2014: ASFPM’s Year in Review

Last year, ASFPM experienced some epic milestones. We have more individual members than ever before, currently standing at 5,735. There are more CFMs than ever before in our history – 8,730. We’re providing up-to-the-minute research, trends, best practices, member announcements and agency news that affects this profession via our social media sites. 2014 indicated a financial bounce back judging by the high number of people who attended our national conference in Seattle, and we’re crossing our fingers that they jump even higher this year in Atlanta. Congress tossed us a curve ball by enacting the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act, but ASFPM wasted no time digesting the new legislation and getting that information out to our members. And ASFPM remains the nation’s expert on national flood policy, witnessed by Executive Director Chad Berginnis’ testimony at multiple Congressional subcommittee hearings. And whatever agency or policy challenges face us this year, ASFPM is ready.

Science Services

As you will see after reading this next section, ASFPM’s Science Services department was crazy busy with multiple projects, and shows no signs of slowing down in 2015.

Great Lakes Coastal Resilience Planning Guide

Science Services wrapped up a third year of work on the Great Lakes Coastal Resilience Planning Guide, in partnership with the NOAA Office for Coastal Management, the Digital Coast Partnership and Sea Grant.
programs in the region. Science Services continued to improve the overall design of the Planning Guide, while adding exciting and educational new case studies and community stories. Through the Planning Guide, local floodplain, stormwater and coastal managers and planners can discover how Great Lakes communities are using science-based tools and data to address coastal watershed hazards that impact land use and zoning, habitat conservation and restoration, and green and gray infrastructure. For example, in the peer-reviewed case studies you can read detailed accounts describing how St. Joseph, MI, passed a “No Build Zone” ordinance with impressive community support, or how stormwater infrastructure upgrades in Two Harbors, MN, mitigated damages during the record 2012 “Solstice Flood.”

As we enter our fourth year of building this valuable resource, do you have an idea for a case study or local story? We’re looking for content that highlights planning or management projects that effectively deal with building coastal community and watershed resilience in the Great Lakes. Contact Project Manager Jeff Stone with any questions or thoughts about potential case studies or interest in the Planning Guide.

**Economic Assessment of Green Infrastructure Report**

Over the past two years Science Services has supported NOAA and the Eastern Research Group on a study to assess the economic benefits of green infrastructure as a method of reducing the negative effects of flooding in Duluth, MN, and Toledo, OH. ERG worked with the Army Corps of Engineers Institute of Water Resources to assess each watershed using hydrology and hydraulics models to estimate existing and future flooding, and with ASFPM’s Science Services using FEMA’s US Multi-Hazards flood model (Hazus) to estimate existing and future potential losses associated with flooding (based on 2-, 5-, 10-, 25-, 50-, and 100-year storm events).

The final report, “Economic Assessment of Green Infrastructure Strategies for Climate Change Adaptation,” was released last May, with additional plans to share the results and build upon the recommendations with both communities. A secondary goal of this report was development of a project framework to help communities consider and estimate projected changes in future precipitation; assess how increased precipitation will likely impact community flooding; consider a range of available green infrastructure and land use policy options to reduce flooding; and identify the economic benefits that can be realized by implementing green infrastructure.

Science Services continued to support the community outreach efforts by attending meetings, presenting Hazus results and engaging state and local floodplain managers for both communities. The Hazus analysis and results formed the foundation of the report, so Science Services continued exploring ways to visualize and explore these results beyond the useful, but limited maps provided in the final report. As a result, Lizzi Slivinski, Science Services’ web GIS specialist, working with NOAA and the city of Toledo, developed the [Toledo Flood Hazard Visualizer](#) (see story about the tool on page 11) with plans to develop a similar tool for Duluth.

**Identification of Bluff Erosion Hotspots on Wisconsin’s Lake Michigan Shoreline**

Through a NOAA Coastal Zone Management Act grant and funding support from Wisconsin’s Coastal Management Program, Science Services worked with Emeritus Professor David Mickelson, UW Mad-
son Department of Geology and Geophysics, to conduct a bluff stability analysis. Much of Wisconsin’s Lake Michigan shoreline has high clay bluffs susceptible to erosion and bluff top recession, putting homes in danger. In previous project collaboration, slope stability conditions on the bluffs along the Lake Michigan shoreline were mapped using 1976 and 2007 oblique air photos. Areas still considered as failing bluff in 2007 were identified as “hotspots,” making understanding the reasons for this continued instability the main goal of this research.

To support this project, Science Services obtained and processed 2012 Lidar data for much of Wisconsin’s Lake Michigan shore. Using LP360 for ArcGIS (QCoherent Software, LLC) we formatted and verified Lidar classification quality (e.g. bare earth, trees, buildings) and developed a process for drawing profiles and exporting slope characteristics for slope “factor of safety” analysis. Projects like this help build Science Services’ knowledge and capacity for using the latest GIS and Lidar processing software and furthering ways of integrating these technical processes into all aspects of flood management and planning.

In the just released final report, Mickelson wrote, “Higher lake levels and waves initiating removal of sediment at the base of the bluff are likely to create a major threat to a number of houses in the hotspot reaches.” This study and the impacts of lake levels and waves at the base of the bluff will complement FEMA’s Great Lakes Costal Flood Study, a project that Science Service Program Manager Alan Lulloff has been intimately connected with over the past three years. FEMA is developing new models and maps for the Great Lakes to better define the extent of potential coastal flooding. However, its study will not in any detail consider bluff erosion and retreat. To view the final reports from all phases of this project, visit “Final Reports and Appendices” tab on the Wisconsin Shoreline Inventory and Oblique Photo Viewer “About” page.

No Adverse Impact Legal Workshops

ASFPM and Science Services continued to develop, coordinate and collaborate the hosting of workshops aimed at exposing participants to the legal aspects of No Adverse Impact and flood management. By leveraging FEMA funding, several workshops have been held over the past 18 months with several more planned. Two workshops focused on Hurricane Sandy were held in late 2013 in New York. The workshops titled, “Community Resiliency after Sandy: Legal Issues and Application of No Adverse Impact in the Coastal Zone,” were held in small communities with approximately 40 people attending each workshop.

More than 70 people participated in the Aug. 19 workshop held in Milwaukee, WI. One of the main goals of this workshop was to expose two major groups to the legal aspects of NAI and floodplain management. The first group was members of the Great Lakes Sea Grant Network. Through invitational travel provided by Wisconsin Sea Grant, climate specialists and outreach coordinators from five Sea Grant Programs (MN, IL, OH, MI and WI) attended the workshop. This was part of an effort by ASFPM to engage and collaborate with Sea Grant around the region to plan and host similar workshops in other states. The second group that attended and participated were members of NOAA’s Digital Coast Partnership, which includes: American Planning Association, Coastal States Organization, National Association of Counties, National Estuarine Research Reserve Association, National States Geographic Information Council, The Nature Conservancy, and the Urban Land Institute. Read the workshop proceeding report to find out more.

ASFPM, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant, Wisconsin Sea Grant, Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management, and Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management are currently in the planning phases to host and conduct three workshops over the next year in Chicago, northwest Indiana and the Lake Erie region of Ohio.
New Projects in 2015

National Fish & Wildlife Foundation – Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resilience Grant

One of the major recommendations of the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force was to address insurance challenges, understanding, and accessibility by examining ways to address affordability challenges posed by Congressionally-mandated reforms to the NFIP. ASFPM and the Coastal States Organization have been funded over the next two years to help achieve this, while also looking for ways to significantly reduce a communities’ vulnerability to the growing risks from coastal storms, sea level rise, flooding, erosion, and associated threats, through strengthening natural ecosystems that also benefit fish and wildlife.

The overall goal of this project is to increase the number of communities making voluntary, effective measures to increase coastal resiliency by taking advantage of the window of opportunity that has been created by BW-12 and the need for communities to take steps to make flood insurance affordable. It will do so by promoting Community Rating System participation, providing guidance on activities that will increase communities’ ratings, and working directly with communities to increase their resiliency through the CRS process. We believe that 1) we can get more communities to participate in the CRS and 2) those that are participating will increase their scores by having a road map to undertake activities that strengthen the natural ecosystems and reduce growing vulnerability to floods.

