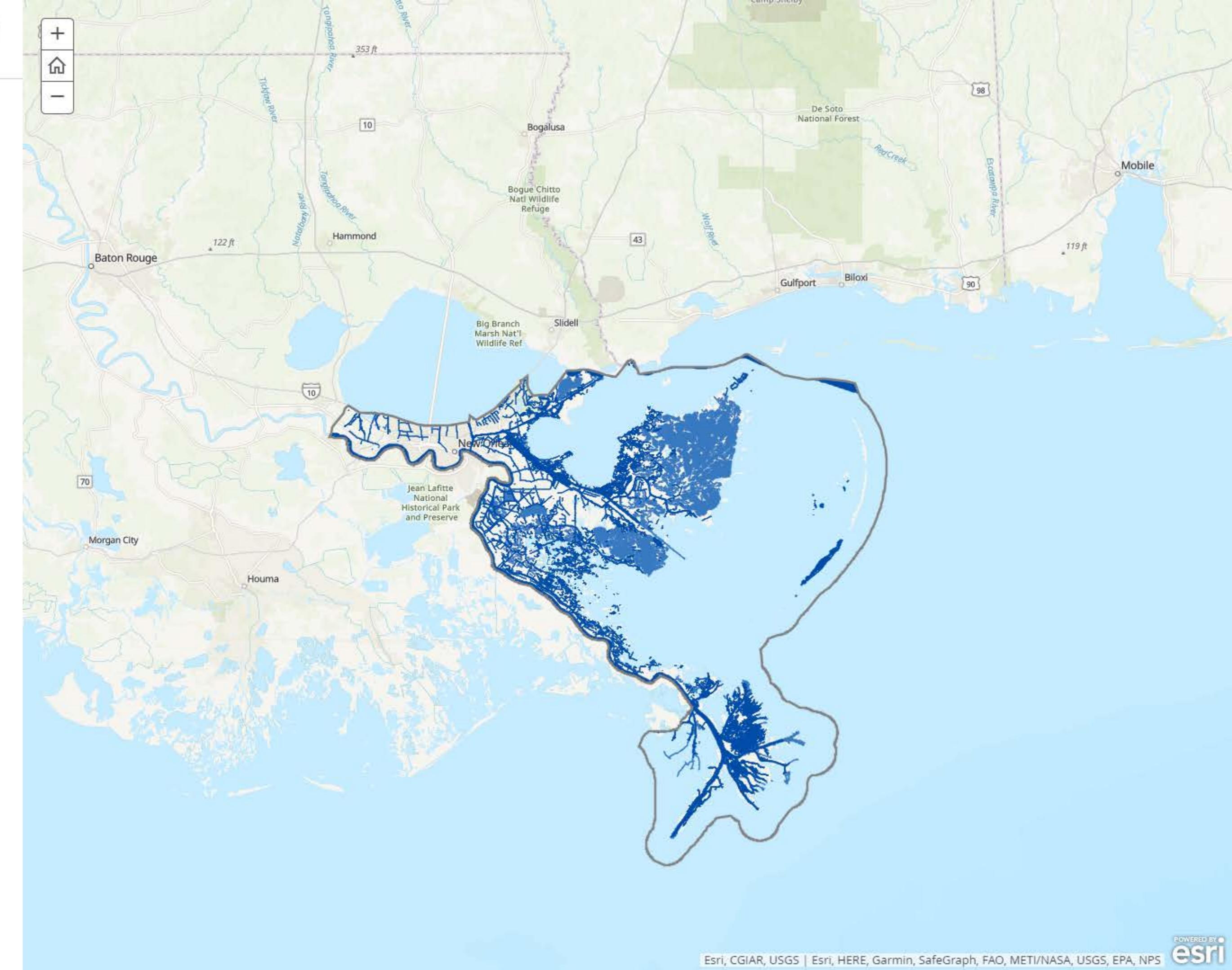
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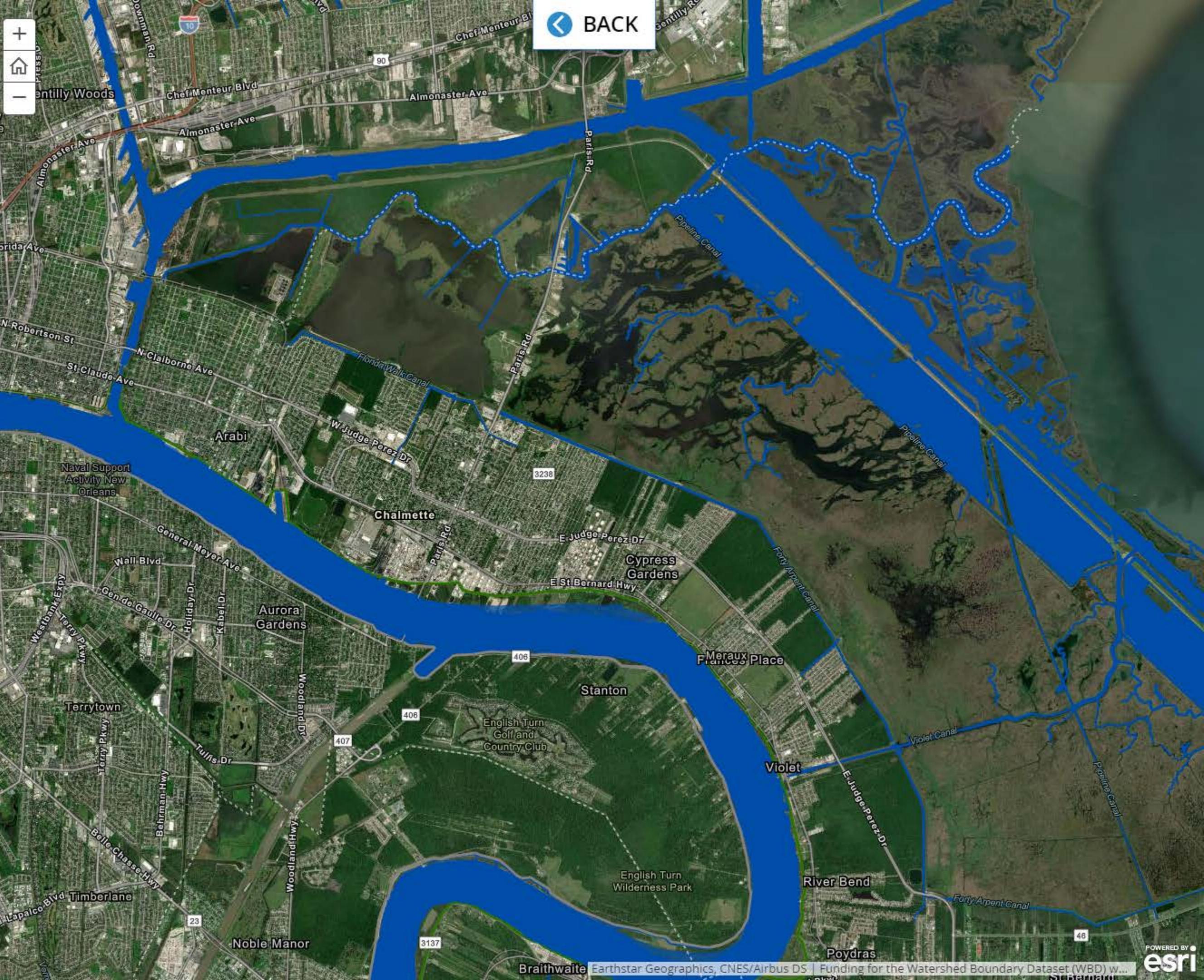
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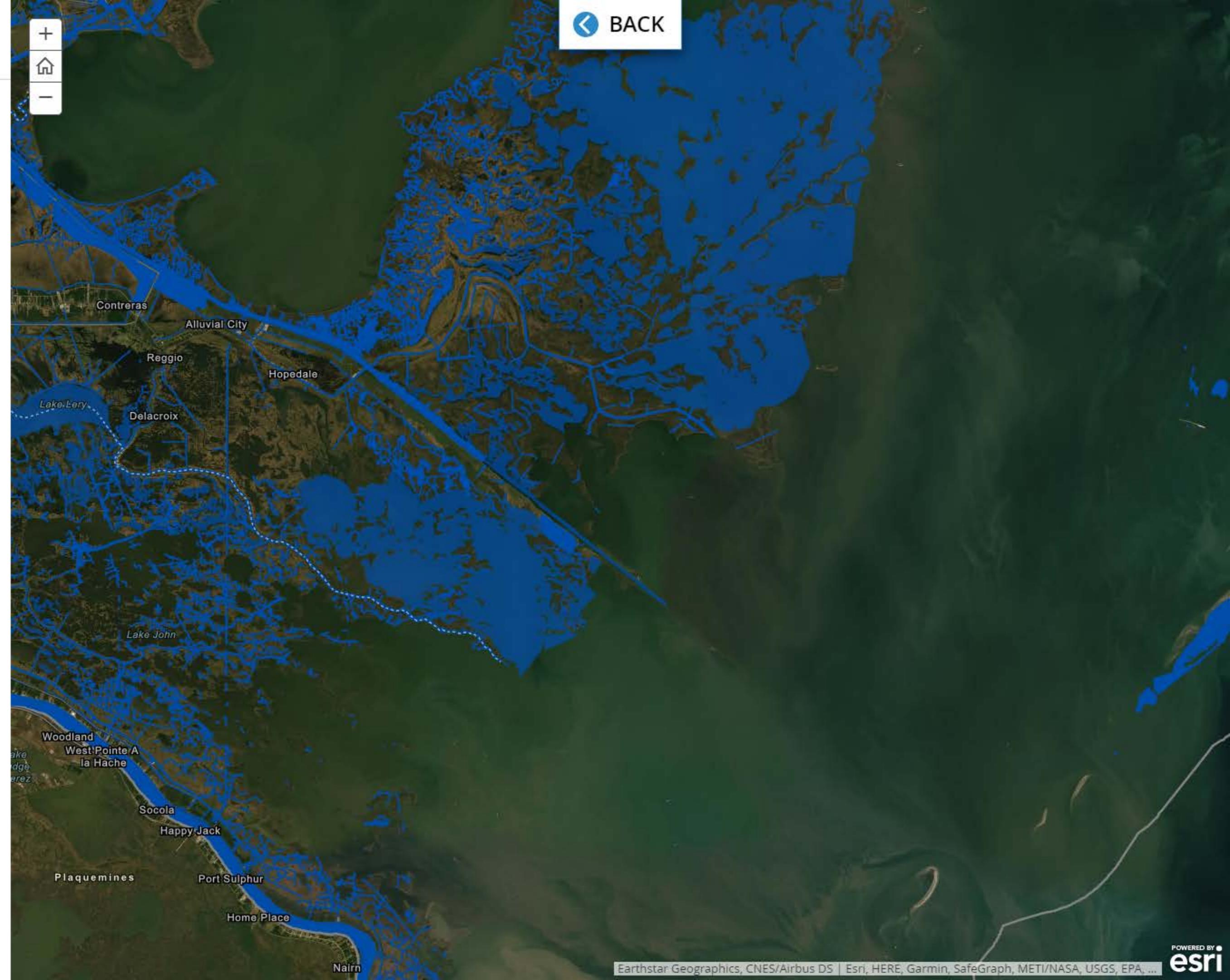
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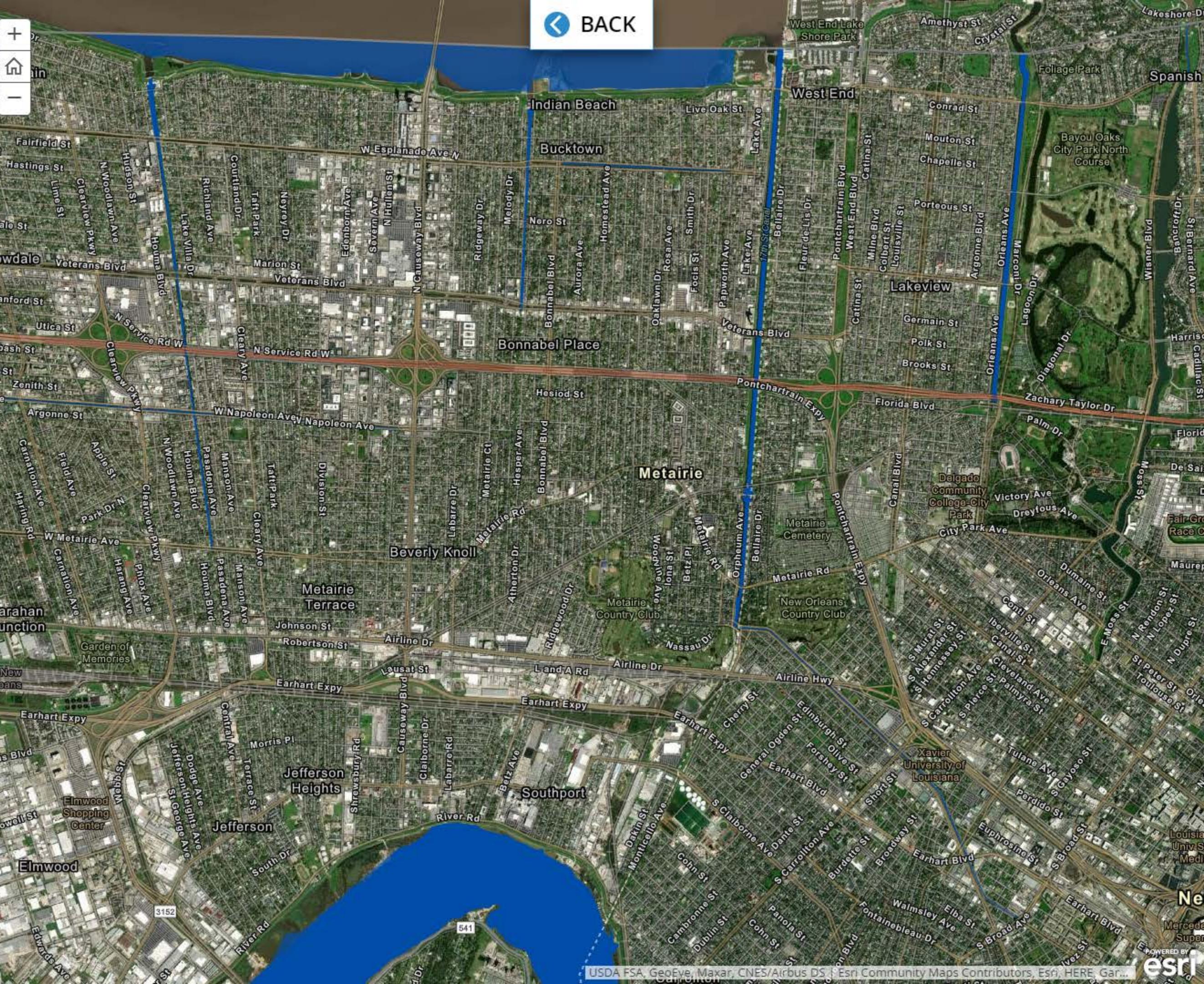
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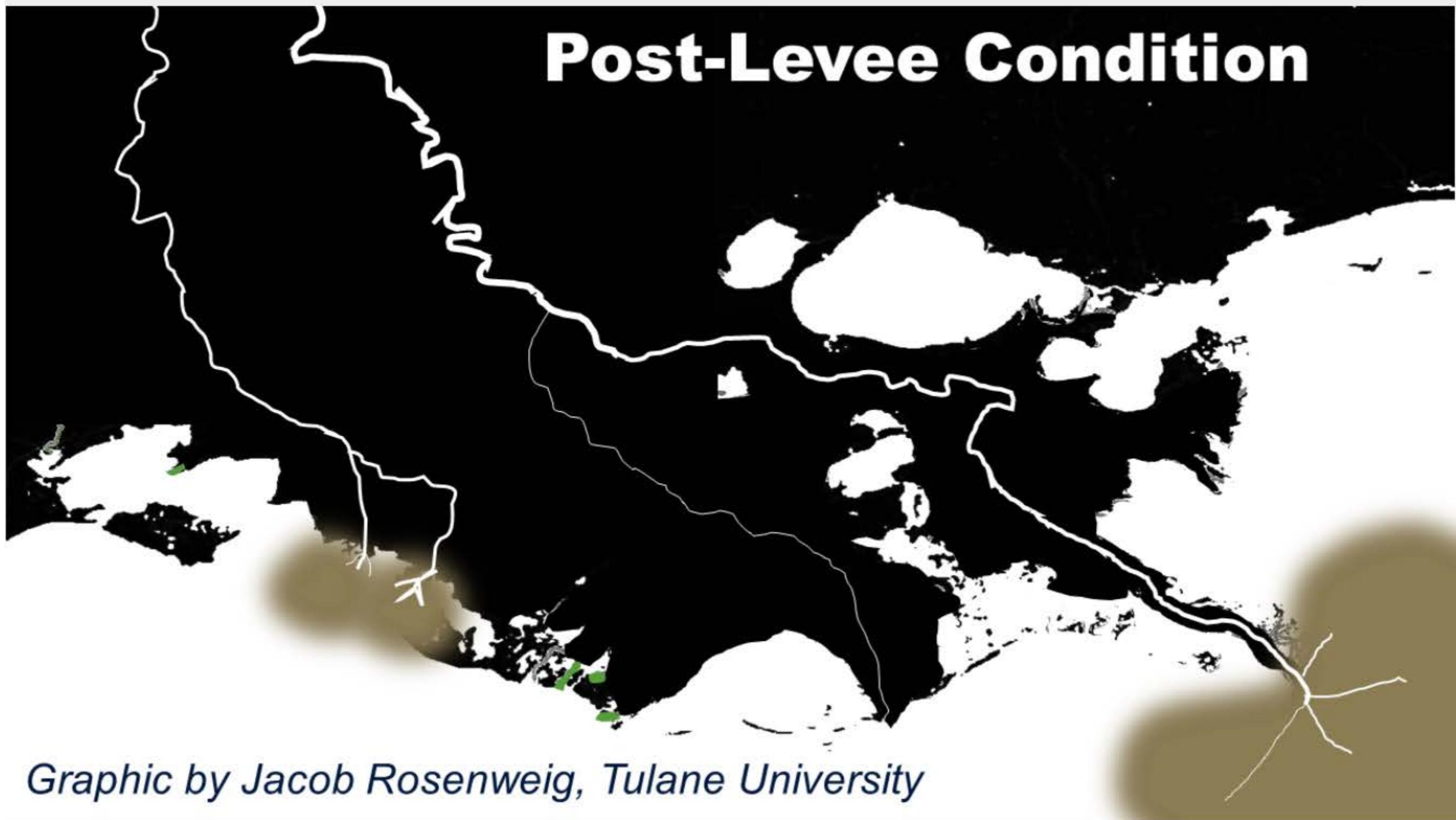
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A constrained system

