FIVE-YEAR FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT WORK PLAN

Idaho Department of Water Resources

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to identify strategies and practices that will ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the State Floodplain Management Program for Idaho and assist its communities in maintaining or improving floodplain management programs at the local level. A major method of accomplishing this is through our partnership with the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). It is through the NFIP's Community Assistance Program – State Support Services Element (CAP-SSSE) grant that funding is provided for the State of Idaho's efforts. The purpose of the CAP-SSSE is to provide, through the state grant mechanism, a means to ensure that communities participating in the NFIP are achieving the flood damage reduction goals of this program. CAP-SSSE is intended to accomplish this by providing funding to Idaho to provide technical assistance to NFIP communities. This funding allows us to monitor and evaluate community performance in implementing NFIP floodplain management activities with the ancillary goal of building community floodplain management expertise and capabilities.

I. State Authority

The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) is designated to assist in the implementation of 44 CFR 60.25, rules and regulations of the Federal Insurance Administration and will encourage a broad and unified effort to prevent uneconomic use and development of the state's floodplains and, in particular, to lessen the risk of flood losses in connection with state lands and installations and state-financed or supported improvements. This authority is stated in Executive Order 2000-10, dated 3rd May 2000.

II. Five Year Vision for Floodplain Management

Background

The State of Idaho has a lengthy history of floodplain management. The State of Idaho established flood control districts in 1971 (Title 42, Chapter 31, Idaho Code) for the purpose of identifying and minimizing flood hazards. These districts are managed at the local level with administration provided by the Department of Water Resources. Idaho has participated in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) since flood maps

became available in the state. The State of Idaho does not have a state ordinance for floodplain development but has passed authorizing legislation (IC 46-1022) so that cities and counties may pass and enforce ordinances related to development in floodplains. The Department of Water Resources is appointed by executive order to coordinate activities related to the NFIP in the State of Idaho. A state NFIP coordinator is therefore employed at the Department of Water Resources with financial support provided by the CAP-SSSE grant from FEMA. Idaho has been heavily dependant on the CAP-SSSE grant for floodplain management efforts.

Current Efforts

The Community Assistance Program – State Support Services Element (CAP-SSSE) is currently operated within the Idaho Department of Water Resources, Resource Protection Bureau. Current CAP-SSE activities include community assistance visits and contacts, workshops and training, public outreach, CRS and ordinance assistance, general technical assistance, and post disaster assistance. Current efforts are focused on providing the maximum support effort to assisting local government with implementation of flood damage prevention ordinances and promoting sound floodplain management practices. The state NFIP staff consists of 1 full time position (state NFIP coordinator) with limited support from the Bureau chief (approx 200 hrs/yr). Idaho has experienced a steadily increasing demand for general technical assistance, training, and workshops over the last 4 years. The demand currently exceeds the available resources.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The strengths of our current floodplain management efforts are our dedicated staff and management at IDWR. The primary weaknesses are limited financial resources and limited access to other staff resources. The CAP-SSSE grant has provided us with a steady funding source. Another weakness has been the lack of a consistent, dependable funding source for our map modernization efforts. This situation caused us to eliminate our mapping coordinator position in 2003. Fortunately, additional funding for map modernization activities has been made available by FEMA but the uncertainty of its adequacy and stability makes this an ongoing concern.

Vision

The goal of floodplain management program in Idaho is to reduce the negative impacts of flood hazards to people, property, and the environment by encouraging wise land use and construction practices in our floodplain areas. Methods to accomplish this include providing technical assistance to local governments and technical assistance to our broad customer group which includes: other state and federal agencies, land developers, realtors, the engineering community, lending institutions, the insurance industry, and the general public.

Our vision for the future is to maximize the effectiveness of the financial and staff resources of our agency. IDWR, along with other state agencies with a stake in

floodplain management, will increase and enhance the floodplain management capabilities of local governments through coordination and cooperation and the use of modern technologies to achieve the flood loss reduction goals of the NFIP. This will also provide for increased public safety, protection of public infrastructure and private property, and preserve the functions and values of the natural floodplain resource.