ASFPM and CSO staff, members, as well as stakeholders in Rhode Island and Ohio, will help develop and compile a guidebook and case studies on proven, effective CRS activities, and conduct several workshops and webinars for both states. As the project and research moves forward we will share what we’re learning.

Multiple partnership projects with the American Planning Association

The subdivision of land in or near floodplains involves the potential creation of tomorrow's flood risks. In an era of increasing attention to climate change, those risks may be greater than they have been in the past. The American Planning Association has a long history of addressing these issues, dating back at least to its 1997 publication, Subdivision Design in Flood Hazard Areas (PAS Report No. 473, 1997).

APA in partnership with ASFPM and with funding from FEMA, are revisiting the topic to provide updated guidance on the subject for local planners, consultants, and others involved in the subdivision design and site plan review process. The need is clear for much more technical guidance related to all aspects of subdivisions, from planning to design, to standards, to infrastructure maintenance.

A new PAS Report would be broadened from the strict subdivision approach used in PAS Report No. 473 to include other land-use regulatory considerations affecting design in flood hazard areas, but also other innovations in coastal and floodplain zoning and regulation. Additional work would include website resources and professional training opportunities based on the report’s findings, such as presentations at the national and state chapter conferences of both partner organizations managing the project.

American Planning Association – Planners Information Exchange

Planners in several disciplines participate in information exchanges, and good models exist. ASFPM and APA participate in the Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance, which ASFPM is a co-founder. While not formally called an information exchange, NFFA has been incredibly successful at doing just that. The central activity has consisted of webinars held every other month on issues of interest to the alliance. APA will lead in this FEMA-funded project with ASFPM playing a key partner role.

The Planning Information Exchange will focus on all hazards and primarily on mitigation planning, but also its connections with recovery planning and preparedness. APA and ASFPM will act as the convener of all planning exchanges, and individual partners will focus on the development of content and hosting of webinars.
exchange webinars with ASFPM focusing on flood hazard and flood management related content and topics. Look for more information as we develop and host the webinars and relevant web resources.

The Board
Our board in 2014 continued to be very active and engaged. Bill Nechamen, chief of the Floodplain Management Section of New York’s Bureau of Flood Protection and Dam as well as our very own board chair, said, “Board committees have been created to deal with various topics: including the association’s finances, climate change, chapters, and support for Cooperating Technical Partners. It’s been a pleasure to work with this group.”

He said a major task has been updating ASFPM’s National Flood Policies and Programs in Review, last tackled in 2006/07. This document is ASFPM’s bible, with commentary on where we think the nation should be going in terms of flood policy. Director Emeritus Larry Larson is leading a group of writers to present a draft to the board at the February Board Retreat in Madison. Board members will then spend a full day or more going over it and passing the final version. ASFPM leadership consults the NFPPR when establishing positions and talking points. The board also passes an annual set of goals and objectives for internal and external ASFPM targets at the retreat. “In this way, the board writes the music, while the executive staff play the instruments,” Nechamen said.

There are three components of the 19-member board. The officers are the chair, vice chair, treasurer and secretary. Vice Chair Ceil Strauss coordinates activities of the 14 policy committees. There are 10 regional directors, each representing states in the respective FEMA regions. There are five chapter directors, serving as liaisons to chapters, with each chapter director representing states in two FEMA regions. In order to make sure ASFPM continues to represent state interests, the officers must be employed by a state or territory of the United States. “I can personally say that serving as an officer on the board has been one of the most fulfilling things that I’ve ever done,” said Nechamen, whose term expires this June.

“I want to encourage all members to get to know your board members, particularly the ones who represent your region or chapter,” he said. “While ASFPM has paid staff, it is still run by volunteers. So please consider running for the board or becoming active in a policy committee. New people and new ideas are always welcome. This is the best way that you can influence national flood policies that affect your community.”

Webinars
ASFPM launched its webinar series in October 2013 to great success. Continuing on that success in 2014, ASFPM hosted 15 webinars to 1,400 registrants on a variety of topics, including NFIP reform, liability and takings issues, finding Base Flood Elevations, ethics, social media for FPMs, and flood zone determinations. We thank all our presenters for their willingness to share their time and expertise!

ASFPM is looking forward to providing future webinar opportunities on new topics and currently is working with our leaders, partners, and industry experts to continue to bring high-interest, high-quality, and high demand topics for your professional development. We hope you’ll join us for one of our upcoming webinars. The January-March webinar schedule is available here. And if you’d like to be the first to know about our upcoming webinars and other professional development opportunities, follow us on Twitter at: https://twitter.com/@FloodTraining.
Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM®) program
This past year was very successful for the program. In addition to welcoming 828 new CFMs to our national program, we also saw major exam improvements; several videos were created that highlight the CFM program; crucial policies were approved; and there were some changes in our Certification Board of Regents leadership.

This January we rolled out the new final exam, which eliminated true/false questions. This was part of the five-year phase-in recommendations of the Ohio State University Reliability and Validity Study. ASFPM acknowledges John Ivey, chair of the exam subgroup, and the entire exam work group, for their extraordinary service to see this through to completion. CBOR also created a new policy that will allow full-time, college student members to take the CFM exam at a student member rate beginning this November.

CBOR also had a few changes. Mark Riebau was appointed as president. Former president Tom Morey will continue his contributions as a regent. Dave Carlton joined CBOR, replacing Gene Henry, as regent-at-large. ASFPM and CBOR extend their sincere appreciation for his years of service to the CFM program.

Foundation
The ASFPM Foundation had four really notable activities in 2014.
1) It is one of the sponsors for the "Designing for Disaster" special exhibit at the National Building Museum in DC, which opened to the public in May and will run for one year. This exhibit explores new approaches in design and engineering to protect life and property against a range of natural hazards.
2) Sam Medlock, ASFPM's policy and partnerships manager, whose position is jointly funded by ASFPM and the Foundation, was detailed to the White House Council on Environmental Quality. This opportunity puts us at the forefront of national policy formulation. And we’ve learned that her detail has been extended to June 19.
3) Scott Edelman handed the gavel to Doug Plasencia to serve as the Foundation's president. Many thanks to Scott for his years of leadership!
4) The Events Committee continues to help state chapters conduct a flood risk symposium, including IN, CO, TX, GA, and FL to date, with IL and AZ on deck for this spring.

Volunteers
Our ASFPM volunteers continued to do a wonderful job in 2014! We want to say thanks to the volunteers involved in so many ways, including co-chairs of the policy committees, pod facilitators, local teams that helped organize a great conference in Seattle, part of the writing team for our “National Flood Programs and Policies in Review” update, and ASFPM board members. In addition, many of our members get involved in writing and/or reviewing discussion papers or outreach materials, or commenting on federal proposals at the committee level. Much of ASFPM’s success – and respect for our opinions on national matters – is due to input that comes from our membership’s diverse knowledge and experience, and their willingness to take the time to share that knowledge. Thanks to all of our volunteers who have been involved at all levels, with a special shout out to those who get involved and wear many hats! We couldn’t do this without your help.
50th Anniversary of 1964 Christmas Flood in Oregon spurs
3-step Flood Awareness Campaign

“Why are we so arrogant to think we control this planet? ... We need to move farther away from the danger zone. Yes, a house by the river is beautiful, but a house floating down the river is not.” – Carl Barney, son of the owner of Snappy’s Camera and Music Store, which was damaged in the 1964 Christmas Flood. The quote comes from this video.

December marked the 50th anniversary of the Christmas Flood of 1964, regarded as one of the most devastating natural disasters ever recorded in the Pacific Northwest. The flood waters submerged towns from Seattle to California, killed 19 people and 4,000 head of livestock, destroyed towns, houses, highways and bridges.

In Clackamas County, OR, 155 homes were completely lost in the upper Sandy River Basin and scores of others were destroyed or incurred significant damage throughout the county.

While the 1964 event was the most devastating of its kind in recent times, that region has experienced similar flooding emergencies over the past few decades. The Willamette Flood of 1996, and the Sandy River Flood of 2011, illustrate how Clackamas County and its surrounding areas remain at continual risk.

And to that end, Clackamas County launched a three-step flood awareness campaign aimed at better preparing all citizens for future occurrences. As a first step in the campaign, the county released four documentaries capturing the devastation brought to the region by the 1964 Christmas Flood.