Post-Levee Condition



Graphic by Jacob Rosenweig, Tulane University

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Engineered systems in Orleans and Jefferson parishes providing water management from Lake Pontchartrain

Coastal floods: surge and tidal

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Future flood risk: coastal surge floods

Future flood risk is understood in terms of how severe future events may be and how often they will occur. This is reflected as a probability:

- 1% annual chance event: 26% chance of at least one event in any 30-year period (commonly known as a 100-year event)



Sources: CPRA Coastal Master Plan 2017 and USGS

US Census TIGER/Line 2010, USGS National Hydrography Dataset, NOAA, Altas: The Louisiana Statewide GIS, Esri, TomTom, Tele Atlas North America, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

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Source: 2017 Coastal Master Plan modeling analysis, Coastal Louisiana Risk Assessment model grid

Coastal flooding

Coastal high tide flooding in Plaquemines Parish



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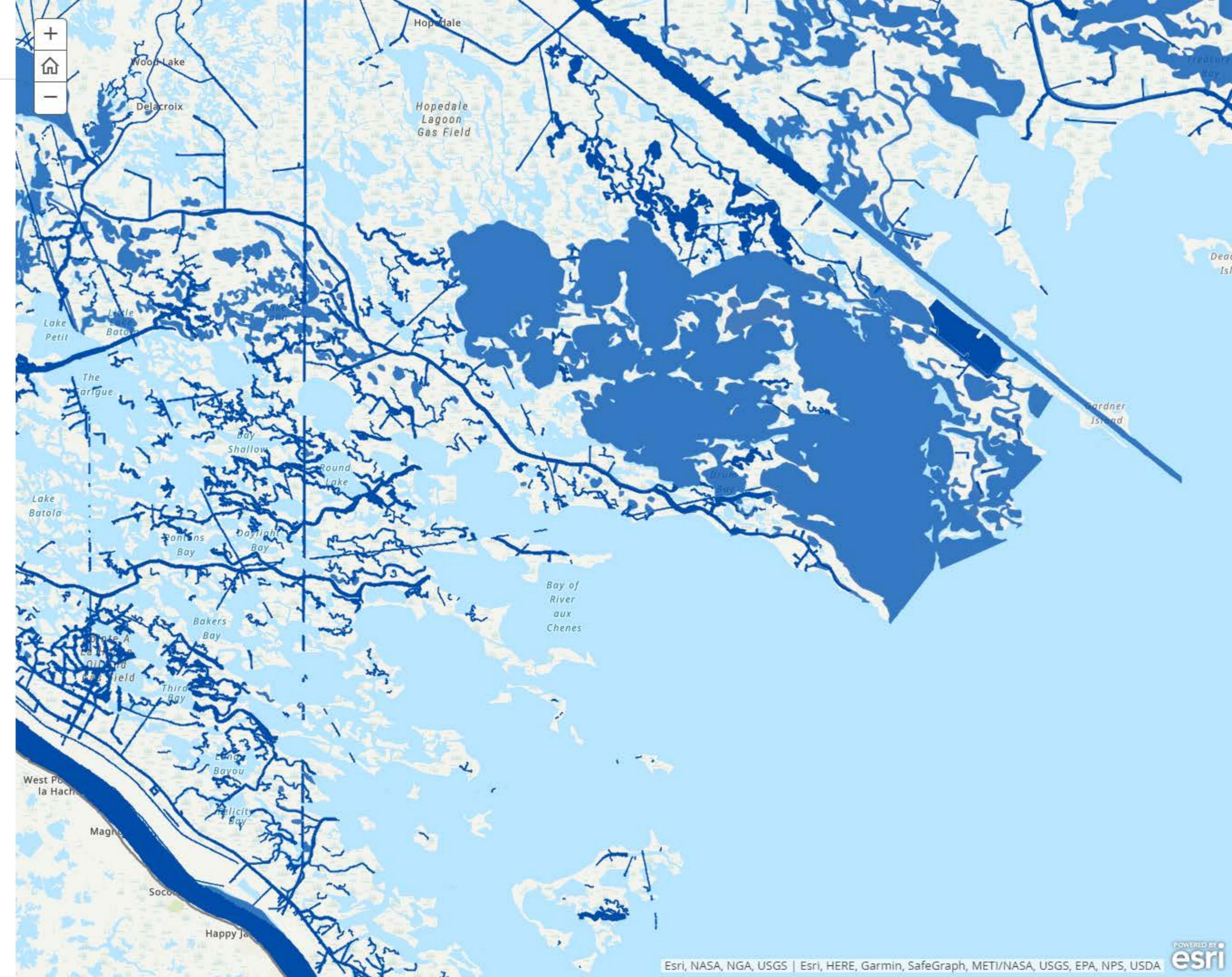
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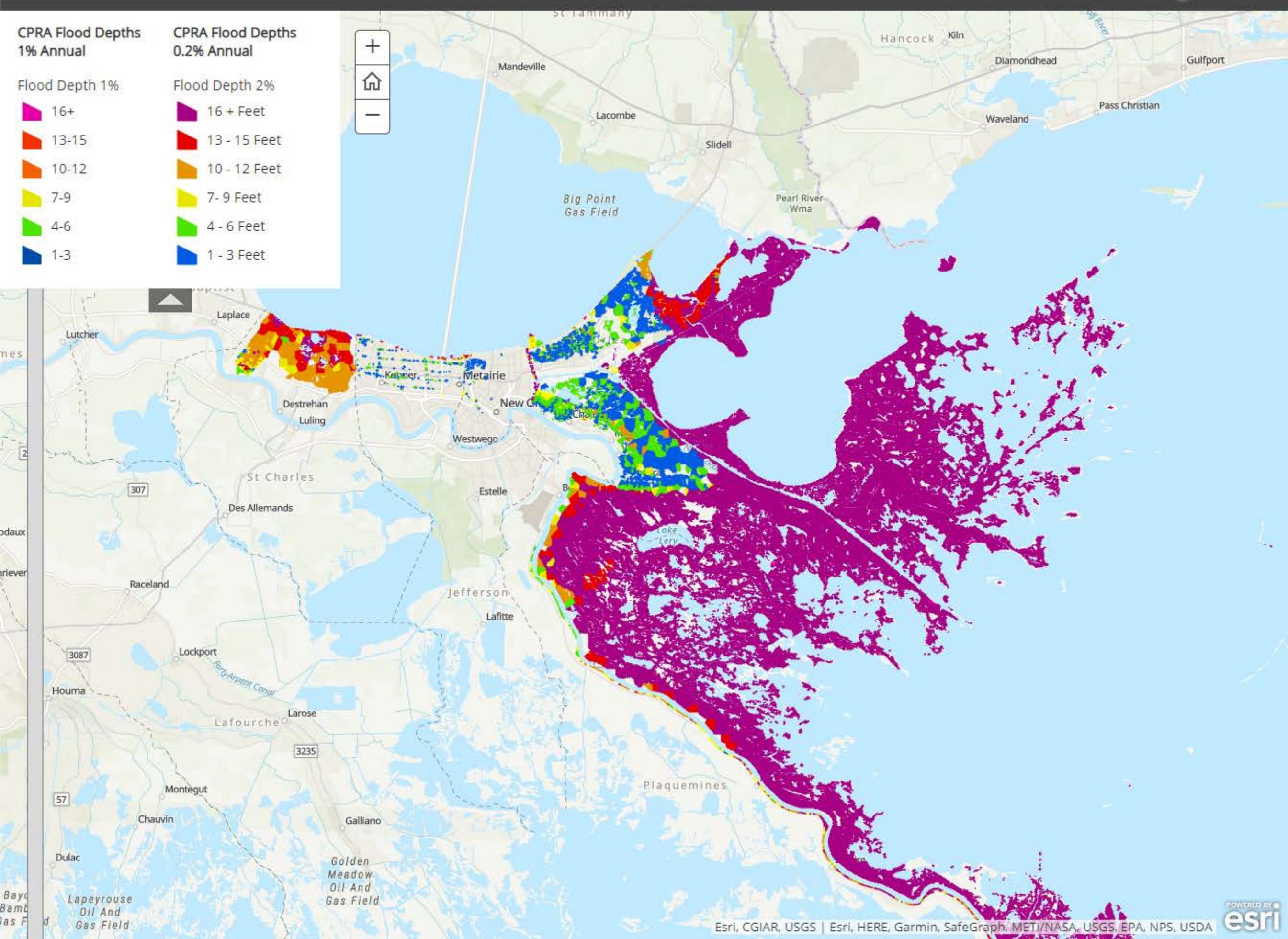
1% and 0.2% Flood Depths

1% Annual Chance on Left 0.2% Annual Chance on the Right

CPRA Flood Depths 1% Annual

Flood Depth 1%	Flood Depth 2%
16+	16 + Feet
13-15	13 - 15 Feet
10-12	10 - 12 Feet
7-9	7 - 9 Feet
4-6	4 - 6 Feet
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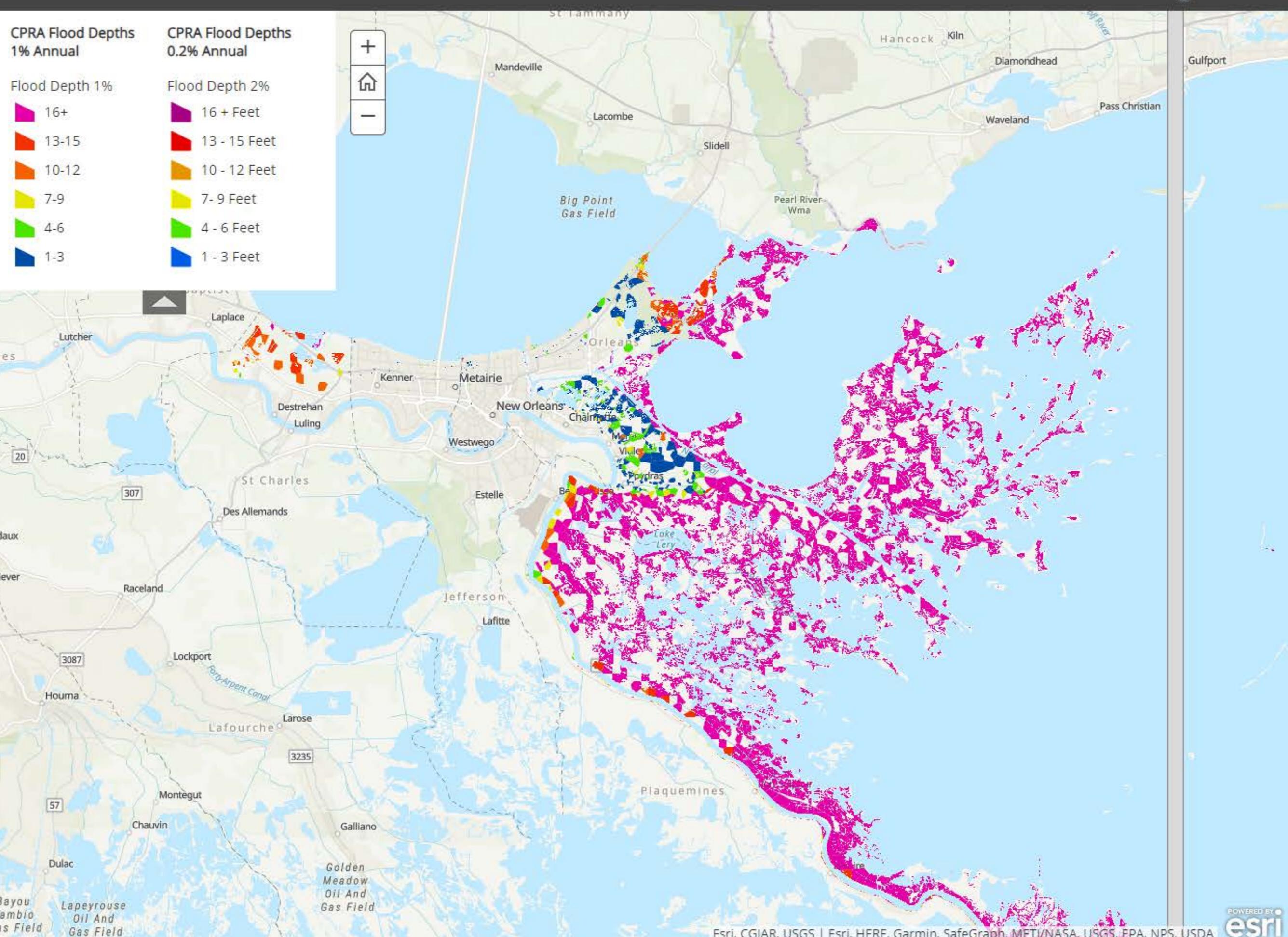
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Extreme rainfall or precipitation

Louisiana has some of the highest rainfall rates in the country on an average statewide basis and often experiences high water levels in its major riverine systems.

Because of our flat landscape and interconnected waterways, the impact of a rainfall event in one part of the state is often felt far beyond the boundaries of where the rain falls.