III. Strategy to Improve Floodplain Management

There are approximately 180 communities in Idaho with a mapped flood hazard. Of that total, 164 communities, or 91%, participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. The communities that do not participate typically have very small populations with few or no structures in a mapped flood hazard area. As the State's designated coordinating agency for the NFIP, IDWR receives an annual grant from FEMA's Community Assistance Program-State Support Services Element (CAP-SSSE) to provide technical assistance and support to those 164 communities enrolled in the NFIP and any other communities that are applying for enrollment in the NFIP. In this role, IDWR staff conducts Community Assistance Visits (CAV's) and Community Assistance Contacts (CAC's) to assess local regulatory programs for compliance with state and federal requirements. In addition to this major CAP/SSSE grant task, IDWR staff provides floodplain management ordinance review and enhancement, flood loss reduction assistance through workshops and public outreach efforts, coordination with FEMA Region X and other federal and state agencies, and general technical assistance on the full array of related topics from insurance questions to hazard mitigation alternatives.

CAV's

Over the past few years IDWR has conducted an average of 20 CAV's per year. While this represents a significant effort, it is not sufficient to meet the desired target of conducting CAV's in all high risk participating communities within a four-year cycle and low risk communities within a six-year cycle. However, since the CAV's represent an intensive effort by meeting with communities' staffs involved in planning, building, public works, and emergency management and examining their activities, it provides a superior method of conveying floodplain management information and assuring compliance with regulatory standards.

Future Objective – Establish a five-year average cycle to conduct CAV's on all 164 participating communities within that time frame.

Milestones – In 2005, evaluate communities and determine those that need to have CAV's conducted on a four-year basis such as those with CRS standing, significant development, and minimal floodplains. The remaining communities will make up the list of communities that need to have a CAV every 6 years. In 2006, develop a schedule based on categorizations and begin implementing it.

CAC's

CAC's, while not as intensive as CAV's, allow for maintenance and continuity of familiarity and awareness with floodplain management issues between Ecology and the communities. The CAC also allows for a specific focus on individual community concerns. IDWR averages 25 CAC's per year with some resulting from specific technical assistance contacts. The use of this method could be expanded as well or could serve as a feeder mechanism for prioritizing the scheduling of CAV's.
Future Objective – Establish a cycle for conducting CAC's that will assure that each community is contacted at least once between CAV's and that serves as a feeder system for the CAV's.
Milestones – Concurrent with CAV schedule.

Ordinance assistance

Ordinance assistance is included in all CAV's and most CAC's. In addition, other communities ordinances are reviewed based on technical assistance contacts, community ordinance update cycles, or community actions (such as annexations). Therefore, many more ordinances are reviewed than are initially planned for under the CAP/SSSE grant. IDWR always exceeds the goal of four ordinance reviews each year.
Future Objective – Continue to increase the number of ordinance reviews completed in the state of Idaho each year. Another goal is to make copies of each community's flood damage prevention ordinance available on the IDWR website for public access.
Milestones – In 2005, develop a plan for creation of electronic library and begin data collection.

Training and workshops

Community training has long been an important part of Idaho's floodplain management program. IDWR currently completes 5+ training sessions a year. These training sessions are typically several hours of direct training of community staff by the state NFIP coordinator.
Future Objective – Continue to provide community training as requested by the communities. Greater effort will be provided to promoting workshop attendance as a more efficient means of providing training to several communities at one time.