“I’d like to share four mini documentaries we produced to bring a personal scale to the historical flood,” said Jay Wilson, the county’s resilience coordinator and director of the four videos. “We have tried to collect these first person narratives into four stories that detail the dramatic nature of the 1964 events in Clackamas County, but also share the personal commitment to working hard, public service and business recovery. We hope these stories go beyond traditional government-based promotions to reflect their personal memories and the power of family histories in a community’s identity.”

Step two was updating the flood preparedness webpage with details about key federal and local resources, best practices for disaster planning, instructions to sign up to receive emergency communications via cell phone, and scientific information about our area’s unique situation. Step three is organizing a local speaking tour for Wilson about flood preparedness. The tour, tentatively slated for January through March 2015, will be held throughout the county with an emphasis on areas hardest hit by regional flooding.

Considering the 2015 International Codes®

The International Code Council published the first printing of most of the 2015 I-Codes late last year. When you’re considering these codes, be sure to check the ICC’s “Errata Central.” There are several errata for flood provisions (they’ll be incorporated in the second printing). FEMA prepared excerpts of the flood provisions of the IBC and IRC and “Highlights of ASCE 24-14,” which is referenced by the 2015 I-Codes.
By Rebecca Quinn, CFM, and Tom Leatherbee, CFM, City of Del City, OK.

With each passing year I spend more and more time in front of a monitor, with most of my “hands on” experience gained by talking to front line floodplain managers. Just like formal education, “book learning” only goes so far. The NFIP regulations and the flood provisions of the International Codes can’t cover every situation. And, despite the breadth and quality of FEMA’s many guidance publications, they also can’t cover every situation.

But sometimes real-life problems (and solutions) can trigger clarification and changes, not only in guidance documents but in building code requirements.

At an ASFPM conference several years ago, Tom Leatherbee gave a presentation on dealing with dilapidated buildings. It stuck with me. Tom, the building official for the City of Del City, OK, was a reviewer during FEMA’s development of the Substantial Improvement/Substantial Damage Desk Reference (FEMA P-758). That’s why at least some guidance on the subject is now available. The issue is how to handle buildings in flood hazard areas that have been neglected to the point where the work necessary to make them safe, sanitary, and livable, might constitute SI/SD.

Representing the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association, Tom recently worked with the FEMA Building Science Branch on a proposal for the International Property Maintenance Code. If the proposal is successful, communities that enforce the IPMC will have yet another tool to reduce exposure of buildings to flooding. Because many buildings subject to the IPMC are low- and moderate-income rental housing, it will also mean fewer economically vulnerable families will be exposed to flooding. The purpose of the IPMC is to ensure public health, safety and welfare by establishing minimum maintenance standards.

As we all know, the NFIP requirements and the flood provisions of the IBC, IRC, and IEBC apply to buildings in flood hazard areas if a local official determines proposed improvements are "substantial improvement" or if buildings have incurred "substantial damage." Making these determinations requires a comparison of costs to building market value. Substantial damage may be triggered by damage of any cause, and most damage results from sudden events, such as fire, tornado, earthquake, or flood. When applied to structures that have been neglected and become dilapidated and unsafe over time, the basic substantial damage and substantial improvement requirements can be undermined by an existing provision in the substantial improvement definition that allows exclusion of costs to correct identified code violations (for detailed guidance, see the SI/SD Desk Reference). Once a structure has been cited under the IPMC, it's conceivable that most if not all costs to correct cited conditions could be excluded.

Another aspect of the definition for substantial damage is problematic when applied to neglected, dilapidated buildings, and that is the determination of market value. When a building is damaged by a sudden event, it is relatively straightforward to determine the market value "before the damage occurred." It is not straightforward when damage has occurred over time – what date should be used to determine the market value "before the damage occurred"?

The proposal to modify the IMPC has two objectives, achieved in part by proposing definitions differ from those in the NFIP regulations and the I-Codes:

- The proposed definition for Substantial Damage makes clear that the market value of the structure is the date of the code official's order pursuant to the IPMC. Without this clarification, an owner may claim...
the market value should be the value of the building before maintenance starting being neglected, which could be many years in the past (and typically not easy to determine). The market value as of the date of an order is likely be a higher market value (therefore raising the 50 percent threshold) than the market value as of the date an application for a permit to perform repairs is received (which may be a year or more after the citation is issued), as recommended in FEMA guidance in Section 4.5 of the SI/SD Desk Reference.

- The proposed definition for Substantial Improvement removes the provision that allows exclusion of certain costs, thus requiring the costs of all work to be included in the calculation.

The IPMC has a section that lists conditions that can prompt a code official to order an owner to demolish a building or board it up until it is repaired. The proposal to modify the IPMC adds structures determined to have incurred substantial damage to the list of conditions that warrant such an order. If future repair is pursued by the owner, the substantial damage determination means the repairs would have to bring the building into compliance. One result of this change is that many more owners are likely to consider demolition, in which case, replacement structures would have to comply not only with flood requirements, but all building code requirements, resulting in many benefits such as resistance to wind and seismic loads, improved fire safety, and better energy efficiency.

The proposal adds a new provision to the IPMC section that specifies general requirements. It would make it clear all cost to correct cited conditions of the interior and exterior of a structure (terms used in the IPMC) are included when substantial improvement is determined, and emphasizes that all costs of all repairs and improvements necessary to correct existing cited violations must be included.

Tom, a long-time ASFPM member, brought his experience to the table to illustrate the merits of the proposal. He writes:

Del City, OK has more than its share of flood hazard areas, mostly filled with aging residential neighborhoods. I've used the IPMC a number of times to require property owners to repair or remove dilapidated buildings in flood hazard areas. Several years ago I had to order demolition of a dilapidated apartment complex that had been damaged by flooding and left unrepaired for several years (see photographs above). Pursuant to the building code and the community's floodplain management regulations, I determined that the structures were substantially damaged. At the same time, I issued a demolition order pursuant to IPMC because the structures were unsafe, unsanitary, and unreasonable to repair.

The owner initially proposed to repair the buildings and applied for a remodel permit. I denied the permit because I determined the work covered by the application was substantial improvement and the owner didn’t propose bringing the buildings into compliance with our flood requirements. The owner
appealed my decision, challenging the SI/SD determinations because virtually all of the proposed repairs would be to correct cited violations of the IPMC. The owner claimed those costs should be excluded from the determination.

Had the city’s appeals board allowed the costs to correct cited violations to be excluded, overturning my determinations, the apartments could have been repaired without compliance. The structures, and future residents, would have been left at continued risk for flooding. Luckily, before the appeals board ruled on the issue the property entered foreclosure and was sold to a developer. The apartment buildings were eventually demolished and the land redeveloped with commercial buildings after a significant flood mitigation project was completed.

Although this specific situation was resolved before the appeal was decided, it came so close that Tom and other members of the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association decided to pursue a change to the IPMC. OFMA offers a course on dealing with flood damage through building codes and using the IPMC is always a hot topic. Tom’s hands-on experience illustrates the value of being committed to mitigating flood risk and sharing with others – in this case with FEMA. That, in turn, may lead to a solution that would be available to all communities that enforce the IPMC.

Submit your own items or suggestions for future topics to column editor Rebecca Quinn, CFM, rcquinn@earthlink.net. Comments welcomed!

The White House announced Jan. 16 new steps that federal agencies are taking to bring private sector capital and expertise to bear on improving our nation’s roads, bridges and broadband networks. Read the fact sheet “Increasing Investment in U.S. Roads, Ports and Drinking Water Systems through Innovative Financing.”

Tick tock! Tick tock! Time is running out.

For those of you who have not renewed your ASFPM membership, it is crunch time. The board election process begins Feb. 1. That means if you are not a member by the first, you won’t be eligible to run or vote in the elections. Do not miss out on your chance to have a voice in our association. Contact Kevin Currie at kevin@floods.org to renew your membership, or to become a member for the first time.
Toledo Can Now Visualize Economic Benefits of Green Infrastructure, Thanks to ASFPM’s Science Services

On Jan. 5, ASFPM’s Science Services department unveiled the Toledo Flood Hazard Visualizer, an interactive map that allows users to explore the economic benefits of green infrastructure in reducing flood damages. The launch of the mapping application comes after nearly three years of research and development and will undoubtedly contribute to a more resilient Toledo, OH, by supporting planning decisions and outreach initiatives.