August 2016 flood



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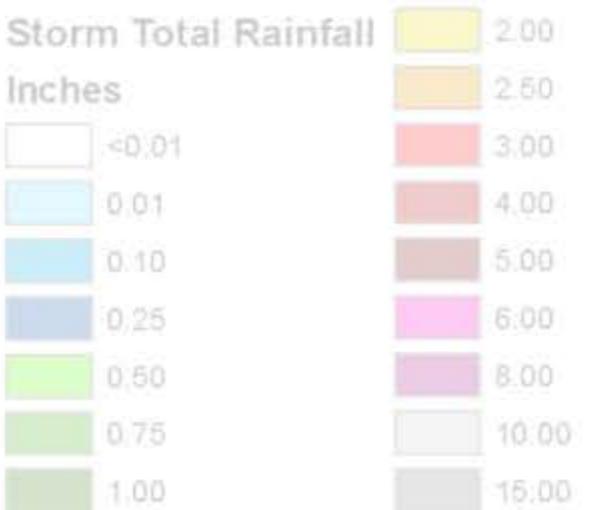
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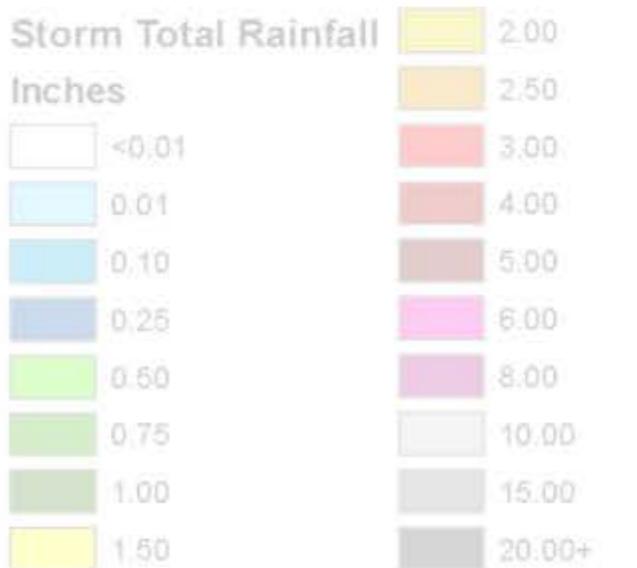
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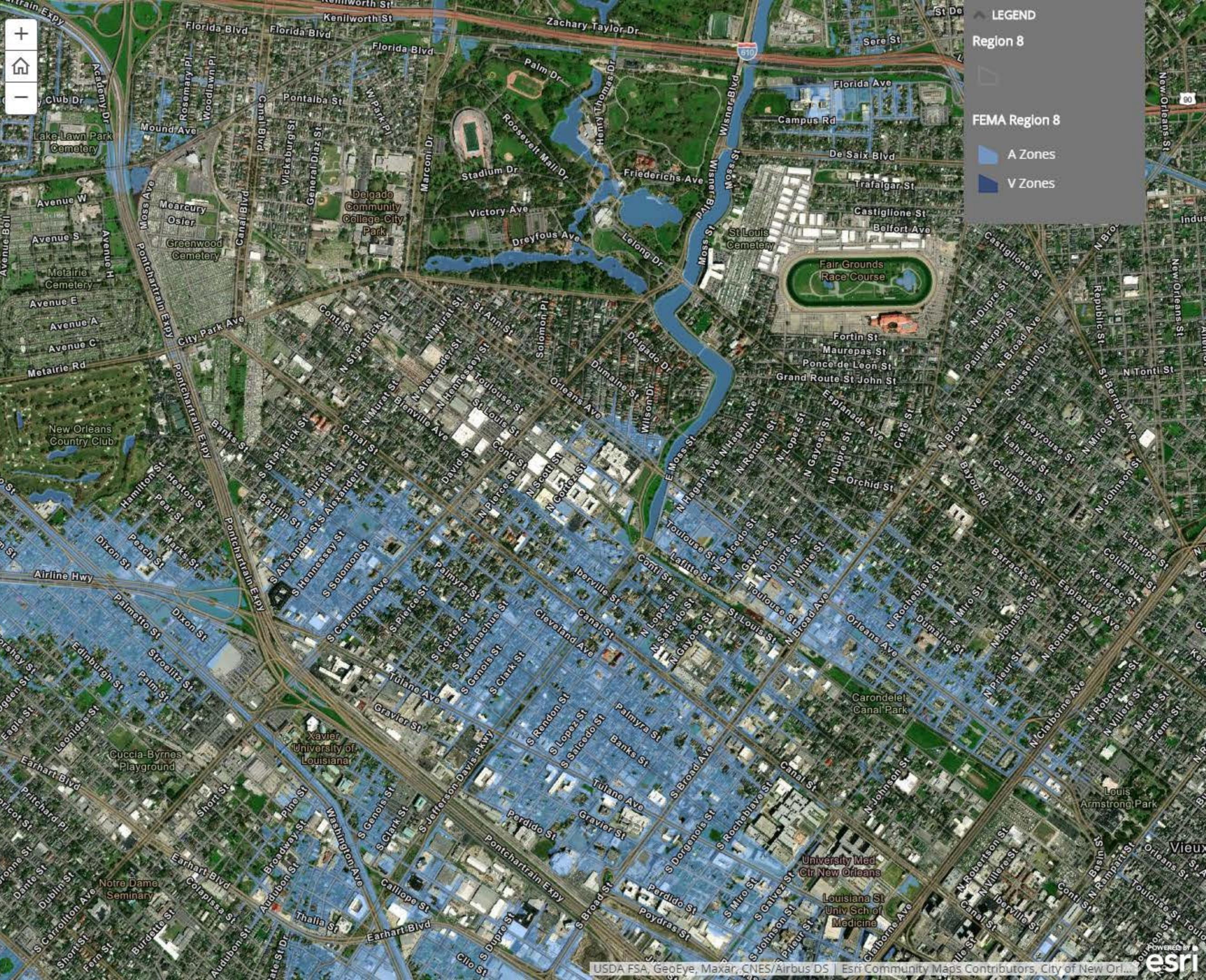
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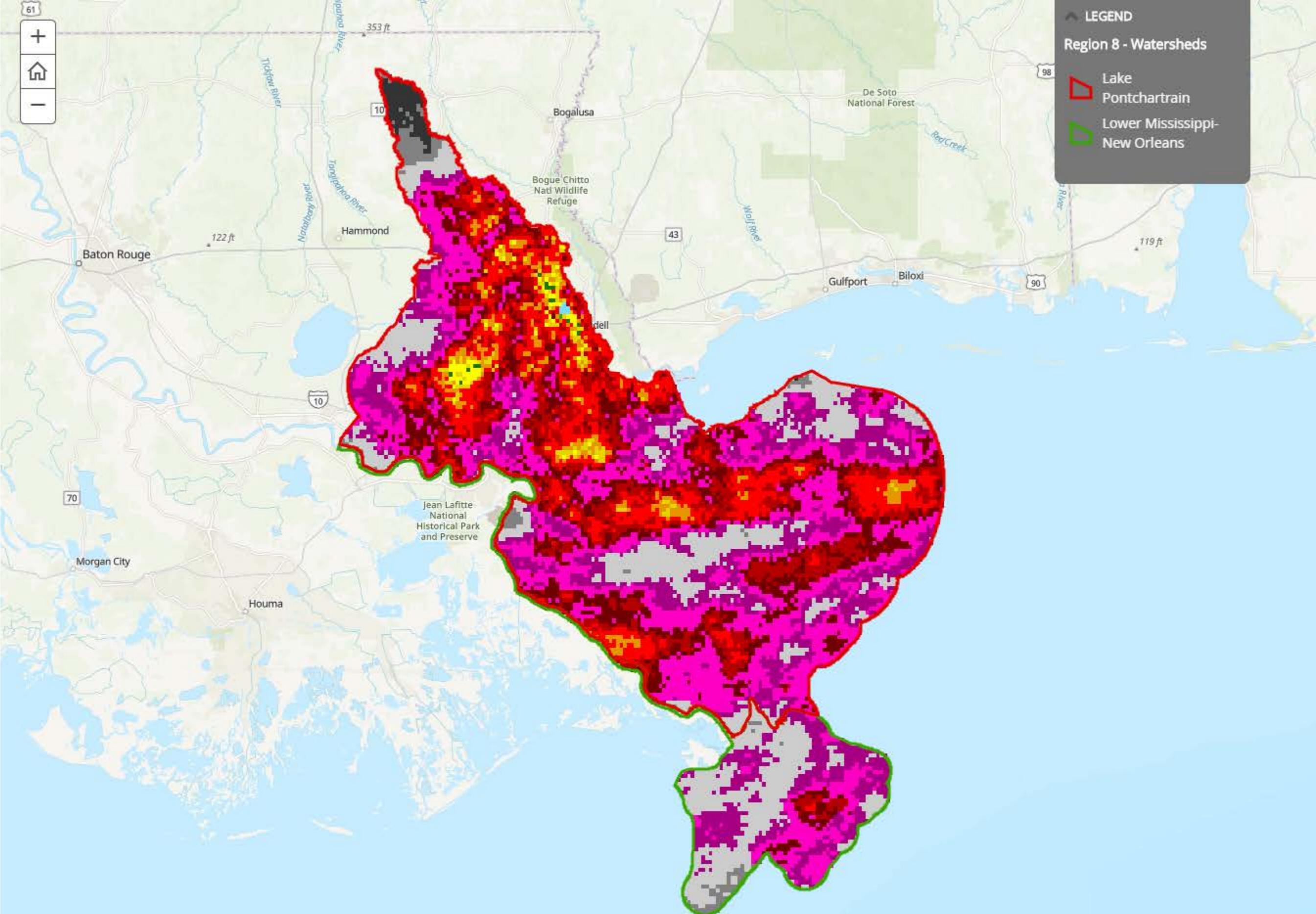
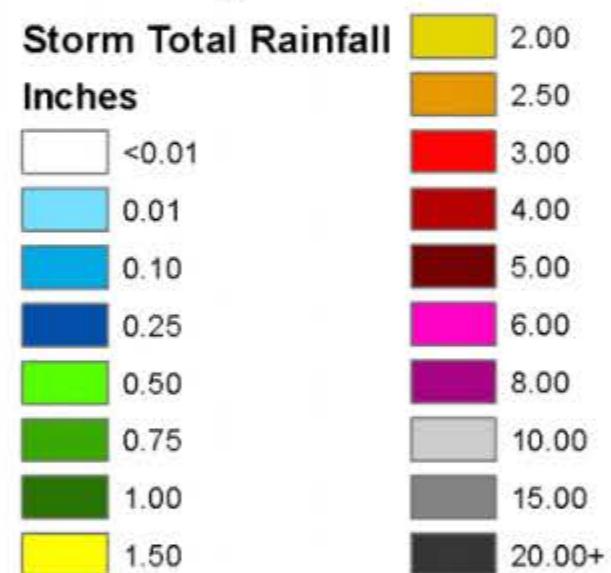


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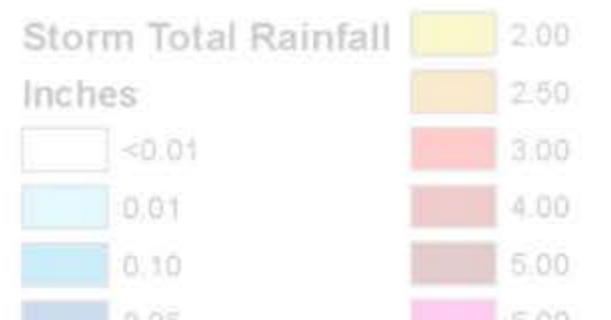
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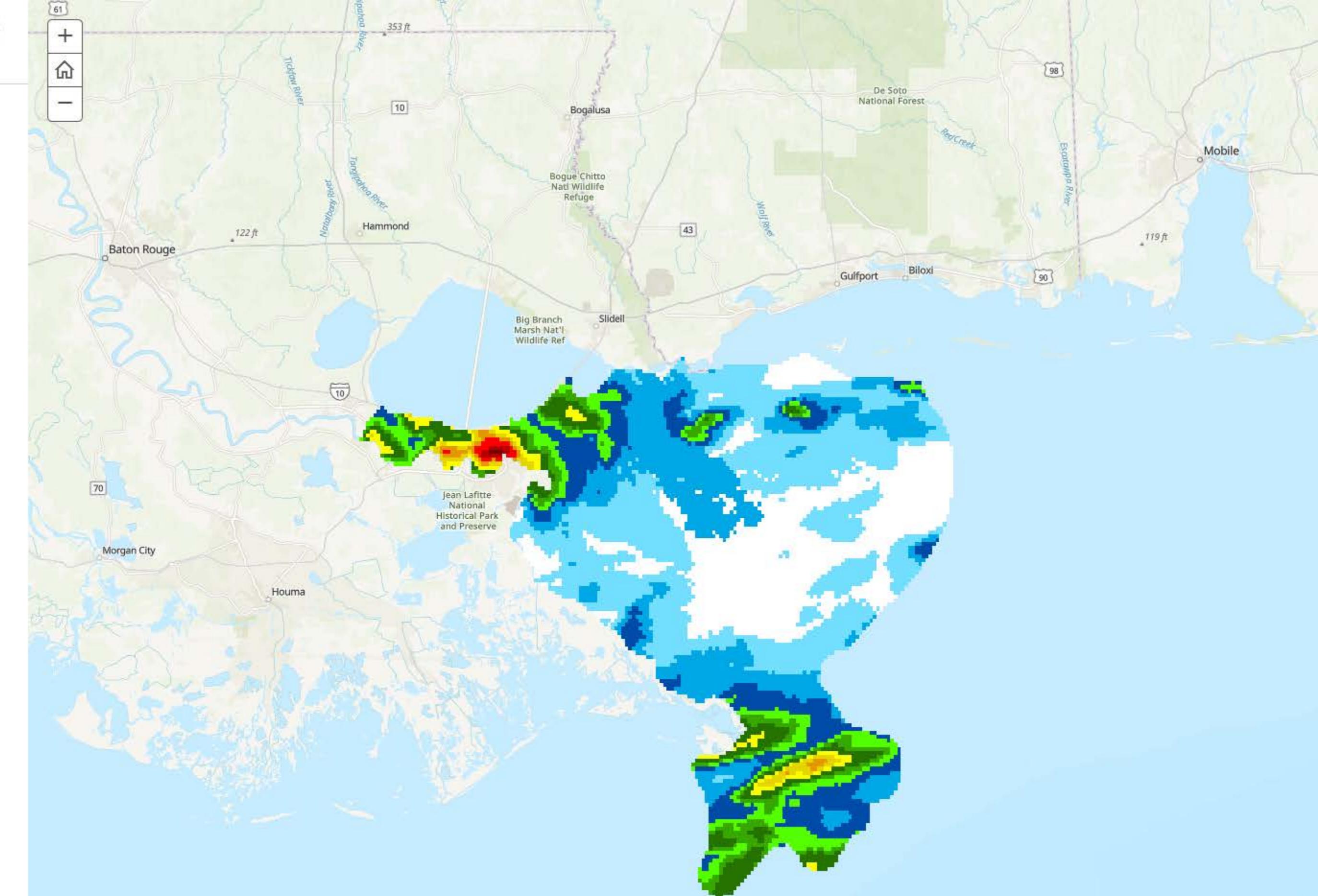
Extreme rainfall or precipitation

