

Torreyson Run Watershed

Flood Risk and Potential Solutions

Arlington County has developed an extensive study of flood-vulnerable watersheds. The study includes present impacts and future climate-driven projections of flood risk. The analysis identifies areas at most risk and evaluates the costs and benefits of potential flooding solutions. This fact sheet focuses on the Torreyson Run watershed.

Torreyson Run Watershed

The Torreyson Run watershed covers about 0.5 square miles, including Leeway-Overlee, Tara Leeway Heights, Highland-Park Overlee Knolls and Westover Village civic associations, the Westover Village shopping district, and Parkhurst Park. The watershed has experienced significant flooding, with 18 reports of flooding during the July 8, 2019 storm.

Torreyson Run includes 7 critical facilities (e.g., Westover Library), including 4 that are identified as potentially vulnerable to flooding. Cardinal Elementary School was identified for more detailed analysis.

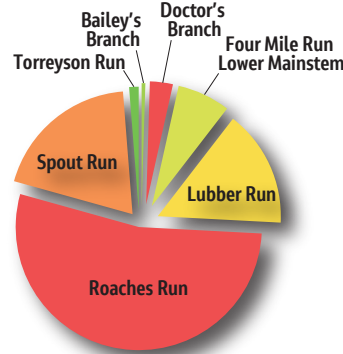
Flood modeling and risk assessment:

Flood modeling was conducted for current conditions. The models estimated the extent and depth of flooding in the watershed and were run for a series of different size storms (2-, 10-, 25-, 100- and 500-year storms). **Figure 3** shows the potential flooding in Torreyson Run under a “worst case” scenario under current conditions with a very intense storm (11.4 inches of rain in 24 hours) if no stormwater solutions were implemented.

Flood risk was calculated in two different ways:

- Monetary risk was calculated using a FEMA tool that calculates potential damages for a given storm times the probability of that storm, which is then totaled for different size storms.
- Social vulnerability was calculated using federally-established indices, mapped against flood-risk areas. Torreyson Run does not demonstrate a confluence of socially-vulnerable populations in areas where flood risk is present.

Economic Risk from Flooding



Socially Vulnerable Area Exposed to Flooding

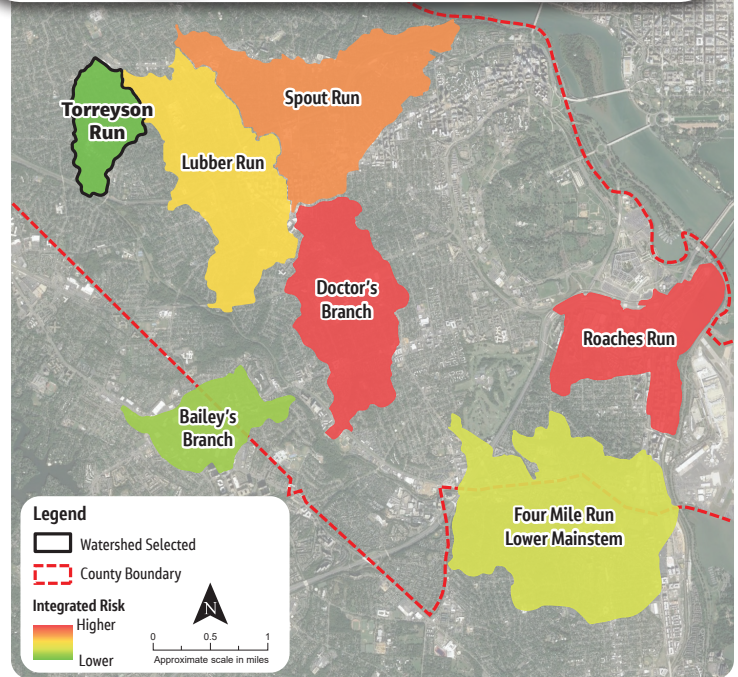
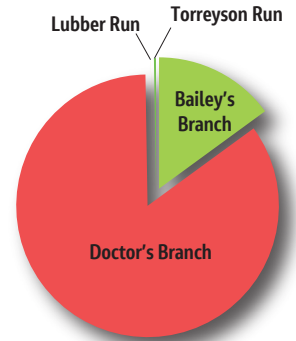


Figure 1 - Watershed Ranking of Overall Risk

The County-wide map shows the **overall “integrated risk” ranking**, which combines economic risk and social vulnerability.

The pie chart on the left shows **economic risk alone**. Torreyson Run ranks 6th, at \$3 million. **Social vulnerability** alone is shown in the pie chart on the right, with only Doctor’s Branch and Bailey’s Branch having significant social vulnerability.