The Visualizer displays the results of NOAA’s “Economic Assessment of Green Infrastructure Strategies for Climate Change Adaptation,” a study for the city of Toledo, which estimated a potential $700,000 economic benefit of green infrastructure through property damage reductions over 20 years.

Science Services used FEMA’s Hazus-MH software with local property tax data to estimate damage results for several flood scenarios. By placing the results of this study in a web-based mapping environment, the Visualizer allows city officials to evaluate damages incurred at individual properties, overlay contextual data sets, and integrate the findings of the report in planning decisions without the use of specialized mapping software.

The application also allows users to export data in a variety of eye-catching, customizable graphs. By presenting the data in multiple formats, the tool effectively engages users, communicates the data, and demonstrates the benefits of green infrastructure. Additionally, the Visualizer supports continued planning, allowing the user to download the underlying data, and connects them to additional resources, such as the Great Lakes Coastal Resilience Planning Guide. Through this unified approach to conceptualizing flood risk, the Visualizer supports responsible flood management strategies necessary to secure the economic viability of Toledo.
Dan Accurti Reflects on His Years with ASFPM, and How that Involvement Enhanced Him and His Career

After many years of feeling like I was closely involved in the mechanics of ASFPM operations, I find myself somewhat on the outside looking in. Certainly my retirement and growth in the Executive Office have contributed to this, and it’s understandable. I’ve had many intertwined thoughts running through my mind recently (clearly retirement provides a surplus of time), and decided to organize them into a written, cohesive narrative. Why am I sharing this with you? I guess you can call it: ASFPM – My Story: A Historical Perspective. I am certainly not presenting this to be vain (or to display my talents as a frustrated novelist), but rather to document my ASFPM involvement over time.

This year will mark 32 years of continuous volunteer service to ASFPM. That’s half of my life, or all of my adult life. Not surprisingly, ASFPM became important in my life. I recall many years ago Larry Larson bemusing why folks tended to hang around and continue to assist ASFPM long after their assignment or term of office expired. I think the answer is that ASFPM offered participants the opportunity to become involved in a dynamic much larger than their normal life or daily job provided – and along with that, the personal satisfaction derived from their efforts. Not wanting to lose that euphoric feeling, ASFPM unintentionally managed to create a nationwide family of FPM practitioners willing to do whatever ASFPM requested – in essence, a nationwide professional family. Let me explain this in terms of my personal involvement.

The year is 1982. Working with the NFIP for about 10 years, I was granted permission to attend my first out-of-state conference: ASFPM in Madison. I have many warm memories of that conference, but perhaps for what FPM purists will surely think are all the wrong reasons. For example: experiencing the exotic beers Wisconsin offered (pre-craft beer world of today), filling my bathtub with as many different brands as I could find, and partaking of them as often as time permitted. Or several long nights at the Mustang Bar with a FEMA staffer drinking “Old Style.” Or hoping that airport security did not confiscate all the beer in my carry-on luggage (pre-911).

At that time, the association was only a gleam in Larry’s eye. More properly, it was affectionately known as the “Midwest Mafia,” reflecting on its origin – and then true operations. The technical conference – successful as it was – was used as a platform to attract a truly national audience, and was the genesis of what is ASFPM today. In between technical sessions, regional “caucuses” were held to solicit input from around the country. I arrived late, having been experiencing the aforementioned exotic elixirs in my room. When upon my arrival at the caucus, Margie Whilden (MD) was addressing the group, advising that she was the only attendee from Region 3. I pointed out that I, too, was from Region 3. After identifying myself and my state, Margie stated that she would become treasurer and I would inherit the “regional representative,” (now regional director – more on the name change later). I knew little about ASFPM, but upon returning home had the obligation to tell...
my boss – who did not believe in joining anything – of my new “national” position. That was my introduction to ASFPM. I held this position 1982-1984. I do vividly remember that Larry arranged a conference luncheon speaker, Professor Von Schloscher, who rattled on about how Germany lost the war due to bad floodplain management: their tanks rusted in the floodplain of the Rhine. It was a total spoof, but French Wetmore had taken meticulous notes before he figured out it was a joke!

Advance to 1983, and the Sacramento conference. I felt a little more at ease with the association, but not much. I believe this marks the beginning of my efforts to concentrate on the mechanics of transforming an excellent group of FPM thinkers and tinkerers into a true and functional organization. At that time, our newsletter was a single-page, plain white paper document produced, copied and distributed courtesy of the state of Wisconsin (probably unknowingly, so I hope the statute of limitations has expired). I spoke up, admonishing that if we were to become a true national organization, our newsletter was its means to publicize our existence and our philosophy. It had to stand out among the reams of plain white paper piling up in recipients’ in-boxes. I was promptly appointed to a task force to address this issue. However, since I was the only member, the task was greatly simplified. What I mocked-up was a multi-page document on grey-toned paper that I called, “News & Views.” The title, masthead, internal layout and even paper shade were immediately adopted and still used basically unchanged today (without the paper).

It’s now 1984, and I was elected treasurer (much to the amusement of my wife, who wouldn’t let me anywhere near a checkbook). I recall inheriting a large ledger book from Margie with multiple pages containing columns of information that was not entered. Since large operating reserves were a wishful thing, the book was a paper exercise at best. However, we did manage to amass some operating cash and I opened our first investment account: I think it was only a $1,000 money market with Dean Witter, but it was a start. The treasurer at that time actually wrote the actual checks and paid association bills. I held this position 1984-1986.

While serving as treasurer, I also served as the 1986 conference director for the Pittsburgh conference. Please permit a moment of personal satisfaction, because I truly believe that conference set the tone for all future ASFPM conferences, as well as set the stage for the meteoric growth of ASFPM. To put this in context, one must look at the mechanics of all past conferences. First, the flyer advising of the upcoming event was an 8.5x11 page that was tri-folded. This was retooled into a 12-page brochure with significantly more content. Second, past conferences were actually two events: the technical conference, and then the association work meetings. I merged the

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**Readers Reactions**

after seeing the “Accurti Treatise”

“You have truly explained why some of us old farts hang around long past the time we should be ‘put out to pasture’ and keep coming back for more abuse. All I can say is, I really enjoyed the trip down memory lane.” —Mark Riebau

“Dan hit the nail on the head with the comment on the Pittsburgh conference— ‘It was the social activities that kept them coming back.’ We all joined ASFPM for the professional benefits, but we can’t quit, even after retirement, because of the social activities and the personal contacts we’ve made. Long after Chad and his generation have used new technology we don’t understand and dealt with new issues we never thought about, we’ll still come back to the conferences and stay in touch with old friends. Here’s to a bathtub of beer in Atlanta!” —French Wetmore.

“Likewise I enjoy the memories, especially when my name and young are associated in the same sentence!” —Doug Plasencia.

“Dan is correct—once involved with ASFPM one is ‘hooked’ forever.” —A.J. Brown.

“Dan your reflections are very astute...Thank goodness for ASFPM, Diane, Larry and Chad, we have the future to hope for.” —Ken Morris.
two into one cohesive event where ASFPM was front and present for all to see. Third, past events were held in cities with greater mass appeal. There was a fear that people would not flock to Pittsburgh. That fear propelled an effort to see that all attendees would walk away with a positive attitude of Pittsburgh and of ASFPM. I booked the Hilton Hotel on the confluence of the three great rivers in the city during the city’s Three Rivers Arts Festival – ensuring that attendees would have thousands of people milling about at all times. I also arranged conference activities every night, further ensuring that attendees would not have time to be bored. That tradition, I think, has become a hallmark of ASFPM. I recall a conversation with French, during which he stated that the conference technical agenda was what prompted people to attend. I agreed, but stated that it was the social activities that kept them coming back. I truly believe that we created such a buzz when attendees returned to their offices discussing what a great time was had, that ASFPM was launched on a growth path. With conference attendees numbering in the three digits, we certainly needed something to draw the crowds. By the way, the conference had 300 attendees – a record draw at that time, and it generated a substantial amount of income.