Workshops have been conducted by IDWR each year that funding has been available. The target audience for these workshops is local planning and zoning officials, building inspectors, surveyors, engineers, and architects. The general public is also invited to attend these workshops. These workshops are provided at no cost to the attendees. The basic CAP-SSSE grant for Idaho does not provide enough money to cover the cost of workshops. Workshops have been funded through supplemental grants awarded near the end of each of the last 3 fiscal years. This funding method allows very little time to organize and promote these workshops, and therefore, results in low attendance. If a consistent source of funding were provided for workshops, they could be planned in advance and more effectively promoted.

Future Objective – Obtain additional funding from CAP-SSSE or other grant program to provide a regular schedule of workshops across the state of Idaho each year. Three or four workshops per year offered in different cities should effectively serve the needs of all Idaho communities for basic NFIP training.

Outreach

Community and public outreach has been accomplished partially through the publication of quarterly newsletters and an annual information guide and partly through public meetings and training sessions. Public meetings and trainings are performed as requested by citizen groups, homeowners associations, real estate offices, and local government. The public relations publications have been used for many years with good success in Idaho. Publication costs are ever increasing and it is becoming more and more difficult to cover these expenses. IDWR intends to continue these efforts and expand its efforts at distribution of FEMA-published outreach materials.

Future Objective – Continue to publish the newsletters and information guide. Reduce production costs by converting to electronic publication and distribution. Expand the current IDWR website to provide more comprehensive and community specific floodplain management data as well as maps and links to additional information. Continue to offer public training and information sessions on an as requested basis.

Milestones – In 2005, investigate technologies and methods available and determine costs and feasibility. In 2006, develop plan and begin implementation.

General Technical Assistance

General technical assistance is the mainstay of floodplain management efforts and accounts for approximately 40% of the total staff time for the NFIP program in Idaho. We must be available to provide timely assistance to local governments, other state and federal agencies, the development and engineering communities, insurance and lending industries, and the general public to help them make wise decisions regarding the use floodplain resources. Sometimes these activities lead to further, more intensive tasks such as ordinance reviews, CAC's or CAV's, and workshops. IDWR logs well over 1000 phone calls, E-mails, letters, office and field visits per year regarding flood hazard reduction methods and practices, flood insurance concerns, ordinance requirements, and policy interpretations. In past years, IDWR used a log sheet to track these requests for technical assistance but discontinued that effort when it became clear that the hours spent on the log sheet could not be spared on a very limited budget and the time could be better spent on providing services to the public. IDWR does not plan to use a log sheet to measure this work again in the future as suggested in the guidance document for this plan.

Future Objective –Expand the IDWR public website to provide more information and thereby reduce calls and emails for assistance. A more streamlined digital database for floodplain management information and records would also speed access time to requested information and decrease response time for individual requests for assistance.

Milestones – In 2005, explore methods and formats available in redesign of the IDWR website to better serve the public and provide commonly requested information. In 2006, implement these changes and design a regular schedule of updating the website on a monthly basis.

Post Disaster Assistance

Disaster response and recovery is another task that we continue to perform on an as-needed basis. This is an important function that enhances the response capabilities of the interagency team that addresses the emergency needs of the citizens and local governments during a time of crisis. We plan to continue to support FEMA and the State Emergency Management Division with these efforts as they arise.
Future Objective – Continue coordination efforts with FEMA and Idaho Department of Homeland Security to plan and prepare for disaster response.

Coordination meetings

Attendance at regional and national coordination meetings provides vital training and exchange of information about the latest information, changes, legislation, and future planning in floodplain management. Idaho has attended and participated in these coordination efforts for many years. In recent years, the Idaho State NFIP Coordinator has attended the annual FEMA Region X coordination meeting in Bothell, WA as well as the national and regional conferences of the Association of State Flood Plain Managers. Continued attendance at these meetings is considered vital to the future success of the floodplain management program in Idaho.
Future Objective –Continue to attend these coordination meetings and seek to improve cooperative efforts and the exchange of information with other federal and state agencies to improve the floodplain management program in Idaho.