August 2017 flash flood event



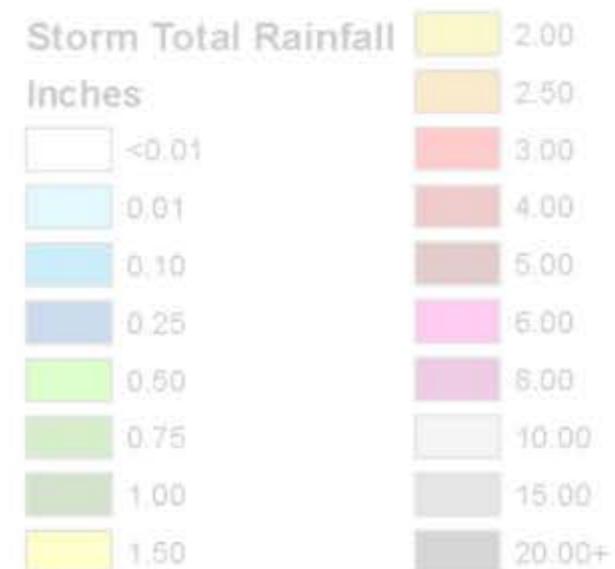
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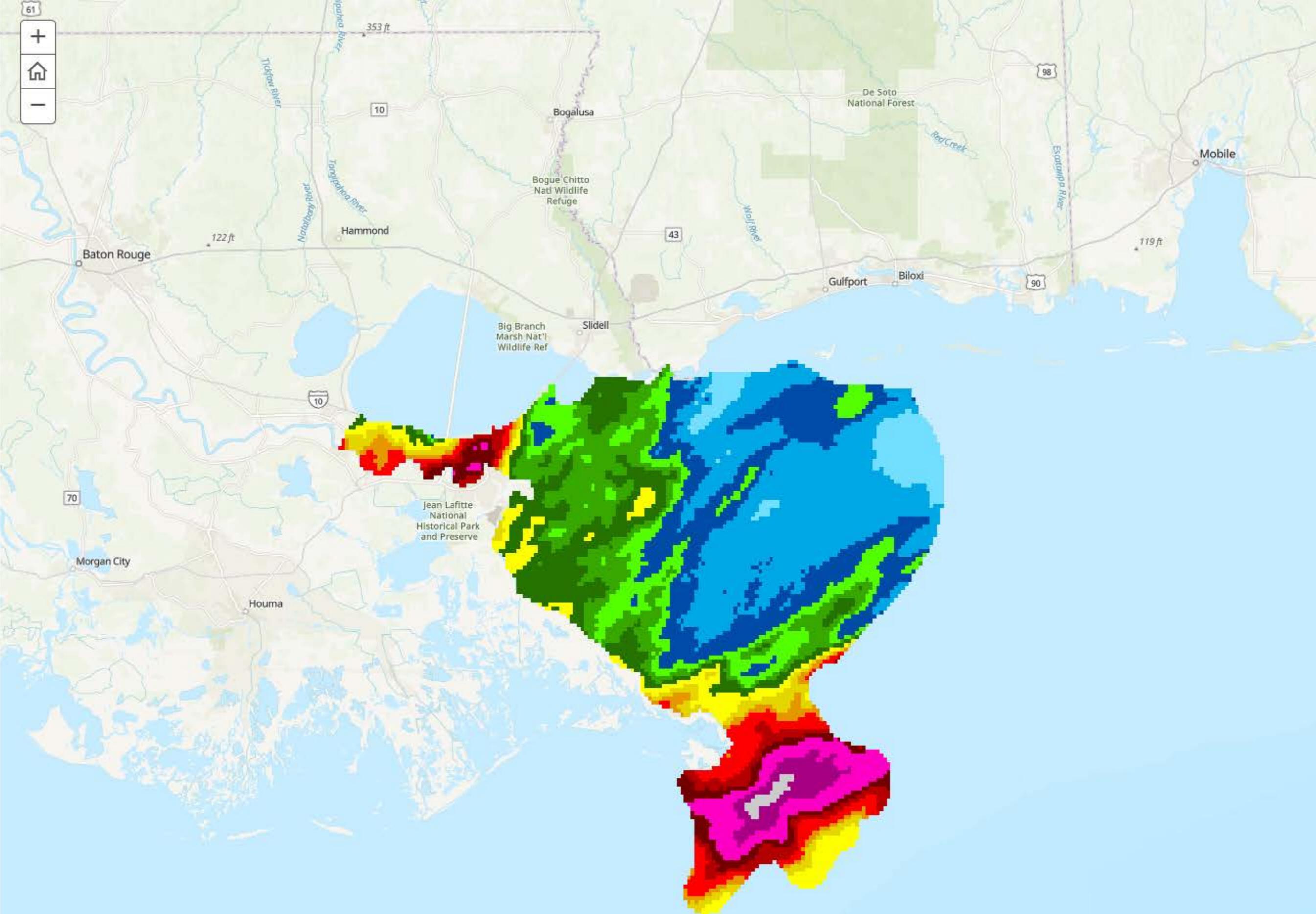


Extreme rainfall or precipitation

July 2019 flash flood event



Extreme rainfall or precipitation



Extreme rainfall

Pluvial flood in Orleans Parish at Bayou St. John in July 2019

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Rainfall study

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- While total precipitation has remained stable, it is occurring in shorter, more intense events.
- Precipitation during 1% events increased by 18% since 1901 (1901-2016) and 27% since 1958 (1958-2016).
- Precipitation is projected to increase 10% to 29% by 2099 depending on emissions levels.
- These more intense rainfall events increase flood risk because they are more likely to overwhelm the drainage systems.

Citation: Brown, V.M., Keim, B.D., and Black, A.W., 2019. Climatology and trends in hourly precipitation for the southeast United States. Journal of Hydrometeorology, 20(8), pp.1737-1755.; V.M. Brown personal communication, July 17 & July 24, 2020.

Traditional gaps in understanding
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Traditional gaps in understanding flood risk

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FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas:

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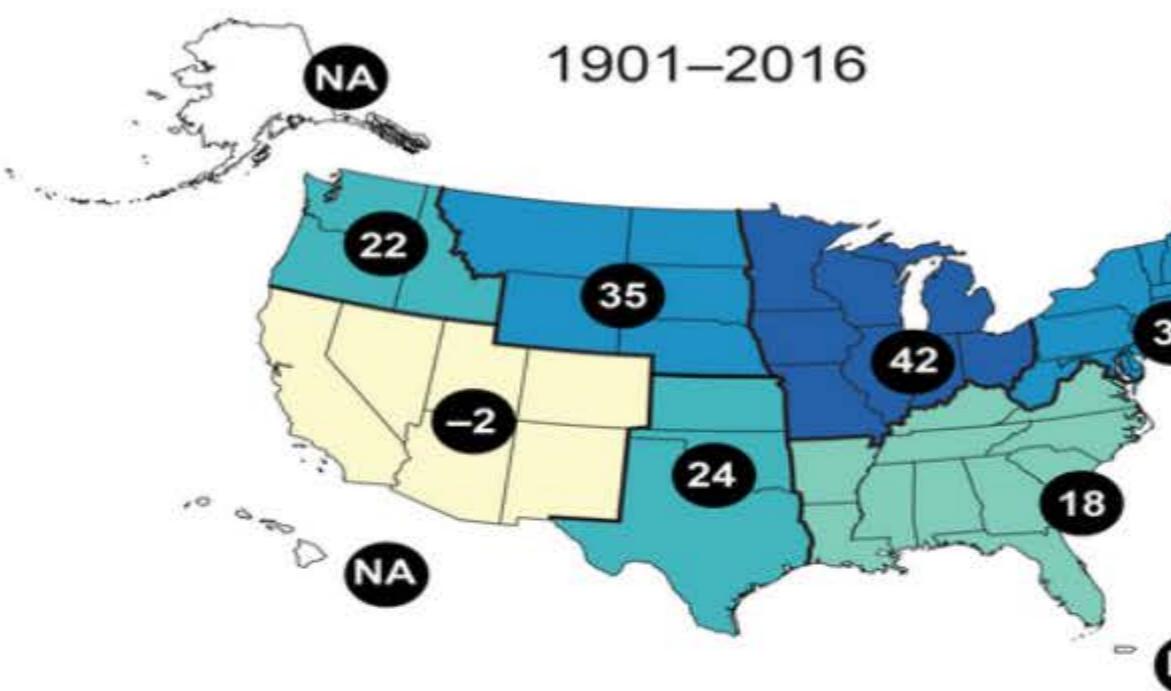
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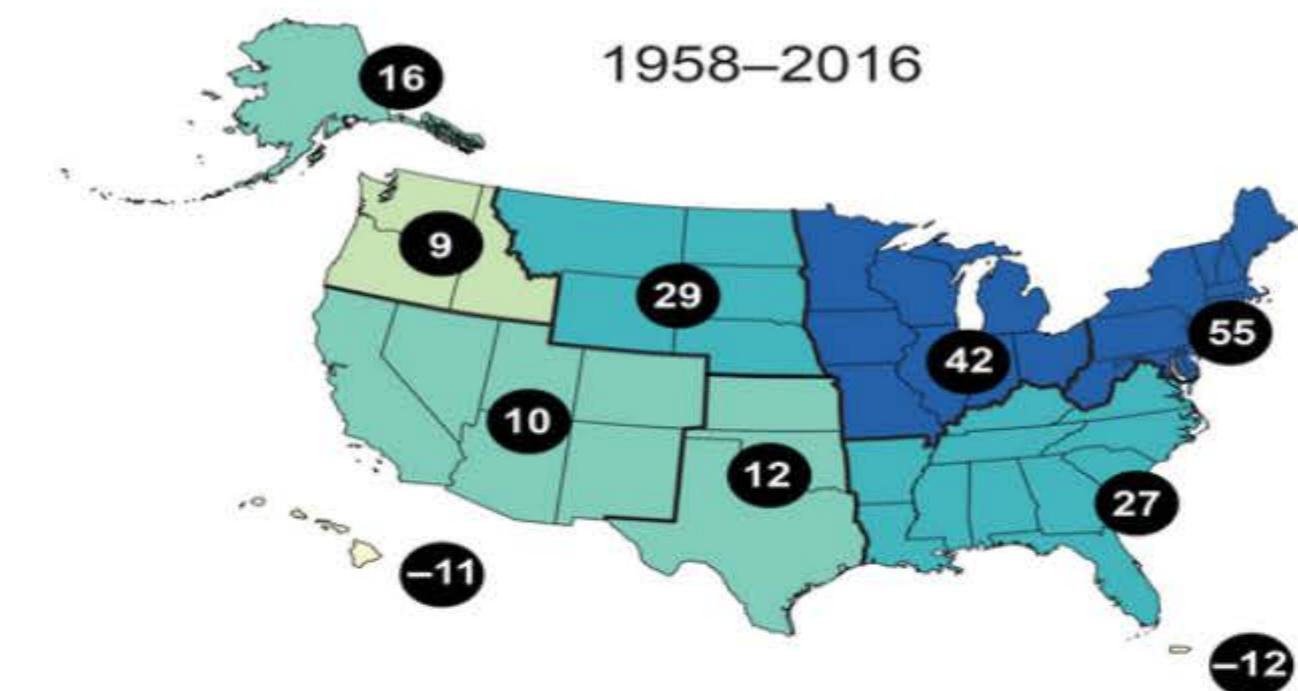
- Provide a basis for flood insurance rates and floodplain management regulations nationwide
- Inform mapped communities about their flood vulnerability
- Impact development of the built environment

Region 8: 95% is located in a SFHA and is subject to flooding.

Observed Change in Total Annual Precipitation Falling in the Heaviest 1% of Events



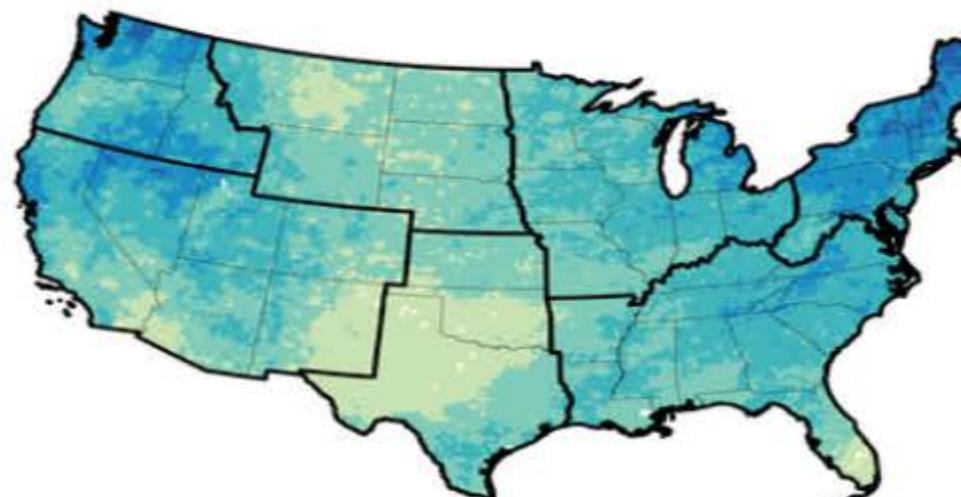
1901–2016



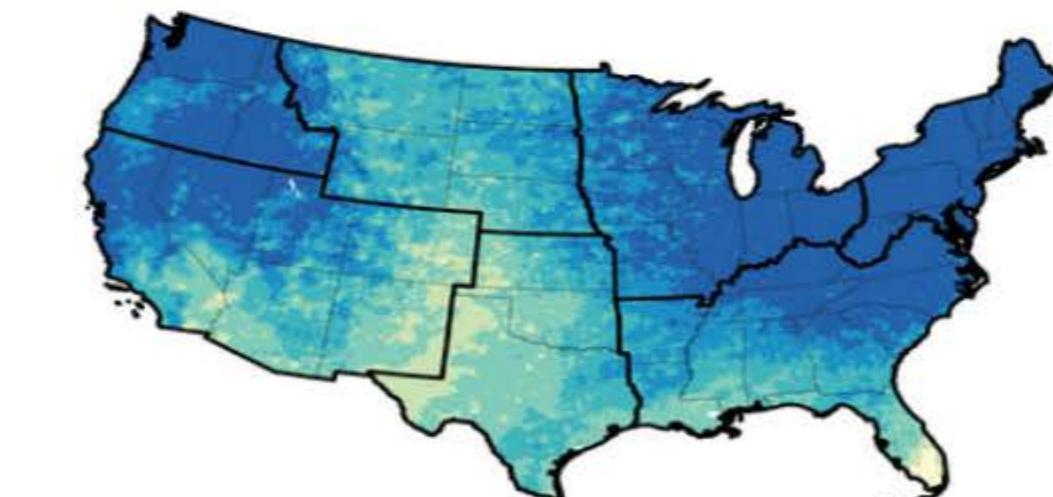
1958–2016

Projected Change in Total Annual Precipitation Falling in the Heaviest 1% of Events by Late 21st Century

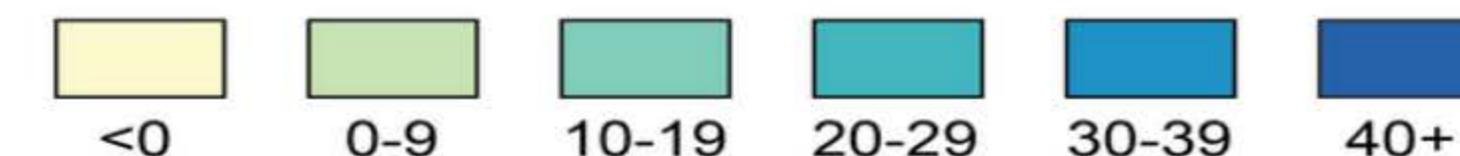
Lower Scenario (RCP4.5)



Higher Scenario (RCP8.5)



Change (%)



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A Zones (shown in light blue)

Special Flood Hazard Areas – High Risk

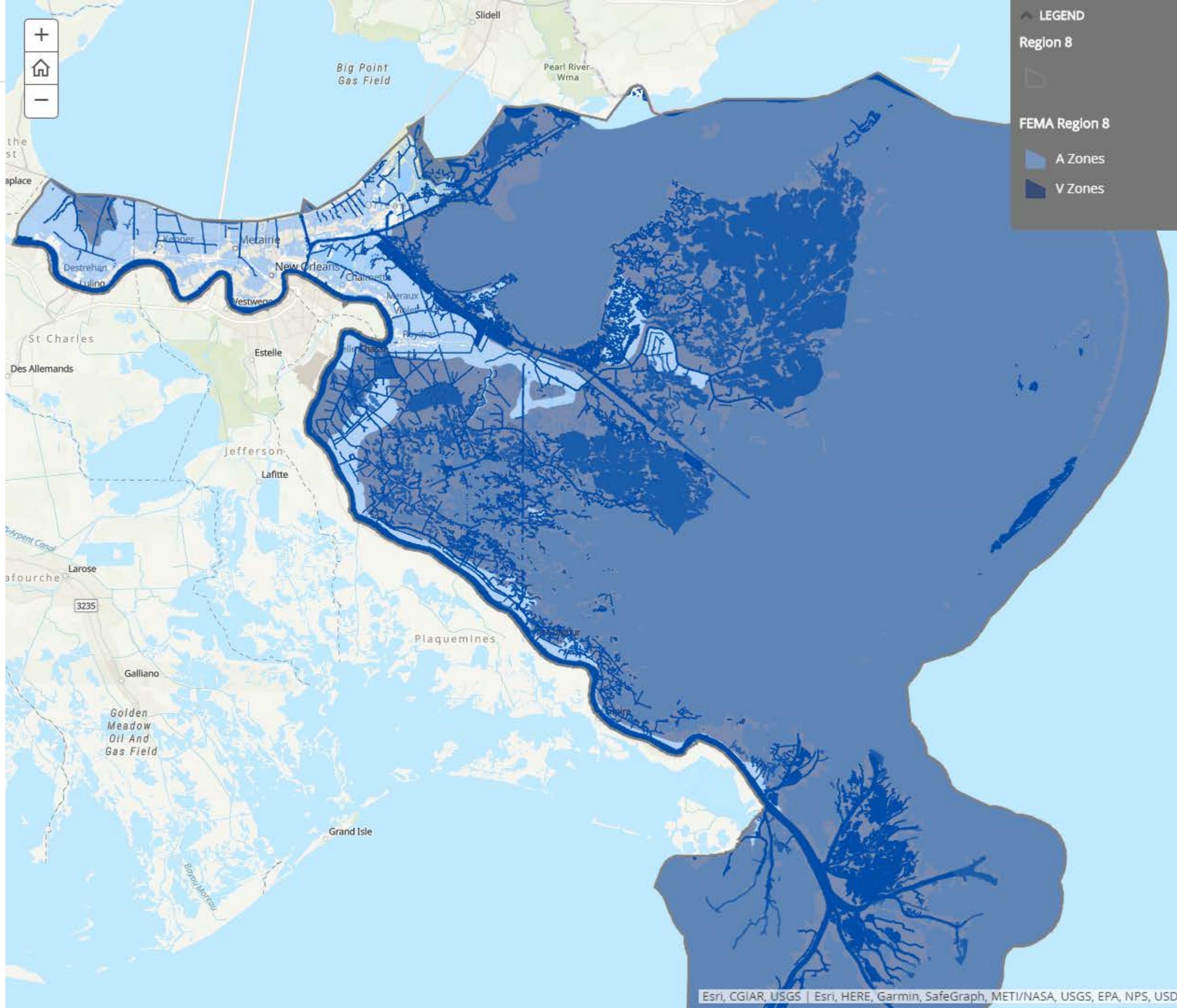
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AZONES