Another first at that conference: I tasked Mark Riebau as our first exhibit director. Mark was responsible for the “pipe and drape” exhibits we have come to expect at our conferences. The revenue generated from exhibits allowed ASFPM to accrue the cash reserves that eventually propelled our growth. Also, I think it was the first conference to actively solicit co-sponsors. There were three, and the total sum rather paltry, but it was never the less a start.

Pittsburgh was also the first conference attended by those who would become future leaders of ASFPM. George Hosek and Wally Wilson are just two. George still remarks about the Welcome Fest in the Presidential Suite of the hotel where I filled the bathtubs with beer (I don’t think George moved from that room all night). Personally, I find it rewarding the number of people who still tell me about their personal experience at that conference.

The Pittsburgh conference was the start of what became my primary area of focus: conferences. I served in an advisory capacity as well as future conference roles, as elaborated on below.

NOTE: while the following is not an ASFPM-related event, I think it bears mentioning. In 1987 and still basking in the success of the Pittsburgh conference, we decided to host a Floodplain Management Symposium in Pennsylvania. We held the event at Penn State University, with an obvious Pennsylvania audience in mind. I recall that in a break after speaking, a bright young man introduced himself to me advising that he had traveled from Maricopa County, AZ. I was stunned, obviously. That young man: Doug Plasencia.

It’s now 1987 and I was just elected as chair, despite running on the “anybody but me” platform. I was following in the shoes of French Wetmore, the patron saint of floodplain managers, whose shoes I couldn’t ever hope to fill. There were numerous new things initiated during my tenure, all aimed at improving the internal operations of ASFPM. To name a few:

- Initiating a by-law change that opened any member to serve in an elected position, with the exception of chair, vice chair, secretary or treasurer (all state-only offices)
- The launching of the Administrative Council
- The launching of “The Insider”
- Changing the title from “regional representative” to “regional director” to more reflect national status (if FEMA had them, we could too).

I held this position 1987-1989.

1989, I think, was also the year I assumed the position of awards moderator – a function I perform to this day. If my memory is correct, 2014 will mark 25 years – a quarter century – of doing what I so enjoy.

1991 was the year I assumed the role of exhibit coordinator. For 21 years I oversaw the growth in this segment of the annual conference—in the number of exhibitors and the associated revenue growth. I held this position from 1991-2011, when the function was absorbed into the ASFPM Executive Office.
In 1997, I was appointed to a position of trustee for the newly formed ASFPM Foundation (the fruition of a long-standing Wally Wilson goal – the Foundation, not me). I served in this position until 2012, and currently serve on the Foundation’s Advisory Board.

There were other functions I performed over the years, as well as a few other accomplishments to which I can claim ownership, and I think this body of work helped make ASFPM administratively what it is today. I’m sure that to most of our members I’m just seen as some old geezer at the podium, but I can only hope that many years into the future someone else will be writing a treatise such as this.

The association has afforded me the opportunity to make many life-long friends and acquaintances from across the nation, as well as the opportunity to associate with some of the leading FPM leaders and forces in the country. That kind of exposure cannot be bought, regardless of price. For that, I’m deeply indebted. The opportunity afforded for enhancing my presentation skills, as well as honing my public relations skills, were unprecedented. Lastly, for the opportunity to freely suggest and implement operational policies and procedures that advanced ASFPM as an organization, there can be no greater measure of personal satisfaction. It’s been a long road to travel, but I never regretted a moment of the journey.

I’m not saying good-bye – although this sounds that way. Just clearing my head of all the stuff floating around up there.

New Year’s Resolution:

Take a fresh look at the 1994 recommendation and action items from Ret. Brigadier Gen. Gerald Galloway's "Sharing the Challenge: Floodplain Management into the 21st Century." This report was commissioned by President Clinton after the 1993 Great Midwest floods, and it’s a guide ASFPM leadership still refer to today:

http://www.floods.org/PDF/Sharing_the_Challenge.pdf

Floodplain Management Training Calendar

For a full nationwide listing of floodplain management-related training opportunities, visit ASFPM Online Event Calendar. Looking for training opportunities to earn CECs for your CFM? Check out our event calendar with LOTS of training opportunities listed for 2014! Search the calendar by state using the directions below, or use the category drop down menu to search by event category. Go to the calendar and click on the search feature icon at the top of the calendar. Type your state’s initials in parenthesis (for example (WI)) into the search field and it will pull all the events that are currently listed on the calendar for your state. The only events without a state listed in the event title are EMI courses, which are listed with their FEMA course number and are all held in Emmitsburg, MD.

Job Corner

Visit ASFPM Job Corner for up-to-date job listings. Have a job opening you’d like to post? It’s free!
Deputy Director – Operations Report – Ingrid Danler

An environmental conscience is hard to put on vacation.

Like many of you, the holiday season was filled with travel. This year, my family and I decided on a two-week, old-fashioned road trip that took us through multiple states and along about 20 percent of the US coastlines. I can see that I trained my (almost adult) children well, as the car games became pointing out dams, levees, building in marginal areas, bridges over wetlands, waterlines on buildings, and mitigated structures.

With every passing mile, it became starkly obvious that as we strive to build amidst the beauty that our country provides, we have also managed to destroy much of its beauty in the process, as well as putting our population at severe risk. It was a vivid reminder why I, and I know many of you, chose this profession. Our expertise, skills, passion and voices need to be heard. We need to teach and we need to demonstrate. And we have never been more in demand.

Here at the ASFPM headquarters, January begins our busy period as we ramp up on membership, CFM renewals, and prep for the annual conference, this year in Atlanta, May 31 - June 5. We are thrilled to welcome about 1,300 of the best and brightest around the country as we all learn, hover over laptops in every inch of the convention center and exhibit hall, and shake hands with our federal and state counterparts that we rarely get to meet in person.

Leadership also begins planning for the next fiscal year that begins July 1. With tasks to present and approve an annual budget, Annual Goals & Objectives, and build teams to complete and move forward annual committee workplans, the board will be here in February and CBOR will be meeting in March, to get this done. Elections will be underway beginning with nominations in February as well, so don’t forget to renew your membership before Feb. 1, or you will not be eligible to nominate or vote for your representatives. A huge shout-out to our volunteer leadership. Without their vision and work, our association would not be the 16,000 member-strong organization it is today.

2015 promises to be a bright year!

Best,

Example of coastal development from my hotel room in Florida.
FEMA Announces New Leadership at FIMA
Ed Conner is Senior Counselor for FIMA, and Brad Kieserman is Deputy Associate Administrator for FIMA. Read the Jan. 22 press release here.

Updated Fee Schedule for FEMA Flood Map Related Products
FEMA has published a Federal Register Notice announcing an updated fee schedule for processing certain map change requests to National Flood Insurance Program maps, requests for Flood Insurance Study (FIS) technical and administrative support data, and requests for particular NFIP map and insurance products. Read the press release here.

FEMA Seeks Applicants for National Advisory Council
FEMA is asking experienced individuals who are interested in serving on the National Advisory Council to apply. All applications must be received by 5 p.m. ET on Feb. 16, 2015. Click here for details.

FEMA Introducing a New Data Visualization Tool
FEMA introduced a new interactive tool Jan. 7 that allows the public to explore currently-available FEMA grant data. On the site, you will be able to see a visual representation of federal grant data as it relates to fire, preparedness, mitigation and public assistance. The tool also visualizes disaster declarations by state, hazard and county. The tool is in BETA because FEMA is looking for comments on how to improve it. Email your feedback to: fema-new-media@fema.dhs.gov. FEMA will continue to add data and update the visual based on feedback in the coming months. The OpenFEMA data used in the visualization were derived from the publicly available datasets on fema.gov and data.gov. According to the press release, FEMA is committed to updating these existing datasets in a timely manner and as feasible, to provide new datasets for our external partners to manipulate and use. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact FEMA’s Intergovernmental Affairs Division at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov.

Visualize Flood Risk with FloodSmart’s Flood Risk Scenarios Tool
The consequences of a flood can be devastating to families, businesses, finances, and the overall health of a community. And because floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States—in fact, all 50 states have experienced flooding in the last five years—it’s a safe bet that most people and communities are at risk of flooding in the near future. The free Flood Risk Scenarios Tool available on FloodSmart.gov demonstrates that anywhere it can rain, it can flood. FloodSmart is the marketing and education campaign of the National Flood Insurance Program.
This tool demonstrates the different risk scenarios in which a flood can occur.