Economic Risk (millions of \$)

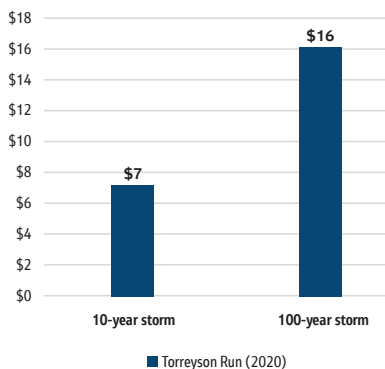


Figure 2 - Economic Impact of Flooding

is shown for two selected storms under current conditions, if no mitigation solutions are implemented.

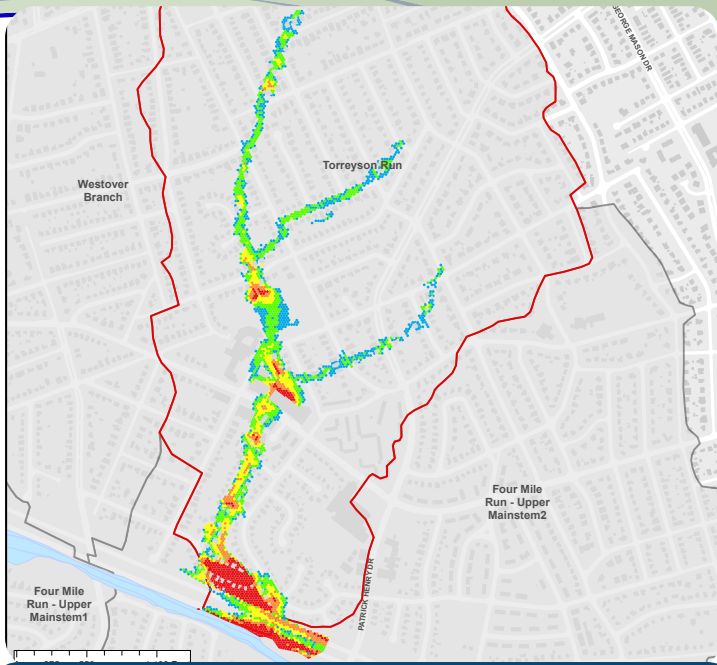


Figure 3 - Worst Case: This map shows the potential flooding in Torreyson Run under a “worst case” scenario under current conditions with a very intense storm (11.4 inches of rain in 24 hours) if no storm sewer or storage solutions were implemented.

Flood Mitigation Alternatives

There are four main strategies to address flood risk:

- Increase capacity of storm pipes and inlets (conveyance) or adding stormwater storage for problem areas
- Implement policy and programmatic strategies, including land use planning, risk communication and flood insurance, and enhanced building codes for areas at high risk
- Implement building-level and asset-level concepts to protect critical facilities
- As a last resort, where other solutions prove infeasible, provide overland relief by acquiring and removing structures in flood-prone areas.

The Stormwater Program Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP)

Arlington County’s Stormwater Program Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP) analyzes the risk and uncertainty of flooding due to climate change, and projects future risk and flooding impacts. The County will use the RAMP results to develop a long-term stormwater resiliency strategy.

The RAMP study included:

- Conducting flood modeling and risk assessments that consider current conditions and potential future conditions given climate change
- Determining which areas of the County, critical facilities (e.g., hospitals), vulnerable populations, and environmental resources are most susceptible to flooding
- Completing detailed risk assessments for the watersheds with the highest vulnerability
- Applying Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) tools to assess current and projected future damages at the neighborhood and watershed scale
- Identifying “problem areas” to estimate risk and evaluate the costs and benefits of potential solutions

Benefits and Costs of Flood Solutions

The study examined conceptual alternatives for adding storm pipes and inlets (conveyance) or stormwater storage capacity to mitigate flooding associated with the 10-year storm (5.2 inches), the current County drainage design standard. For each of these alternatives, planning level costs were developed and residual risks were determined to quantify benefits of these alternatives.

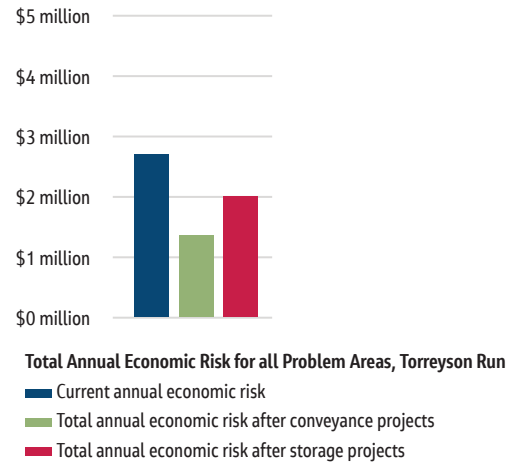


Figure 4 - Total Economic Risk

Shows the total annual economic risk for all storms in the watershed, currently and with conveyance or storage projects.

Benefit cost ratios were calculated for concepts with either increased storm pipe/inlet capacity or with additional storage, where benefits are defined as the reduction in monetary risk.

The benefit cost ratios for Torreyson Run indicated that both conveyance and storage projects, if feasible, would be cost effective.