V Zones (shown in dark blue)

Coastal High Hazard Areas – High Risk

Coastal High Hazard Areas represent the area subject to inundation by a 1% annual chance flood, extending from offshore to the inland limit of a primary frontal dune along an



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V Zones (shown in dark blue)

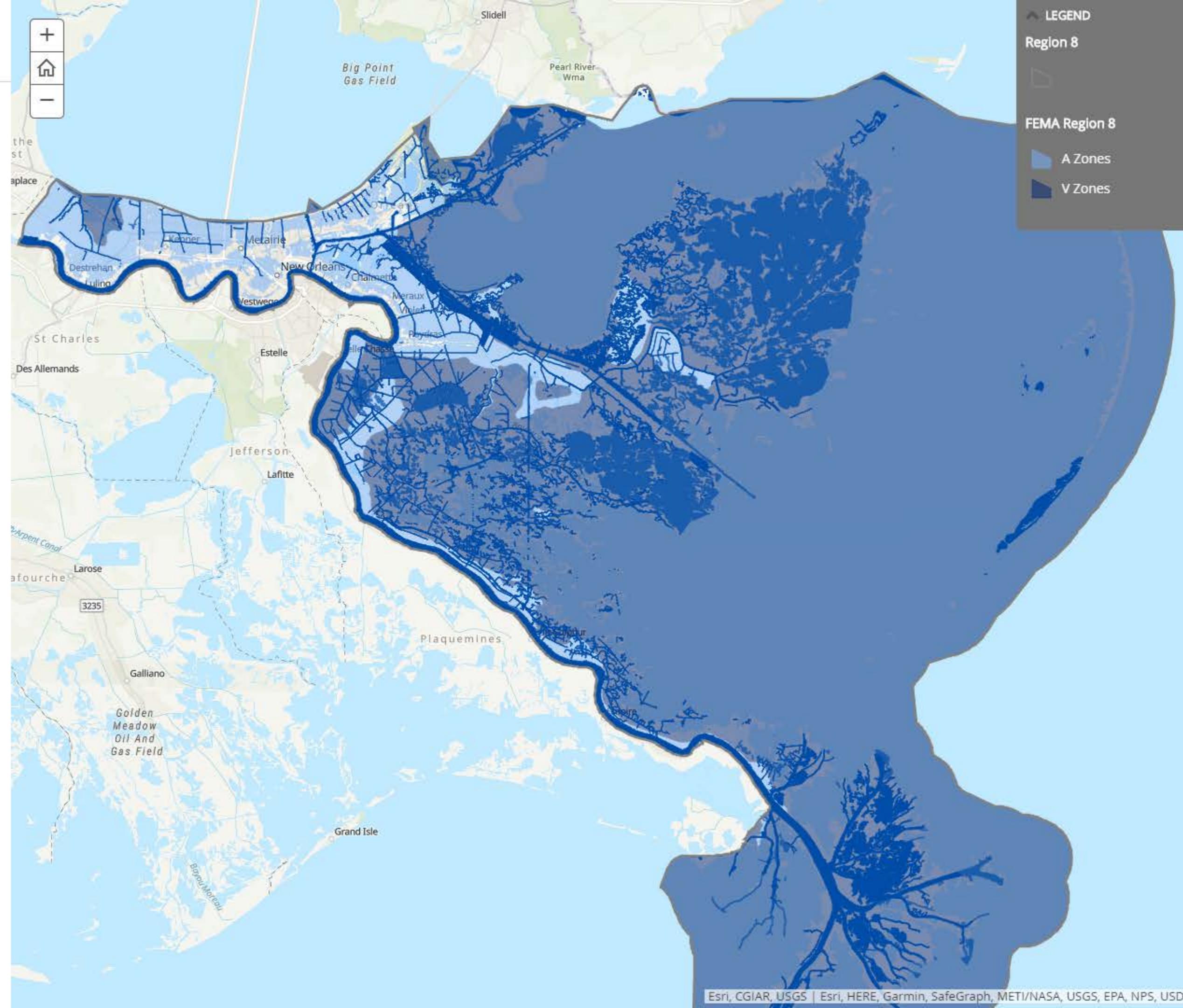
Coastal High Hazard Areas - High Risk

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V ZONES

FEMA Repetitive and Severe Repetitive Loss data

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Traditional gaps in understanding flood risk

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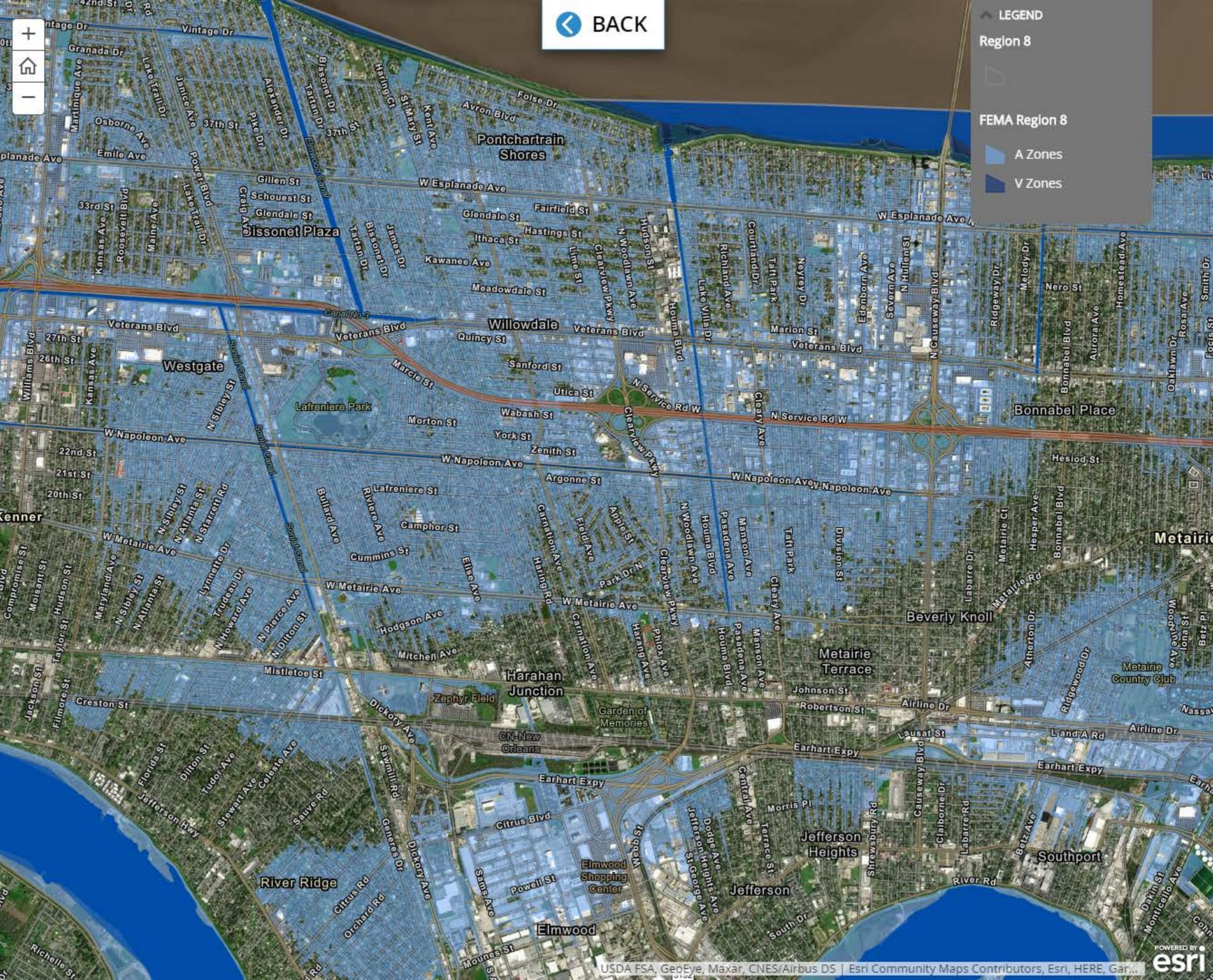
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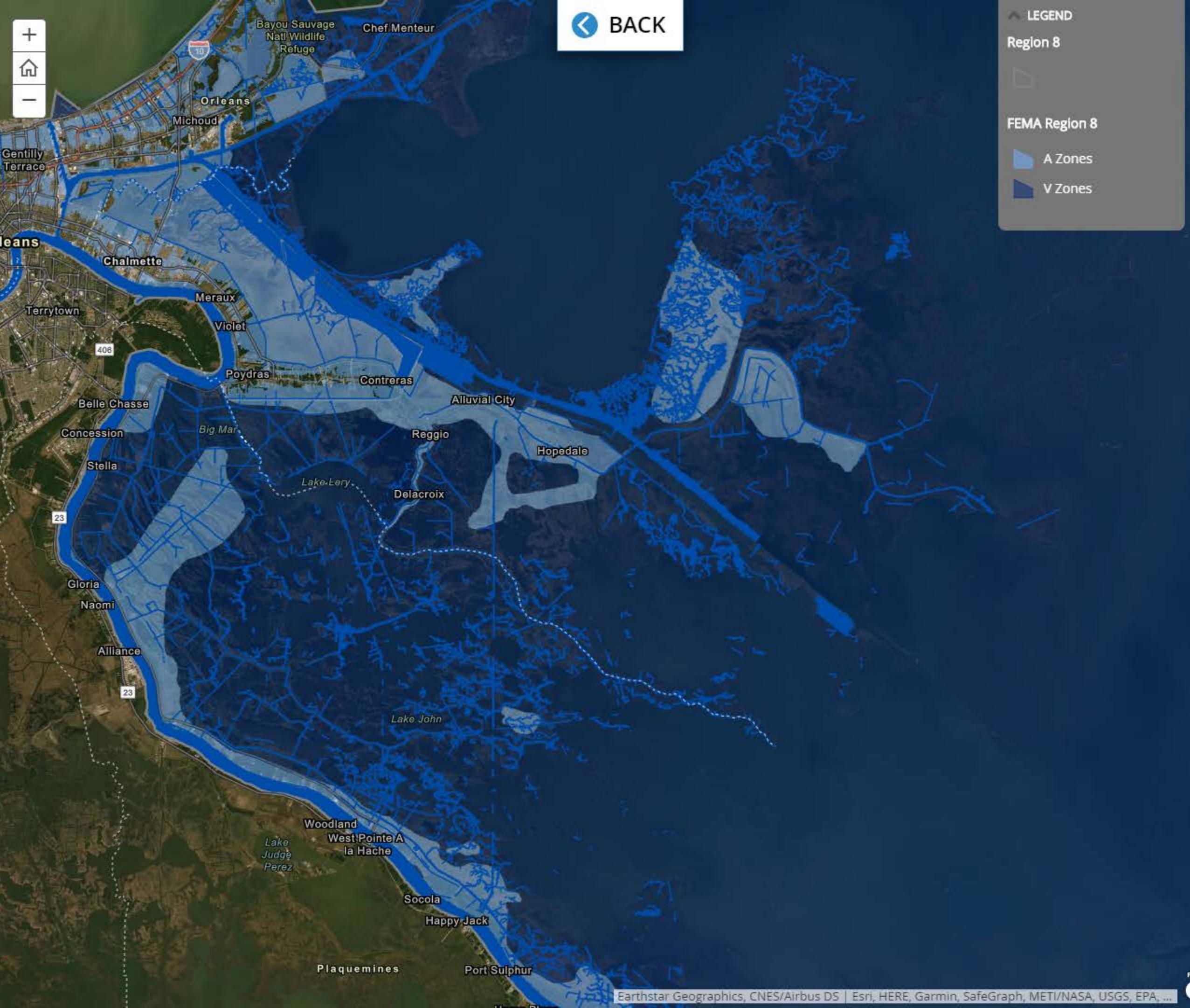
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New Orleans area

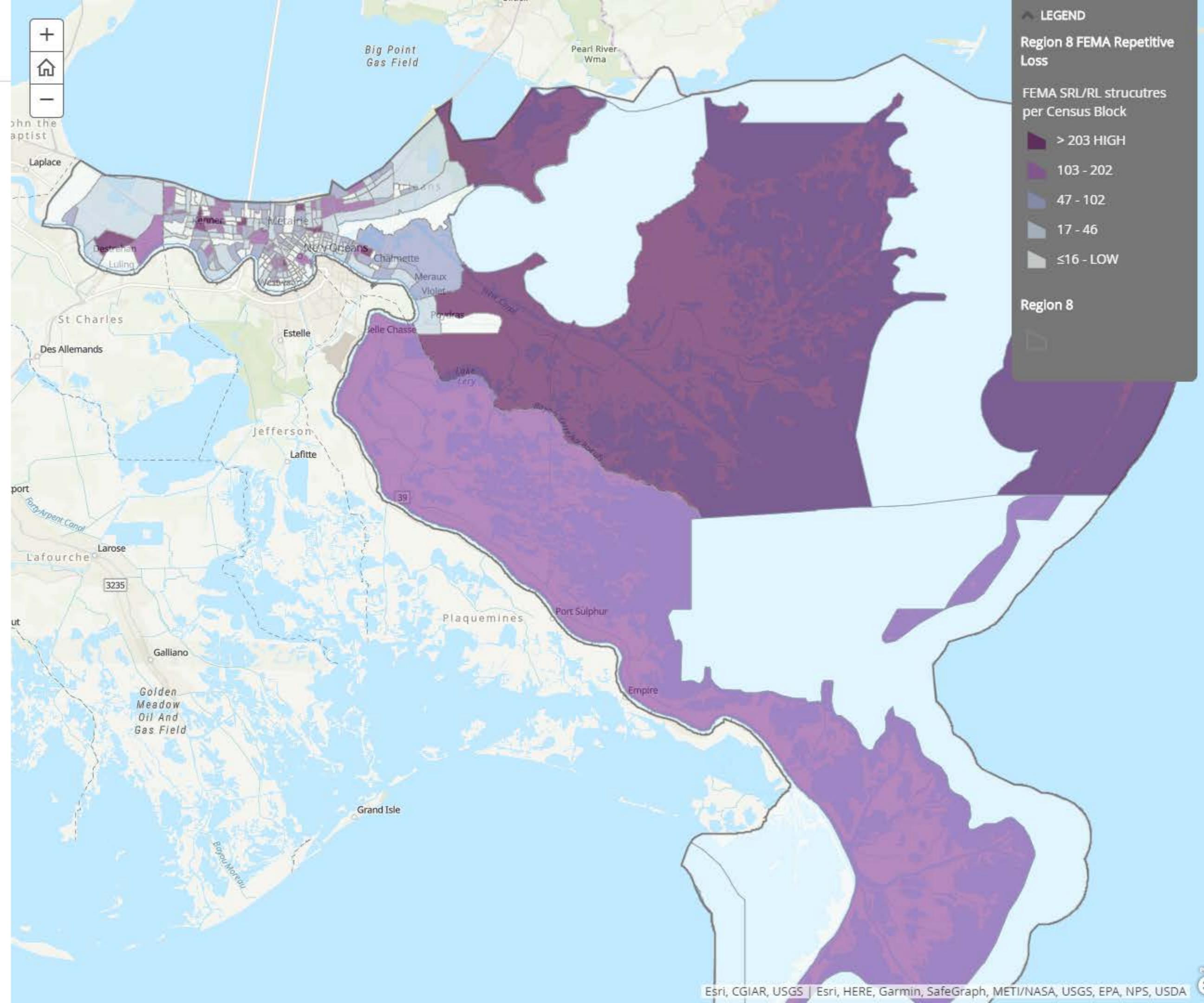
Kenner

CDC Social Vulnerability Index

Natural disasters disproportionately impact socially vulnerable populations. Understanding and addressing vulnerability can help mitigate suffering and recovery costs.