- **Snowmelt** is a common cause of flooding during the winter and early spring months. During these times, large amounts of runoff cannot be absorbed into the frozen ground. The water accumulates into lakes, streams, and rivers, causing excess water to spill over banks.
- **Flash floods** are the most common severe weather emergency. A flash flood is caused by intense rainfall from one or more downpours, and can also be caused by the collapse of a man-made structure, such as a levee or dam.
- Construction and **new development** can change the natural drainage patterns in areas around buildings, parking lots, and roads, meaning less land is available to absorb excess water.
- **Dams** and **levees** also pose a flood risk. While these structures assist in the prevention of flooding, there are instances when it can still occur. Dams can become jammed with debris or fail with the build-up of water pressure—or they can weaken over time and crack or collapse altogether. Levees can also be overtopped or breeched.
- **Tropical storms, hurricanes**, and **Nor’easters** can bring several inches of precipitation in just hours. These heavy rains can lead to severe flooding by oversaturating the ground, overfilling storm drains, or causing rivers to spill over their banks or levees.

All of these examples are demonstrated in the Flood Risk Scenarios Tool and can help residents understand the many ways they may be at risk. Since floods can happen anywhere that it can rain, it’s important that everyone is financially protected from the dangers of floodwaters. Flood insurance is available to residents and business owners in high- and moderate- to low-risk areas. And because most policies take up to 30 days to go into effect, the time to act is now.

For anyone interested in using this tool, it easily can be embedded into websites. This tool, in addition to other resources, are available at FloodSmart.gov, and are a great way educate communities about flood risks and residents about the need to purchase flood insurance.

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**Flood Insurance Committee Corner**

### Primary or Principal Residence...or Both?

As we’ve mentioned before, FEMA will implement a host of changes to the flood insurance program starting April 1. April policy renewals will be going out in February, which means you may start getting calls from policyholders about these changes. One particular change is the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act (HFIAA) surcharge. The surcharge was put into place when Congress rolled back/slowed down the pace for removing subsidized premiums on pre-FIRM policies through HFIAA. Starting April 1, new and renewed policies for single-family primary residences or individual condominium units (or apartments in non-condos used as a primary residence) will include a $25 surcharge. Policies for all other buildings will include a $250 surcharge. This surcharge is independent on what flood zone it is in, so even Preferred Risk Policies will get hit with a $25 or $250 surcharge, depending on the building’s use.
So, what is a primary residence and how will the agent and WYO know what it is, especially since current primary residence questions asked by agents only have been used to distinguish between primary and secondary pre-FIRM residences for rating? And how is that different than a principal residence? Great questions. But let’s see if we can keep this column to one page!

Starting with the renewals of all residential policies not yet determined to be primary (e.g., post-FIRM residences and those in B, C, or X zones), the WYO (or insurance agent) will be requesting documentation that the residential property is primary and eligible for the $25 surcharge. FEMA lists six items as acceptable evidence (e.g., driver’s license, auto or voter registration, homestead tax credit). If none of those are available, they will now accept a signed and dated statement that the insured and/or spouse live there for more than 50 percent of the 365 days following the policy effective date (the definition of primary). An example letter and verification form that WYOs will use can be found in Appendix C of the April 2015 WYO Bulletin (issued October 2014). Note that if the agent/WYO don’t receive a response within 30 days of sending out the letter, it will be renewed with a $250 surcharge.

Before proceeding to the principal residence discussion, here is where a negative impact may occur with this surcharge. Take a PRP policyholder who understood they were at risk, though not in a high-risk area, and got a PRP for their vacation home (or rental) near the lake/coast/river. For $200,000/$80,000 in building/contents coverage, they paid $390 last May. Now, at renewal this May, they will pay $630. So, will they now think twice about renewing it since they are not required to carry it? What will this surcharge do to the NFIP’s policy count? We will be watching it and want to hear your experiences out in the field.

So, how is principal residence different than primary residence? Principal residence definition is used to determine how to pay a flood claim. Principal residence building claims are paid at Replacement Cost, while non-principal residence building claims are paid at Actual Cash Value (ACV), which are paid based on the depreciated value (note that all flood claims on contents are paid ACV). So, here’s the definition: A single-family dwelling in which, at the time of loss, the named insured or the named insured’s spouse has lived for either 80 percent of the 365 days immediately preceding the loss, or 80 percent of the period of ownership, if less than 365 days. So a primary residence (50 percent + occupancy) can still not qualify to be a principal residence (80 percent). Confused? Send us a note!

--Your Humble Insurance Committee Co-Chairs

Bruce Bender and John Gerber & Liaison Gary Heinrichs

This column is produced by the ASFPM Insurance Committee. Send questions about flood insurance issues to InsuranceCorner@floods.org and they will be addressed in future “Insider” issues.

Grant Opps…

Grant opportunities are being offered from the National Science Foundation for “Interdisciplinary Research in Hazards and Disasters.” Click here for the listings.

Just a reminder to bookmark the Florida Climate Institute’s website for a comprehensive list of funding opportunities. It’s a fabulous resource.

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Mitigation on my Mind!
ASFPM’s 39th Annual National Conference
May 31-June 5, 2015

We’re just four months away from the year’s most comprehensive floodplain management training and networking opportunity! Make your plans now to attend “Mitigation on my Mind” at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. Registration will be open and available on the conference website by the middle of February. Need a hotel room? No need to wait – the room block is currently open and accepting reservations. Visit www.asfpmconference.org for more information.

Did you submit an abstract or workshop proposal for consideration in the program? Notifications have now been distributed, so double check your email for details. The preliminary program will be posted on the event website in conjunction with registration mid-February.

If your firm or organization is interested in high-level exposure at this conference, be sure to check out sponsorship opportunities. The ASFPM annual national conference is THE place to engage your stakeholders and clients. Contact Chad Ross at chad@floods.org for more information. We look forward to welcoming you to Atlanta!

Coastal GeoTools 2015
The preliminary program and registration options are now available. This will be the best opportunity to share your geospatial expertise and network with your peers from all sectors. If your firm or organization is looking to increase the impact of your participation, there are exhibitor and sponsor opportunities available as well. Get full details on the conference website at www.coastalgeotools.org.
What’s happening around the nation?

A collection of the most viewed stories on our Facebook page

Michigan
Rethinking a floodwall in Grand Rapids, MI: Imagine taking out a stretch of concrete floodwall and replacing it with a stepped embankment that people could go up and down to launch a kayak or just splash around when water levels are low. When the river floods, water would rise and submerge the steps. But the water would be hemmed in by the embankment in a kind of riverside holding tank. Read the article here.

Tennessee
Gaylord Entertainment Company's pursuit of more than $250 million in damages it incurred from the 2010 flood is looking bleak now that the US Court of Appeals has ruled in favor of the Middle District of Tennessee's primary ruling. Read the article here.

Washington, DC
Former FEMA director writes op-ed piece in The Hill saying, "Pre-storm mitigation is key to cutting damage and costs." Read the full column here.

The Nation
Fires. Floods. Storms. Hurricanes. Volcanoes. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has declared more than 3,000 disasters since 1953, covering the gamut of large-scale calamities ranging from tornadoes to terrorism, and everything in between. And a Washington Post reporter compiled all that data into an interactive map, which can be viewed here.

Pennsylvania
More accurate floodplain maps are seen as one outcome of a new state law bringing greater oversight to use of geospatial information systems data. The law, which took effect recently, creates a state advisory board to coordinate geospatial information systems now used by state and local governments and academic institutions. The story, “Mapping Law Could Aid Flood Planning,” can be read here.
Chapter Renewals Overdue – Don’t Let your Chapter Benefits Lapse!

Happy New Year! A friendly reminder- 2015 Chapter Renewals were due December 31, 2014. If your chapter has not yet renewed, please be sure to get your renewal paperwork and payment to Kait@floods.org to avoid a lapse in your chapter benefits. You don’t want to miss out on any of the good things happening in 2015! If you have questions, give Kait a call at (608) 828-6325.