CRS coordination

Idaho has actively promoted community participation in the CRS program and will continue to do so in the future. The CRS program is a valuable tool in promoting higher regulatory standards and wise floodplain management. The Idaho State NFIP Coordinator will continue to work with the FEMA Region X CRS coordinator to assist and encourage local communities to join the CRS program.
Future objective - Continue to promote the CRS program to every community in Idaho and increase the number of communities that participate.
Milestones – In 2005, add at least 1 new community to the CRS program and at least one additional community each year for the next 5 years.

Map Modernization Coordination

Coordination between the state NFIP coordinator and the state mapping coordinator, FEMA, and FEMA's contractors will require an increasing amount of time and resources from the CAP program. This is not accounted for in the current CAP-SSSE budget.

Over the next 5 years an increasing amount of resources will have to be provided to support this effort. This will come at the expense of the other efforts mentioned previously if additional funding for CAP-SSSE is not provided specifically for this purpose.

Future objectives – Provide support as needed to the map modernization program to ensure Idaho's maximum participation in this program.

Activity Mix Variations

The mix of CAP-SSSE activities will vary during this five year period to accommodate changes in emphasis as directed by FEMA guidance. The primary variation in activity is expected in connection with map modernization activities. More effort will be placed on mapping assistance as more communities engage in the modernization process. Other factors that may cause variations include: CRS enrollment and re-evaluation, disaster response and recovery duties.

IV. Needs Analysis and Gap Assessment

Current funding levels are not sufficient to accomplish the planned tasks or future vision for the CAP-SSSE program. If this proposed five-year plan is to be implemented, additional funding is needed. During fiscal year 04, we received $78,831 under the CAP-SSSE grant. At this level of funding, Idaho will not be able to accomplish any new floodplain management goals. In the past few years, additional activities such as the very successful series of workshops were only possible as the result of additional grant money received at the end of the year. While this money was put to good use and made a huge difference in the success of the Idaho NFIP effort, it would be much more effective if the money were provided earlier in the year so that advanced planning could enable more efficient use of the funds. Workshops and training are the highest and fastest growing need in Idaho's floodplain management program. Increasing growth rates and high staff turnover rates in local government are driving the increasing demand for additional workshop and trainings for basic NFIP and Elevation Certificates.

The current shortfall in funding will result in the termination of the publication of Idaho's quarterly newsletter and annual report/directory. While the publications will continue in a digital format and will be posted on the IDWR website, there are still many Idaho communities with no access to email or the Internet. These communities will be impacted.

We also expect an increased workload due to increasing map modernization efforts. We will attempt to fully support these efforts to the greatest degree possible by assisting our Mapping/GIS coordinator with outreach, assessment of mapping needs, and participation in scoping meetings and other meetings required under map development and adoption procedures. However, if additional funding for CAP-SSSE is not forthcoming, then support of map modernization will come at the expense of the other CAP-SSSE tasks described previously.

Proposed remedy—Increase CAP-SSSE grant to provide for 3 to 4 workshops per year. Make such funds available early in the fiscal year. In addition, the CAP_SSE program needs more employee hours to provide adequate support to the map modernization program. The most efficient means to accomplish this is to fund part-time clerical assistance for the CAP-SSSE program. This will free some of the NFIP coordinator's time that can then be devoted to map modernization support. The approximate funding needed for these remedies is $16,000 per year with annual increases for inflation.

V. Map Modernization Activities

Idaho will hire a Map Modernization Coordinator by approximately the start of FY2005. The position is funded under our CAP- Map Modernization Management Support (MMMS) grant. This grant provides enough funding to staff a position with a half-time employee and provide that employee with the equipment and resources need to perform the required tasks. The business plan for MMMS identifies mapping coordination efforts to be completed by the Idaho Mapping Coordinator in support of FEMA and its contractors. This plan was developed in accordance with FEMA guidelines and Department of Homeland Security objectives and is designed to accomplish the goals established by FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security.