Social vulnerability is based on the following factors:

- Socioeconomic status
- Household composition and disability
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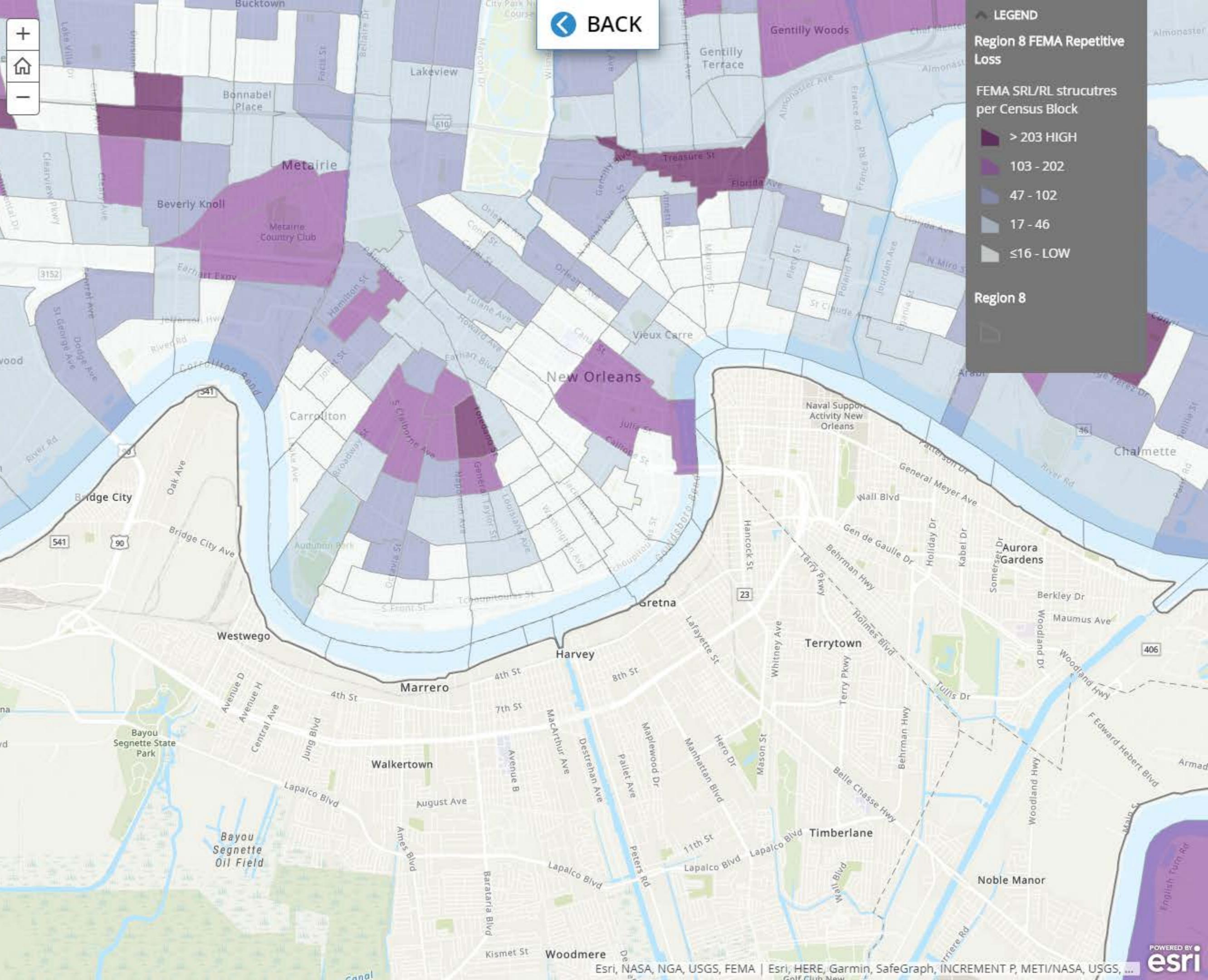
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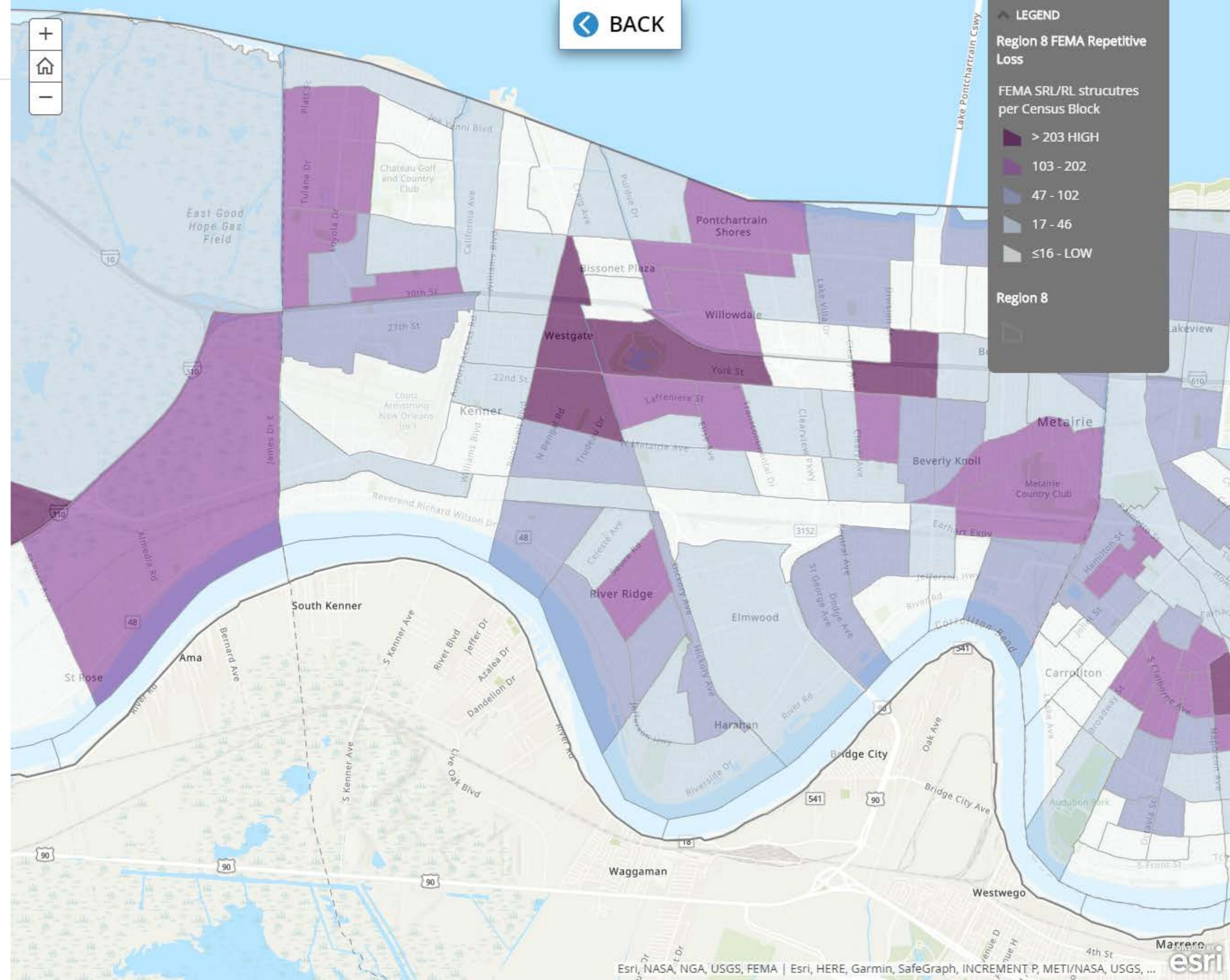
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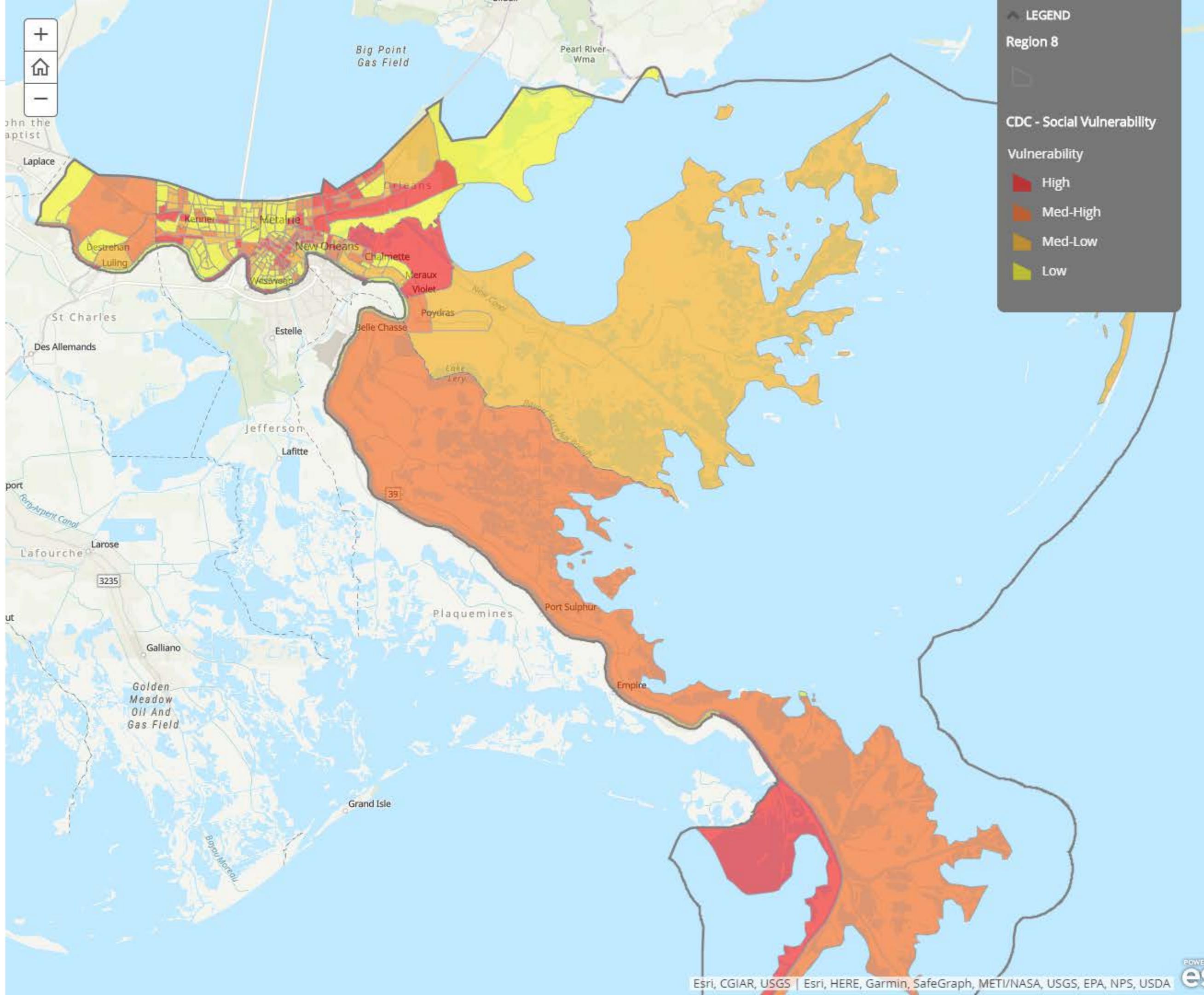
Discussion

Discussion: Where do we go from here?

Reincorporating nature

Wetlands function as natural sponges that trap and slowly release surface water, rain, snowmelt, groundwater and floodwaters. Trees, root mats and other wetland vegetation also slow the speed of floodwaters and distribute them more slowly over the floodplain. This combined water storage and braking action lowers flood heights and reduces erosion.

The holding capacity of wetlands helps control floods and prevents waterlogging of crops. Preserving and restoring



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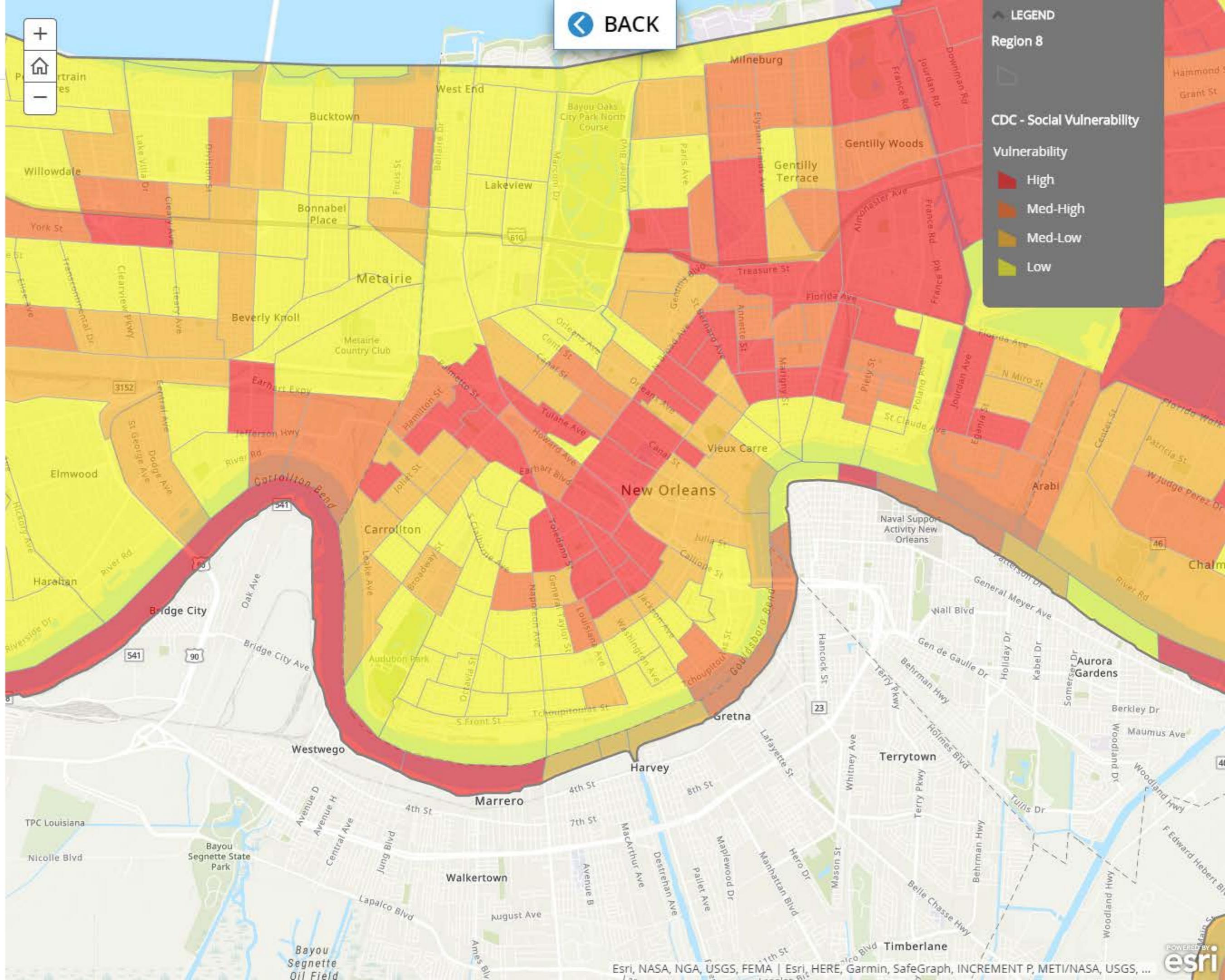
LEGEND