SAVE THE DATE

Chapters Web Meeting (Call) is at 1 p.m. CDT, March 20.
All Chapter Board and Committee members are invited to participate.
Please contact Kait at kait@floods.org to submit agenda items & RSVP.

Upcoming 2015 ASFPM Webinars

Implementation & Impacts of Flood Insurance Reform Legislation
PRESENTERS: Bruce A. Bender, CFM; Chad Berginnis, CFM, ASFPM
Friday, February 6, 2015
1:30pm – 3:00pm Central Time
(Starting at 2:30pm ET, 12:30pm MT, 11:30am PT)
1 CEC for CFMs

Nonstructural Flood Proofing Techniques for At-Risk Development
PRESENTER: Randall Behm, P.E., CFM, USACE, Omaha District
Thursday, February 12, 2015
1:00pm – 2:30pm Central Time
(Starting at 2pm ET, 12pm MT, 11am PT)
1 CEC for CFMs

Finding that Base Flood Elevation (BFE)! Tools and Techniques for Determining BFES
PRESENTER: Brian Varrella, P.E., CFM, Forum V Consulting
Friday, March 27, 2015
1:00pm – 2:30pm Central Time
(Starting at 2pm ET, 12pm MT, 11am PT)
1 CEC for CFMs

Lender Based Flood Zone Determinations: Essentials for Floodplain Managers
PRESENTERS: Michael Bremer, CFM; Scott Giberson, CFM; & Leila Taha, National Flood Determination Association (NFDA)
Thursday, April 16, 2015
1:00pm – 2:30pm Central Time
(Starting at 2:00pm ET, 12:00pm MT, 11:00am PT)
1 CEC for CFMs
CFM® Corner

This section will appear in each issue of “The Insider.” For suggestions on specific topics or questions to be covered, please send an email anita@floods.org. The email for certification questions is cfm@floods.org.

Keeping us updated - Please remember to notify cfm@floods.org when you move. CFM renewals and other certification-related mailed material is sent to your HOME ADDRESS. Also, make sure we always have your current employment information and correct email address.

CFM Renewal 1/31/2015 - ASFPM CFMs who are up for their biennial CFM® certification renewal Jan. 31, 2015 have been sent a letter and renewal form via snail mail. If you did not received yours in the mail, please contact cfm@floods.org so your CFM does not lapse.

CFMs- View your submitted CECs online
As a reminder, ASFPM CFMs who are current ASFPM members can log onto the members site and view their certification file for continuing education credits (CECs). This site shows how many CECs the person has earned, what year the CECs were earned, and the type of CECs (Core or Parallel). If you have problems logging on or have questions about your CECs, email cfm@floods.org.

Awards Nominations sought for ASFPM 2015 Conference
Deadline is March 1

Join the stars who have received national recognition over the years for doing the right thing and doing it well. Below are the award categories for excellence in floodplain management. Click here for details on the awards you can submit for worthy programs, projects, and people.

- Tom Lee State Award for Excellence
- James Lee Witt Local Award for Excellence
- Larry R. Johnston Local Floodplain Manager of the Year
- John Sheaffer Floodproofing Award
- Media Outreach Award
- Louthain Award for Distinguished Service
- Meritorious Lifetime Achievement in FPM Award

Help us showcase the many successes across the country! Simply go to the ASFPM awards nomination page at www.floods.org/awards/nomination.asp and submit the information online. Make sure you get it in by the March 1 deadline. It is highly recommended that you provide applicable letters of support for your nomination. Send those to Diane Brown at diane@floods.org. She can also answer your questions about the process or categories by calling (608) 828-6324. Winners will be notified in April to allow time to make travel arrangements.
Nick Winter Memorial Scholarship Fund for College Students
Deadline: April 1, 2015

ASFPM and the ASFPM Foundation will grant a $2,500 scholarship for the 2015-16 academic year to a full-time college junior or senior currently enrolled in an undergraduate program related to floodplain/stormwater management, or a student enrolled in a graduate program in a field related to floodplain/stormwater management. Eligible applicants include current undergraduates in a four-year college program, applicants to a graduate program, or current graduate students. Applicants must be enrolled in an accredited university or college in the U.S. and be a U.S. citizen. Eligible fields of discipline include civil or environmental engineering, planning, emergency management, environmental sciences, or other disciplines with a demonstrable link to floodplain and stormwater management.

Applicants must complete a Scholarship Application Form. Selection preference will be given to those applicants who demonstrate a history of civic or volunteer service, as well as a financial need (i.e. full-time students responsible for their own tuition), in addition to meeting the basic qualifications. In order to be considered, the Scholarship Review Committee must receive the application form and a separate reference letter by April 1, 2015. Scholarship funds will be paid directly to the recipient’s university.

Applications and reference letter should be sent electronically to diane@floods.org. For additional questions, contact Diane Brown at (608) 828-6324.

ASFPM Foundation information is available on the website: http://www.asfpmfoundation.org/

And don’t forget about ASFPM Foundation’s 5th Annual Collegiate Student Paper Competition

The three lucky winners of this competition receive travel assistance to present their papers at the association’s annual conference, which will be in Atlanta this year. Cash prizes are also awarded following the presentations. The deadline for the application and abstract is Jan. 31. Click here for more details and to see past winners.

2014 Competitors, Pictured L-R: Grant Livingston, Oregon State University, 1st place; Kristin Vitro, University of Washington, 2nd place; Francesca White, University of Washington, 3rd place.
Technical Mapping Advisory Council Develops Plan of Action

Technical Mapping Advisory Council members developing a game plan at the meeting in December. Photo credit: Chad Berginnis.

TMAC members, which include many ASFPM members, including Leslie Durham, Scott Edelman and Sally McConkey, met in December for their second face-to-face meeting. The main purpose of the two-day meeting was to discuss the legislative requirements for the Council, and to hear presentations related to the FEMA national flood program, including those on: (1) overall flood management process and components; (2) data acquisitions, maintenance and dissemination; (3) future conditions risk to insurance rating; (4) database, mapping, and digital display; (5) risk assessment and mapping; (6) key decision points; (7) engineering/study production (riverine; levee; coastal); (8) current and future possibilities; and (9) examples of next generation flood risk management.

ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis was one of those presenters. He discussed how delegating responsibilities and authority to state and local partners will continue to play a significant role in the success of mapping, noting that FEMA will never have enough resources to adequately complete all flood mapping activities.

He encouraged the TMAC to consider how delegating might be used to successfully achieve FEMA’s mapping goals and suggested that while the FEMA Coopertating Technical Partners program does accomplish some program goals, it is not true delegation. Specifically, he cited the Clean Air Act, noting how the structure of that program requires states to carry out federal program objectives. Delegated programs have three basic elements including sufficient legal (enabling) authority, program procedures, and funding. He said a FEMA mapping model could have three different levels of delegation: basic (non-delegated), intermediate to include the CTP program where partners assist with mapping activities, and advanced, where a program is fully delegated.

Berginnis said that at the advanced level (full delegation), FEMA’s primary role would be to set standards, monitor and enforce the standards, and provide technical assistance and coordination. Each level of delegation provides its own unique benefits, including having certainty for long-term planning and creating efficiencies.

He completed his presentation by outlining next steps that the Council and/or FEMA may wish to consider as it reforms flood mapping programs. Berginnis suggested the Council seek legal advice to determine whether the Congressional charge alone for the council to recommend procedures for delegating activities to state and local mapping partners constitutes sufficient enabling authority to delegate elements or the entire mapping program.
TMAC members also developed a five-step process in order to have a report with their recommendations completed by Oct. 1, 2015. The first step was the “kick off” meeting, which they were currently holding, and dividing into subcommittees to tackle the tasks. The other steps are as follows: (2) develop a plan of what the TMAC wishes to accomplish; (3) conduct information gathering, leveraging outside expertise if needed; (4) develop a report that consists of annotated mark-ups, beginning as a detailed table of contents with page allocations and potential graphics; and (5) develop report drafts and the final submission.

ASFPM will keep you informed of future news and information regarding TMAC.