The map modernization efforts are correlated with the CAP-SSSE activities to provide for mutual information exchange and support in carrying out the duties for each. Discussion of the map modernization program and identification of mapping needs is routinely discussed at all CAV's and CAC's. Flood hazard maps and floodplain management practices are inextricably linked, since the maps are the major tool to establish floodplain management jurisdiction. Better, more accurate maps with improved accessibility will lead to improved, more effective floodplain management programs. It is expected that the state NFIP Coordinator and the Mapping Coordinator will work closely to provide the most effective support possible for each program.

VI. Evaluation of State Performance

The overriding goal of floodplain management as a field of endeavor is to protect lives and properties from destruction or damage by flooding. Effective floodplain management programs at state and local levels provide a variety of benefits beyond this important purpose. Measuring success in terms of performance measures can be difficult because of the nature of the desired outcome, which is to prevent something from occurring.

Taken to the level of the CAP-SSSE grant this proposition of establishing goal-oriented performance measures becomes slightly less problematic since the tasks on which these measures are based are assumed to lead to the desired outcome. The real successes can only be measured at the local level where the results of the CAP-SSSE efforts can

actually be observed. Therefore, the performance measures that IDWR proposes on behalf of the State of Idaho are mostly local in focus relying on the CAP-SSSE reporting mechanism to capture the specific activities of the grant tasks for the State.

Some of the suggested measures are not appropriate for Idaho because of previous efforts that obviate or reduce their significance. For example, the measure "Increase the number of flood prone communities enrolled in the NFIP", would not be useful or significant since approximately 91% of all communities in Idaho are participating in the NFIP and the remaining communities are small communities with minimal or no recognized flood hazard. A similar situation is true for CRS enrollments, the vast majority of those communities with the commitment, need, and resources are already enrolled in CRS. These facts will not preclude us from making efforts to enroll new communities in either the NFIP or the CRS if there is need and benefit for the community. However, the value of tracking such performance measures would be minimal.

The performance measures proposed for the purposes of this plan are as follows:

Performance Measures

1. **Maintain or improve the Percentage (%) of communities that adopt new maps by the FIRM effective date.** This is a required measure that will compare the number of communities receiving new maps with the number of those that have adopted the new maps and have compliant ordinances. We do not expect to have any communities suspended for failure to adopt. The target percentage for this measure for all years is 100%,
2. **Increase or maintain the percentage (%) of communities that adopt new maps prior to the thirty-day letter being sent.** This is a preferred measure that will compare the number of communities that received a 30-day letter in FY 2004 with the number in subsequent years. Those adopting prior to the 30-day letter represent a cost savings by precluding the need for the preparation and mailing of the letter and the *Federal Register* publication requirements. The target for this measure is 95%.
3. **Increase the number of communities that adopt and enforce higher regulatory standards.** This is a selected measure that will compare the number of communities with higher regulatory standards in FY 2004 with the number of communities adopting higher standards in subsequent years. This will be implemented upon completion of our ordinance review compilation efforts during FY 2005 and updated as new information is received. The target for this measure is an additional 4 communities per year.
4. **Increase the number of State Floodplain Management staff that are certified floodplain managers (CFM).** This is a selected measure that will compare the number of CFM's working in State Floodplain Management in FY 2004 with the number in future years. Such certification would provide further credibility for State staff working with local governments and may provide incentive for increasing the number of CFM's throughout the state. The target for this measure is to maintain the 100% of state NFIP staff that are

CFM's. This means any and all new staff that may be hired in the future will become a CFM.

5. **Provide annual workshops for basic NFIP and elevation certificate training each year.** Training and public awareness is the essential element needed to achieve compliance with NFIP goals in every community. Without effective training, there will not be effective compliance. The goal of this activity is to provide a workshop opportunity in every region of the state at least every other year. The target for this measure, therefore, is to provide at least three workshops per year, in different cities, on a rotating schedule.