Region 8

CDC - Social Vulnerability

Vulnerability

- High
- Med-High
- Med-Low
- Low



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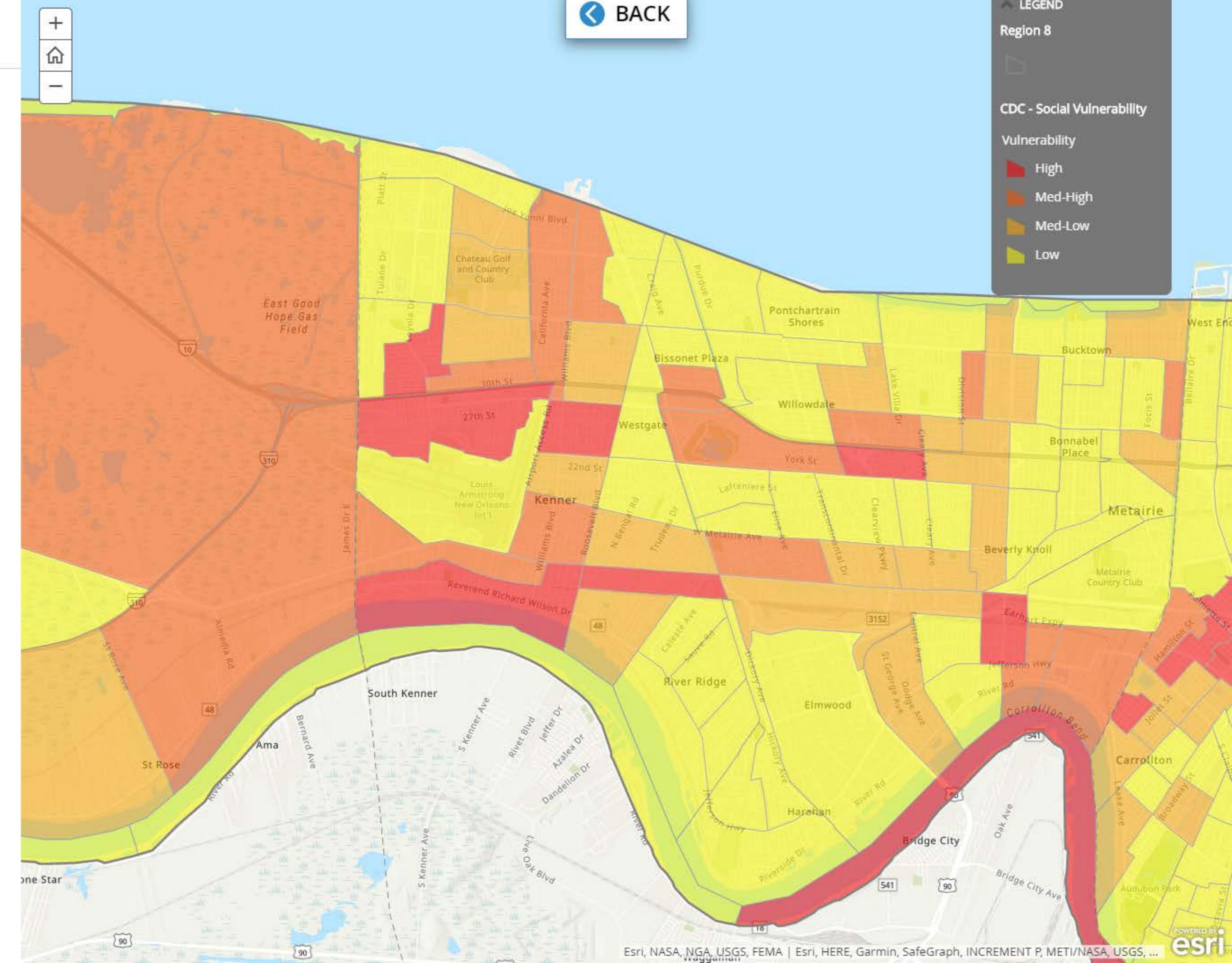
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Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan

Regional plan: The Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan is a regional effort spanning three sub-basins in Region 8 including the east banks of Jefferson and Orleans parishes and a portion of St. Bernard Parish.

A different approach to managing water resources: The urban water plan, acknowledging that the region's 100-year-old infrastructure is no longer adequate to sustain the region, provides a long-term program of retrofits to existing systems and the urban landscape. The plan strongly emphasizes the need for better management of stormwater and groundwater.



Reincorporating nature

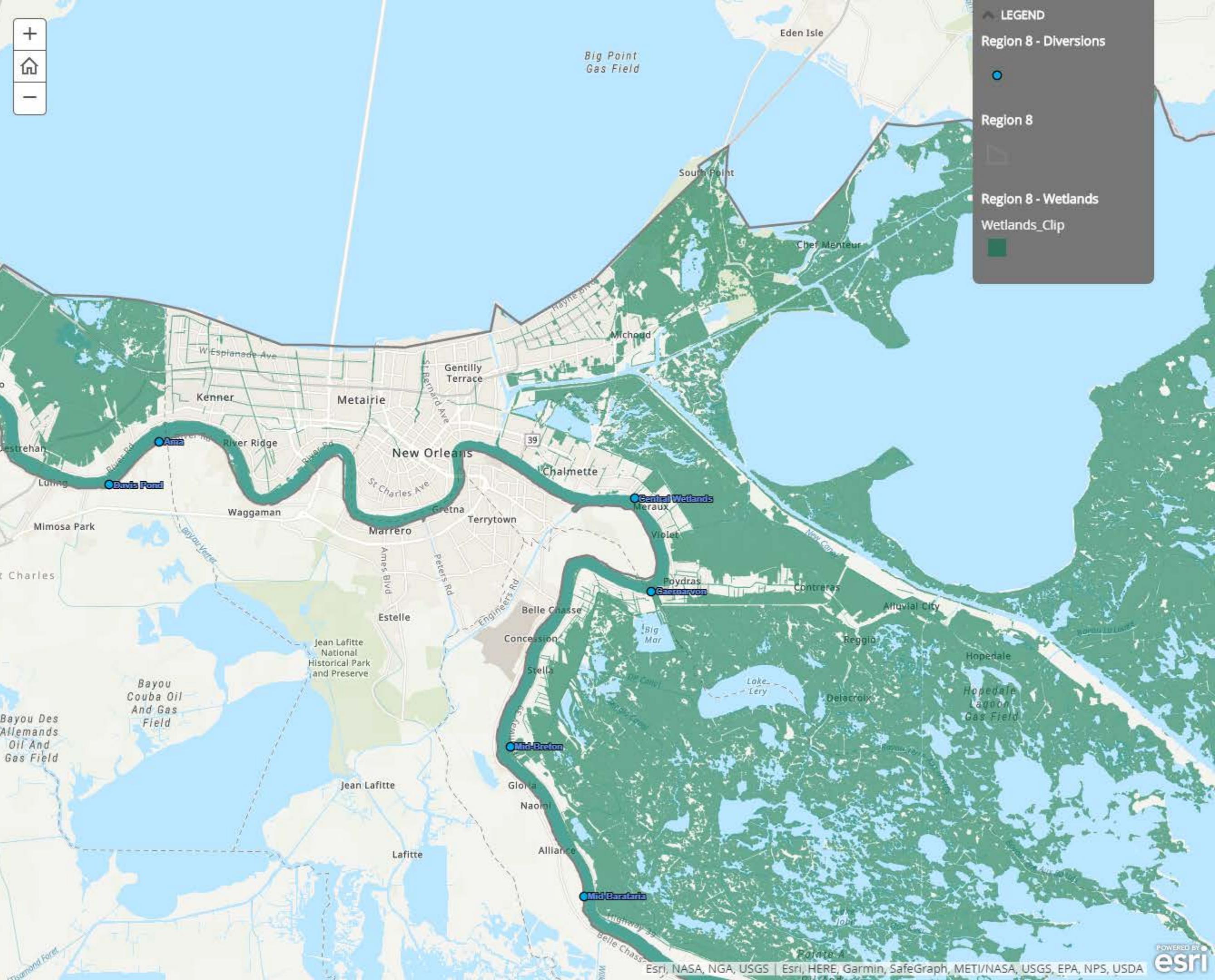
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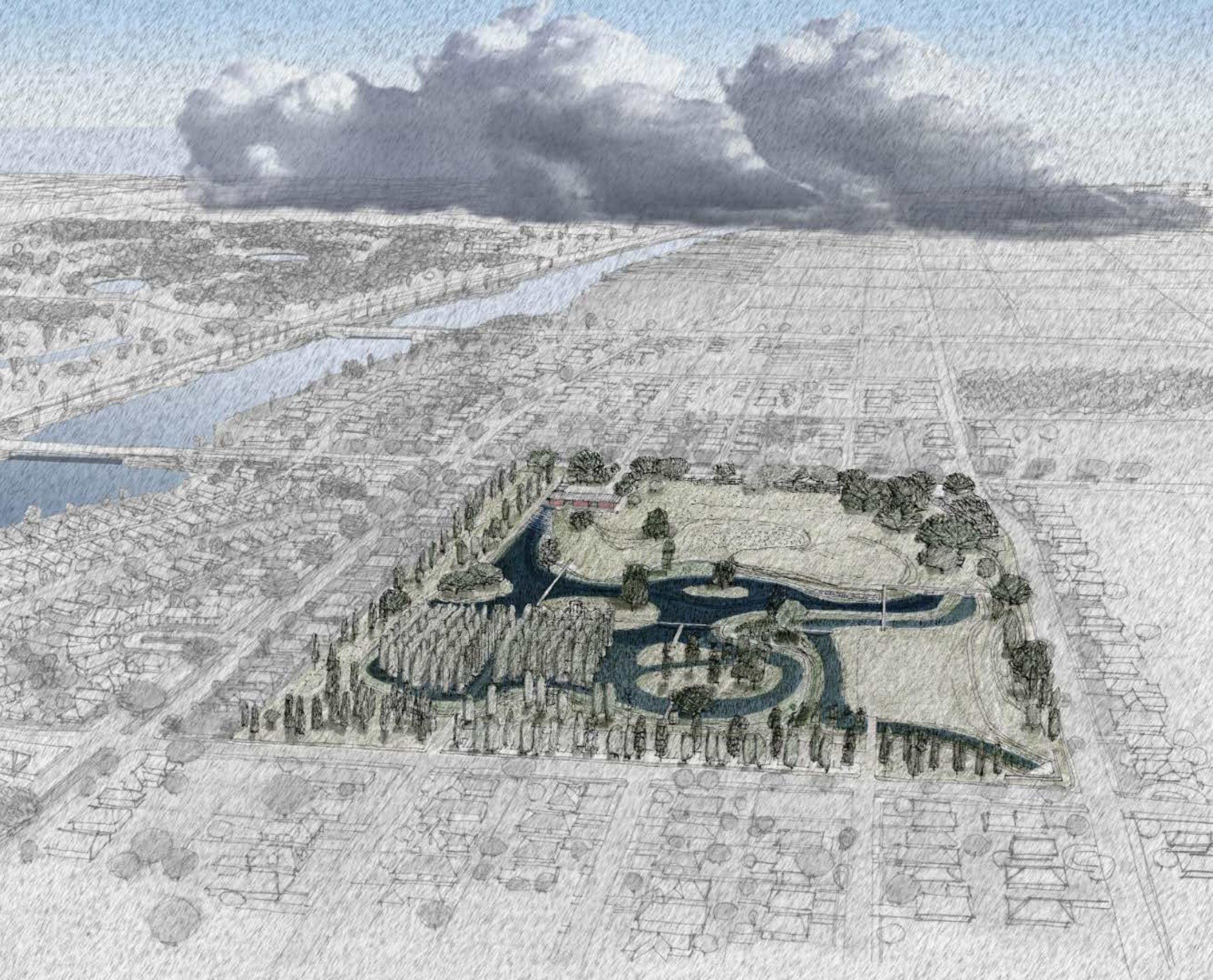
Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan

Plan implementation: The urban water plan outlines a 50-year timeline for implementation of these major retrofits and includes several action items related to community outreach, design, engineering and public policy adoption. From 2013 to 2020, the plan recommends the implementation of seven demonstration projects across the region.

Recap

Putting it all together

* Three types of flood risk



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Recap

Putting it all together

- Three types of flood risk
- Future coastal surge flood risk
- Special Flood Hazard Areas, A zones and V zones
- Wetland areas
- Social Vulnerability Index
- Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan

Your feedback

Now we will examine risk more closely by combining some of these datasets and dividing Region 8 into subregions.

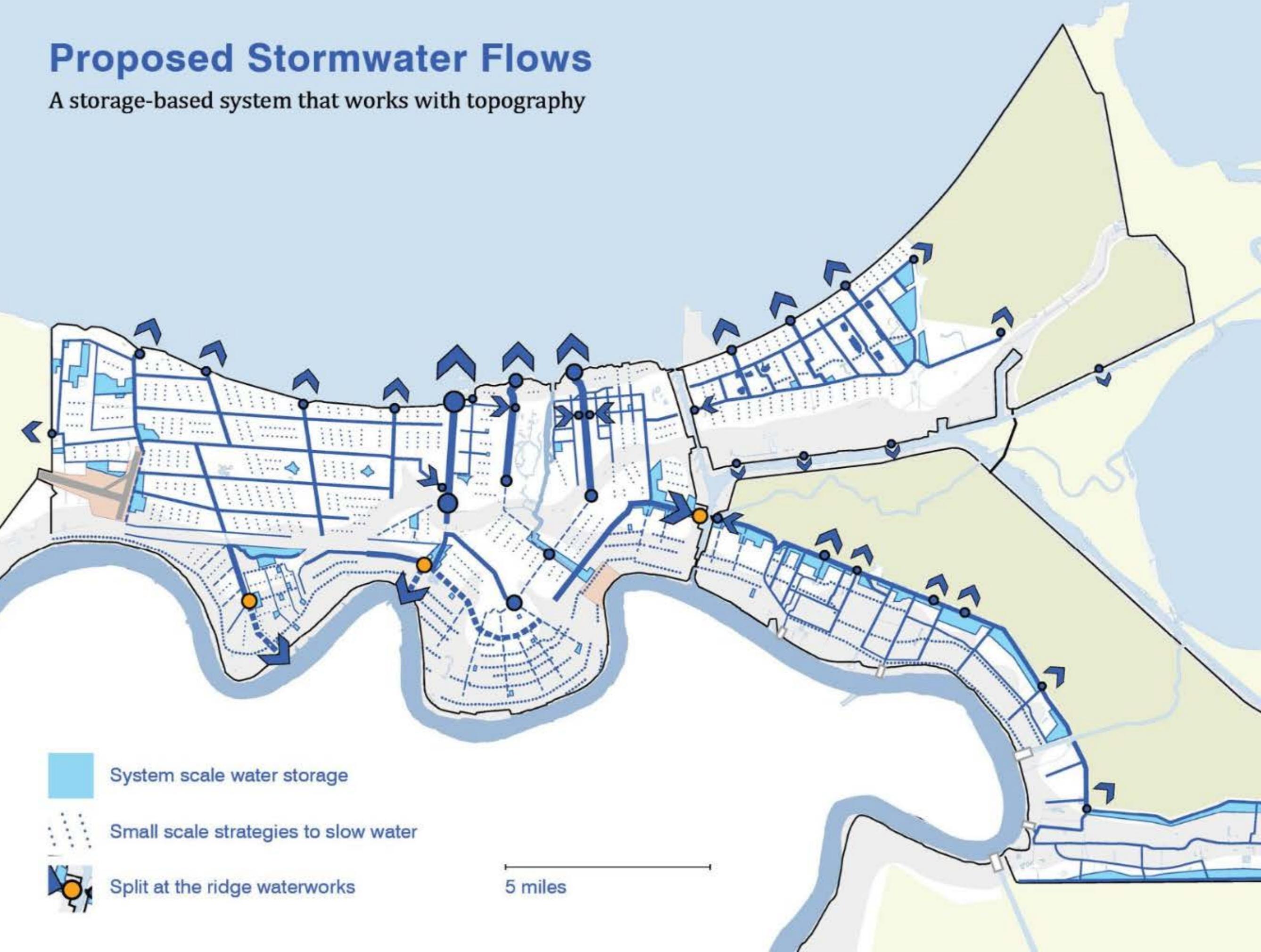
Legend

FEMA Region 8	CDC - Social Vulnerability
A Zones	Vulnerability
V Zones	High

Med-High

Proposed Stormwater Flows

A storage-based system that works with topography



Recap

Putting it all together

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Legend

FEMA Region 8	CDC - Social Vulnerability
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	 Med-Low
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Let's Review



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Legend

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[Let's Review](#)



