

Ice Jam Breaches Levee and Floods Area

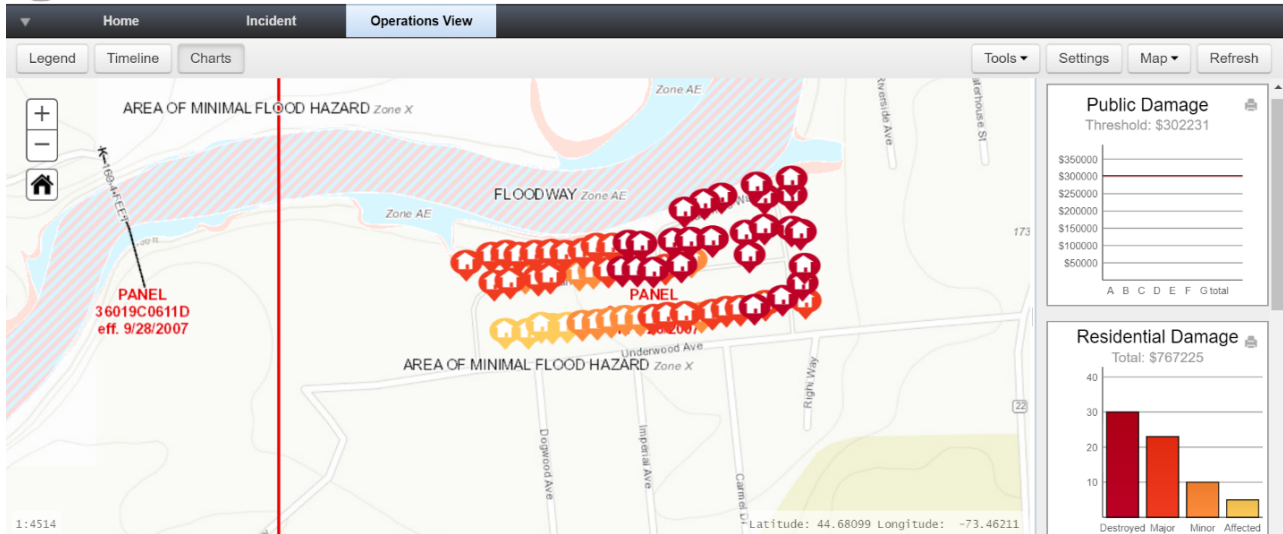
In January 2018, an ice jam flooded the Saranac River in Plattsburgh, New York, where the Saranac feeds into Lake Champlain. Although ice jams are a frequent occurrence during spring thaws, this ice jam led to a breached levee and major flooding within a mobile home community.

Prior to the breach, Clinton County Public Safety personnel quickly evacuated approximately 50 families from the mobile home community. Once life and property were secured, a damage assessment team assessed 70 lots in roughly two hours the following morning, despite temperatures plunging below zero and being so cold that the iPad batteries were shutting down.

Estimating Damage Costs from Damage Assessments

Because the incident occurred at a mobile home park, the biggest data-collection issue the County had was identifying the owner of a mobile home and improved value for a specific lot. Crisis Track typically stores an improved value for each address point. However, local data only existed for the whole parcel. Fortunately, the manufactured home types were similar enough to calculate total replacement costs by making an estimate for one unit and multiplying by the number of damaged units.





County Receives Disaster Assistance from the State of NY

Once the data was collected, Clinton County used this data to request assistance from the State of New York and the Small Business Administration (SBA). The SBA was able to issue a disaster declaration after conducting a site visit and noting the thorough documentation provided in the Crisis Track reports. The State also offered significant assistance by providing funding for the levee repair and a portion of the trailer replacement costs once those costs were able to be determined.

Damage assessments can be conducted regardless of an incident being FEMA-eligible. Clinton County, New York was able to use Crisis Track to quickly identify the unmet needs in a small, local incident and use that data to request and receive disaster assistance for their community.

Overall, the State provided \$7 million in funding for the incident, which has allowed for the levee to be repaired, utility systems to be upgraded, and manufactured homes to be flood proofed.