

Tools for Building Community Climate Resilience through Public–Private Partnerships

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FernLeaf Interactive and UNC Asheville’s NEMAC maintain an active public–private partnership focused on helping decision makers move from data to decisions about the climate risks they face. Through the partnership, FernLeaf has leveraged NEMAC’s applied research and domain expertise to build out tools that help decision makers understand exposure, sensitivity, vulnerability, and risk at the intersection of human and environmental factors.

One such tool that will be demonstrated enables on–the–spot data combinations to identify areas where people and valued assets are exposed to environmental hazards. Bringing together a robust inventory of climate and environmental threat data with socioeconomic datasets, the tool can be used to move beyond exploring exposure and into prioritizing the most vulnerable sensitive areas. This tool also has a peer identification component that enables communities to ask the questions, “what makes me unique?” and “who else is like me?”

The datasets explored in this tool include climate stressors such as flooding, tornadoes, and wildfire; non–climate stressors such as manufacturing decline, and poverty; and other human factors such as population, population growth, manufacturing workforce percentage, education attainment, and family income.