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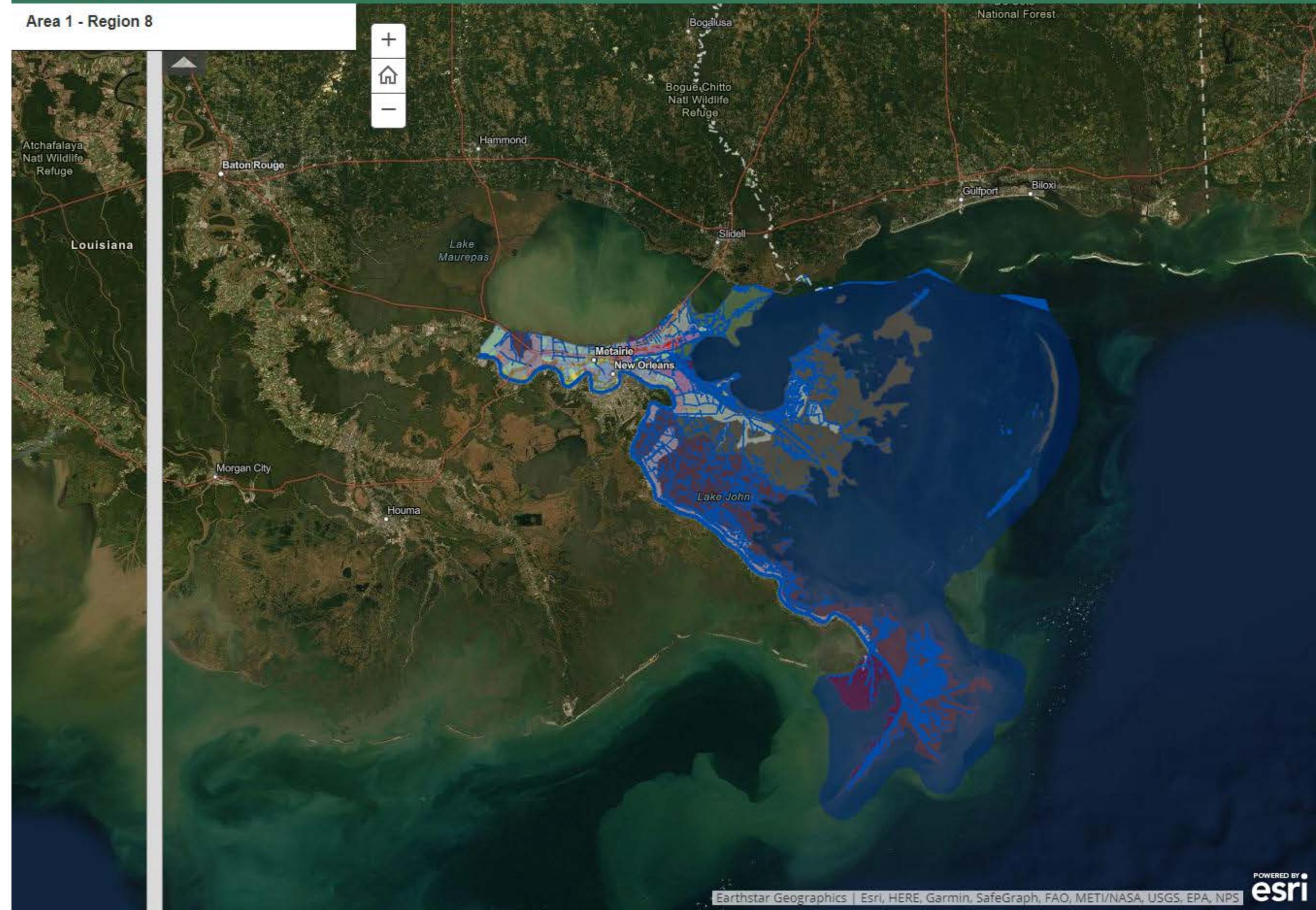
Let's Review

LWI

[BACK](#)[Switch to
builder mode](#)[A Story Map](#)   

1 2 3 4 5

Area 1 - Region 8



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Legend

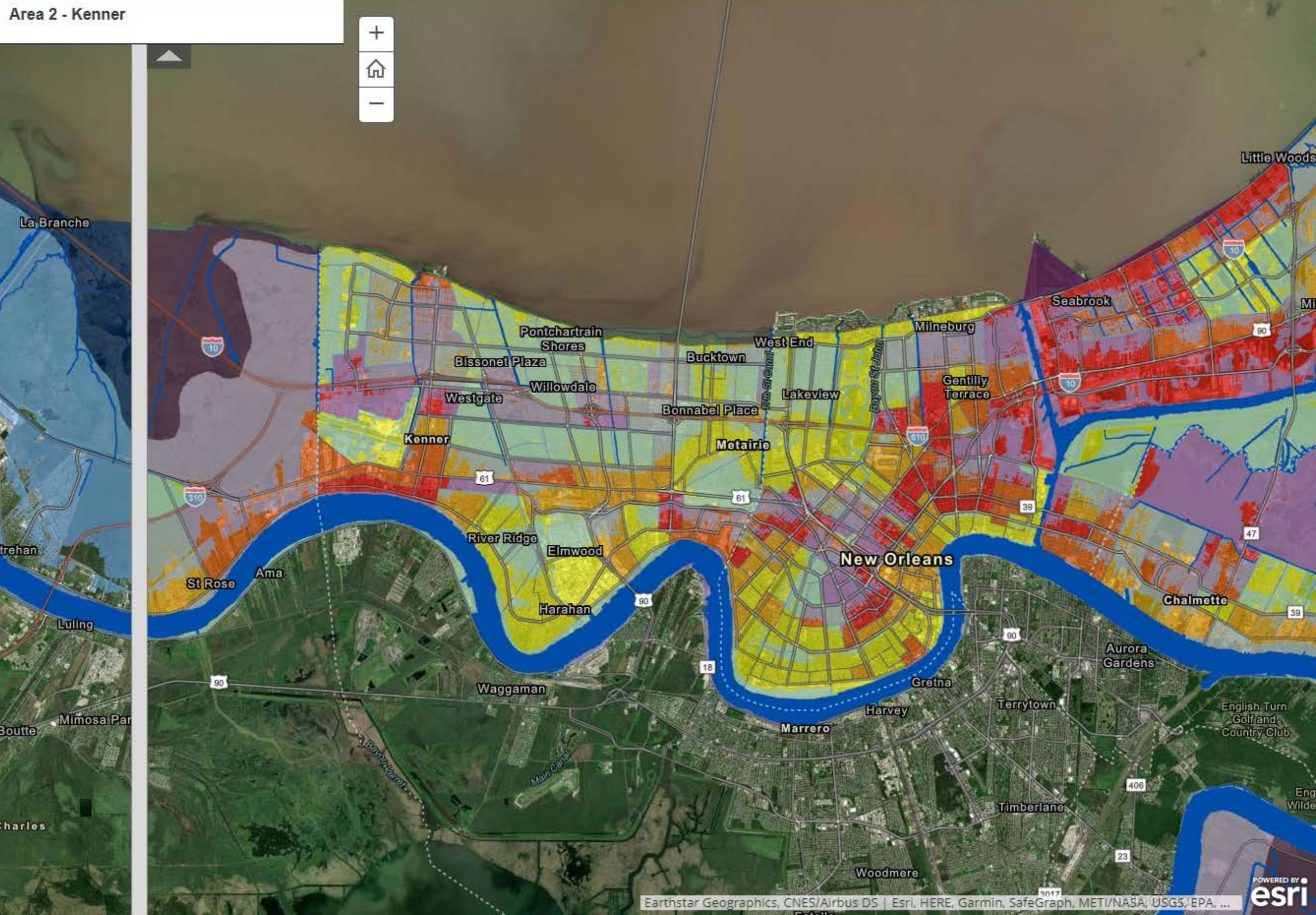
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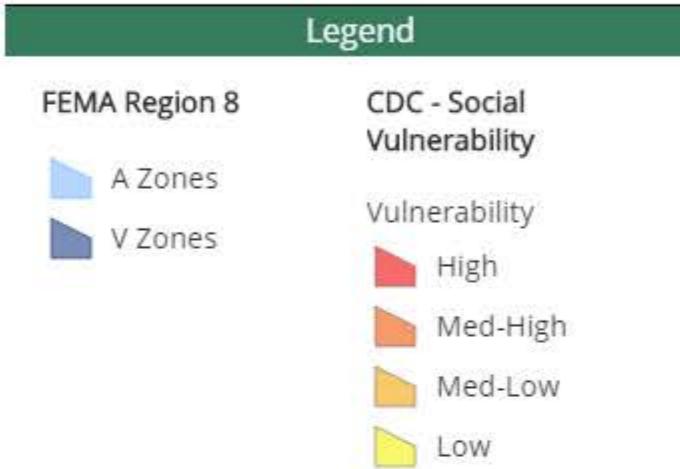
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Area 2 - Kenner



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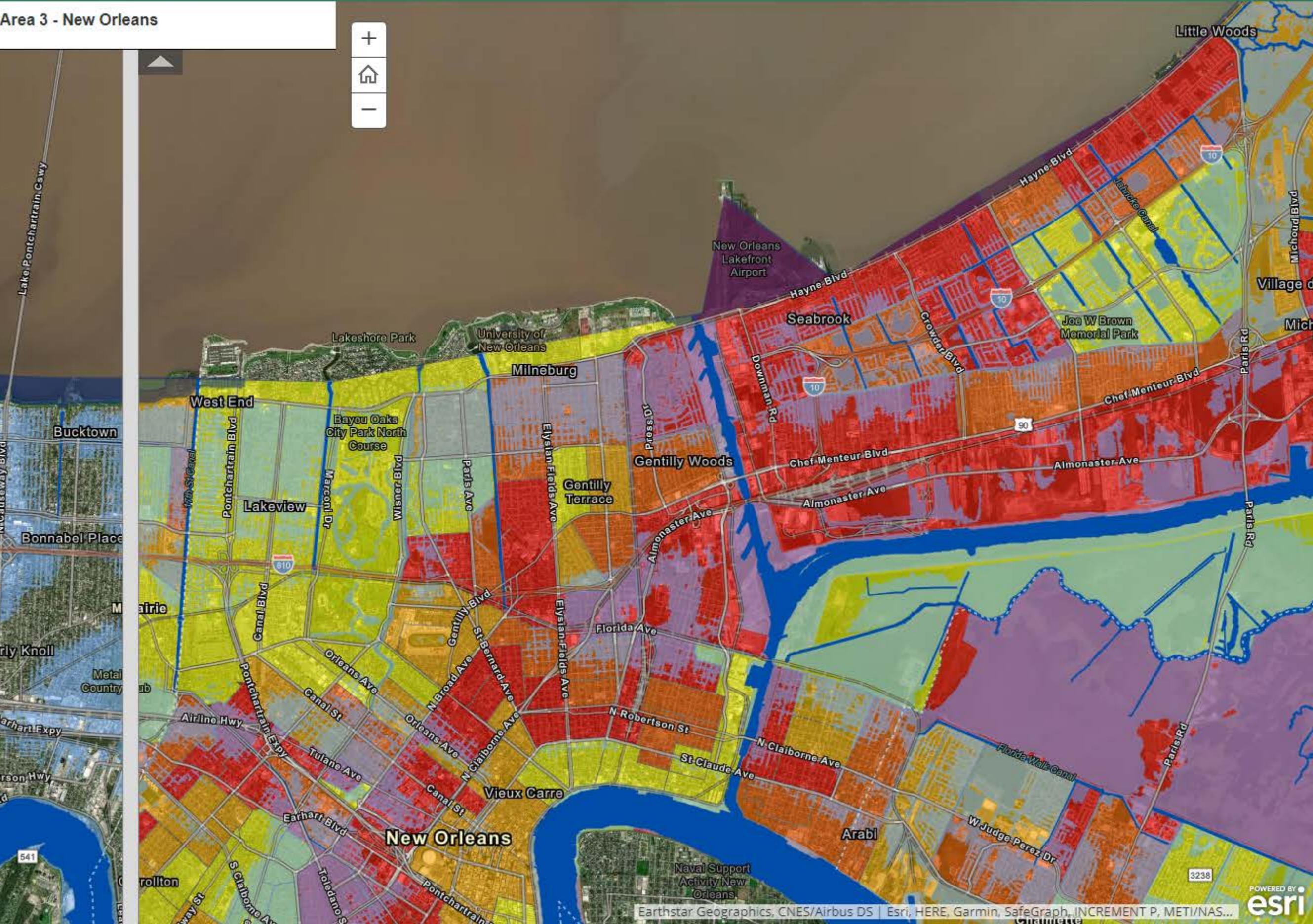


Let's Review

LWI

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Area 3 - New Orleans



Your feedback

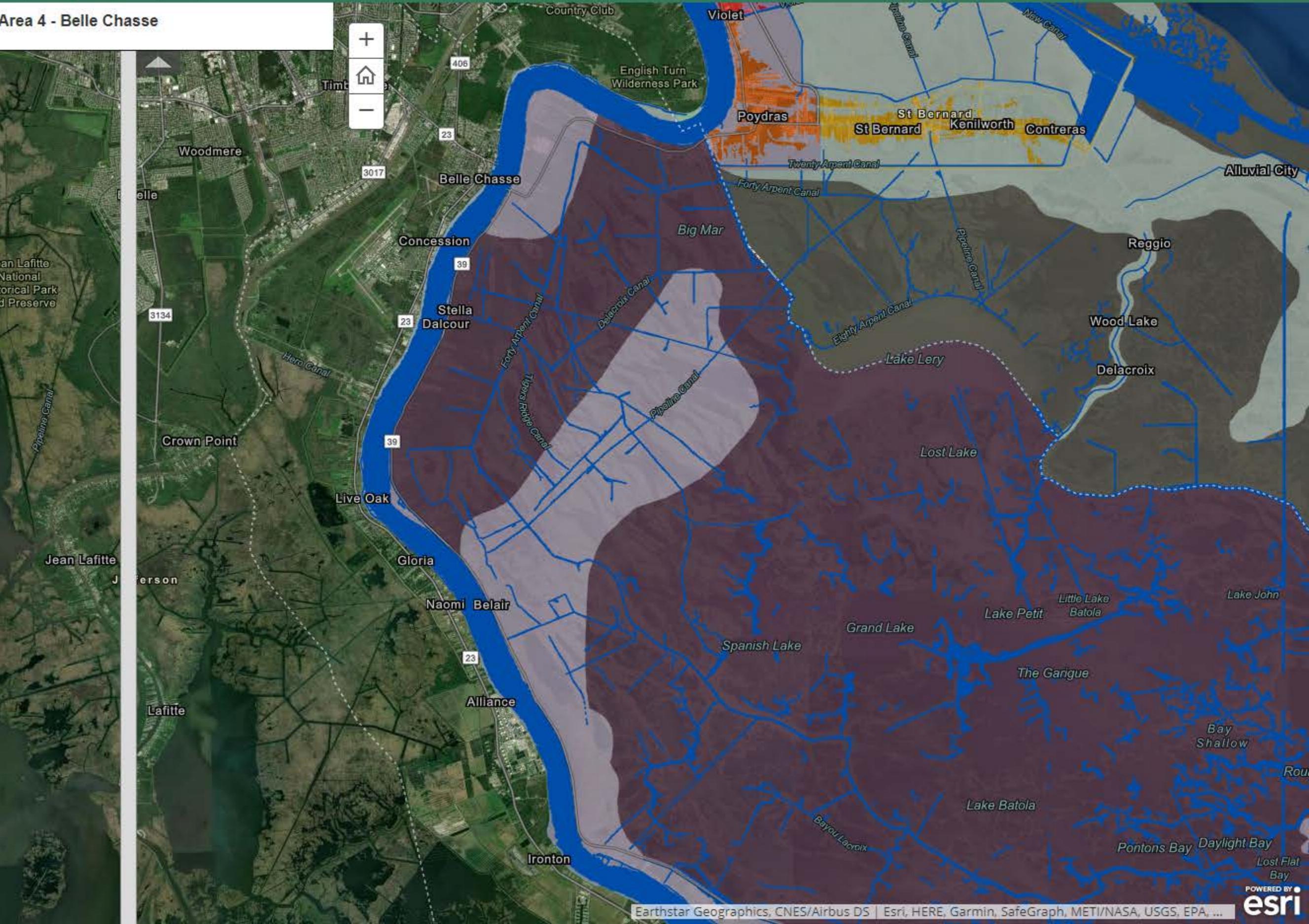
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Let's Review

1 2 3 4 5

Area 4 - Belle Chasse



Your feedback

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Legend

FEMA Region 8	CDC - Social Vulnerability
A Zones	Vulnerability
V Zones	
	High
	Med-High
	Med-Low
	Low

Let's Review

LWI

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 Switch to
builder mode

[A Story Map](#)


1 2 3 4 5

Area 5 - New Orleans East