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**It’s never too early to prepare for the soon-to-be-announced 2015 annual Hazard Mitigation Assistance grants**

The Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs are designed to provide funding to protect life and property from future natural disasters, and can be a key component of your community’s flood loss reduction efforts. Currently, there are two programs offered nationwide annually:

- **Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM)** provides funds for hazard mitigation planning and projects on an annual basis. Funds are available to address all hazards.
- **Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)** provides funds for projects to reduce or eliminate risk of flood damage to buildings that are insured under the National Flood Insurance Program on an annual basis.

Eligible flood mitigation project types include acquisition and demolition or relocation, elevation, flood-proofing, and stormwater management, and others. For a full list of eligible project types, you can look at last year’s program [guidance](#).

For FY15, ASFPM believes that that FEMA will try to use a similar grant application/award cycle as last year, which means that the application period could open March-April, with full project applications due in the June-July timeframe, and project selection occurring by the end of September. Of course the 2015 availability of funds is entirely dependent on Congress passing a budget for FEMA, which has not yet been done. Any significant delay in Congress passing a FEMA budget will impact the grant application timeline.

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*Elevated homes in Branson, MO. Photo credit: Diane Brown.*
However, ASFPM is encouraged that there may be significant funding for the FMA program and lesser funding for the PDM program.

This means that time is of the essence, because communities will only have about 60 days to submit an application once the announcement has been made. So if you’re thinking about applying, getting your document ready now would be a great investment of your time. So what can you do to prepare?

REVIEW your local mitigation plan to get some project ideas that may have been previously identified. Also, solicit ideas and interest from community officials and other organizations. Eligible, cost-effective projects from previous years that were not funded might also be good candidates. Finally, mitigating repetitive loss structures is not only a priority for the FMA program, but such projects may be eligible for a more favorable federal cost-share.

ENSURE you are getting program notifications and information from your state hazard mitigation office and/or state floodplain management office (in some states the FMA program is administered by the state floodplain management office) about the upcoming funding cycle. Also, be aware of internal state deadlines for applications and take advantage of any training the state may be offering.

OBTAIN the latest training and tools you will need to develop a project application. For example, all projects need to be cost effective. Last year FEMA updated the Benefit-Cost Analysis Toolkit (version 5.0) to include an automatic calculator for certain environmental benefits. Alternatively, FEMA has already pre-calculated benefits for elevation or acquisition projects to reduce the administrative burden associated with developing a project. Also, the Emergency Management Institute offers an HMA Project Application Development course E212. It is being offered next March 2-5, 2015. For course information click here.
A Brand New Congress Gear-ing Up – the 114th Congress

Well, they’re BACK – with many new senators and house members, a changed majority party in the Senate and a much larger Republican majority in the House.

In the House and Senate, all committees and subcommittees will now be chaired by Republicans and committee membership ratios will be adjusted to include more Republicans than Democrats. Republican committee staffs will grow and Democratic staffs will shrink.

The major issue claiming congressional attention during the first weeks of the 114th Congress is the appropriations bill funding the Department of Homeland Security for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2015. It is the only federal agency not funded for the entire fiscal year in the “Cromnibus” appropriations measure enacted in December (PL 113-235). Instead, DHS is operating under a Continuing Resolution that expires Feb. 27. The House of Representatives passed a DHS appropriations bill (HR 240) Jan. 14 and the measure is awaiting Senate action.

The President’s proposed budget for FY16 will be released Feb. 2. This kicks off the season of appropriations subcommittee hearings to examine federal agency budget requests.

A House subcommittee has already held a hearing on the increasing costs of disasters and a joint House-Senate hearing is scheduled for Feb. 4 on impacts of the Environmental Protection Agency’s proposed rule on Waters of the US.

Committees

During January, committees have been holding organizational meetings to establish rules for the conduct of business and to agree to tentative agendas. Most, but not all, have completed that process as the end of the month approaches.

In the Senate, committee and subcommittee chairs and ranking minority members of particular interest to floodplain managers are as follows:
Chair
Ranking Minority Member

Appropriations
Thad Cochran (R-MS) Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Lamar Alexander (R-TN) Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
John Hoeven (R-ND) Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)
Subcommittee on Interior & Environment
Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) Tom Udall (D-NM)

Banking (NFIP)
Richard Shelby (R-AL) Sherrod Brown (D-OH)

Environment and Public Works (Corps of Engineers Operations and Programs)
James Inhofe (R-OK) Barbara Boxer (D-CA)

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (FEMA Operations and Programs)
Ron Johnson (R-WI) Tom Carper (D-DE)

(New) Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight & Emergency Mgt.
Rand Paul (R-KY) Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)

In the House:

Appropriations
Harold Rogers (R-KY) Nita Lowey (D-NY)
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Mike Simpson (R-ID) Marcy Kaptur (D-OH)
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
John Carter (R-TX) Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA)
Subcommittee on Interior and Environment
Ken Calvert (R-CA) Betty McCollum (D-MN)

Financial Services (NFIP)
Jeb Hensarling (R-TX) Maxine Waters (D-CA)
Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance
Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO) Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO)

Homeland Security (FEMA Operations and Programs)
Michael McCaul (R-TX) Bennie Thompson (D-MS)
**Transportation and Infrastructure** (Corps of Engineers Operations and Programs)

Bill Shuster R-PA) Peter DeFazio (D-OR)

Subcommittee on Econ. Development, Public Buildings & Emergency Management

Lou Barletta (R-PA) Andre Carson (D-IN)
Subcommittee on Water Resources
Bob Gibbs (R-OH) Grace Napolitano (D-CA)

Of particular note, the organizational and agenda notes for the House T&I Committee’s Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management include the following:

“The Subcommittee intends to initiate a comprehensive review and assessment of how federal disaster assistance has evolved over the past several decades and its continued effectiveness. The purpose is to examine how and why disaster declarations and spending have increased, which agencies provide assistance and how that money is spent, what guidance or controls are in place for the effective use of assistance, and what the appropriate role for the federal government is.”

**Budget and Appropriations**

The President’s budget request for FY16 is to be released Feb. 2. Shortly thereafter, House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees will begin to hold hearings in which federal agency officials explain their budget requests. Meanwhile, the House and Senate Budget Committees will begin to formulate their budget resolutions, which will then form the basis for allocating budget ceilings to each Appropriations Subcommittee.

Leadership in the House and Senate hope to complete action on the DHS appropriations bill for FY15 (HR 240) before the Continuing Resolution (CR) expires Feb. 27. The House took early action on the measure in anticipation of delays in the Senate because the Senate is engaged in lengthy consideration of the XL Keystone Pipeline legislation. The House, however, did adopt five amendments to the measure related to the President’s announced policy on immigration. Those amendments are likely to cause some complications during Senate consideration.

**Hearings**

**Disaster Costs**: A hearing on the rising costs of disasters and appropriate policies to reduce those costs was held Jan. 27 by the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Subcommittee Chairman Lou Barletta (R-PA) said in his opening statement, “The purpose of today’s hearing is to launch a public policy debate about the growing human and financial costs of disasters and to review if we — as a nation- are responding in the most appropriate and cost-effective way.” He indicated that his top priorities for the 114th Congress are public buildings reform and disaster legislation.

The chairman announced a series of roundtable discussions on disaster costs and policies with the first to take place Feb. 26. Those roundtable discussions will consider questions such as: How much do we really spend on disasters? Where is the money going? And what are the key drivers of those cost increases?
How have disaster programs evolved over time? Are they still targeted at the greatest need and are they cost beneficial? What are the principles guiding federal assistance and how it is used to rebuild in the wake of a disaster? How can we bend the growing cost curve and ensure there is less damage and fewer people hurt in the future?

Testifying at the hearing were: Craig Fugate (FEMA administrator), David Paulison (former FEMA administrator), Bryan Koon, (director FL Division of Emergency Management for NEMA), Francis McCarthy (emergency management policy analyst, Congressional Research Service) and Brian Fennessy (San Diego assistant fire chief for emergency operations for International Association of Fire Chiefs). See testimony at www.transportation.house.gov and click on Jan. 27 on the Committee calendar.

Waters of the US

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will hold a joint hearing Feb. 4 at 10 a.m. EDT. The unusual joint hearing is titled, “Impacts of the Proposed Waters of the United States Rule on State and Local Governments.” It will be live streamed and can be found by going to www.transportation.house.gov.

National Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization

While no hearings are on committee agendas at this point, it is important to note that many informal discussions are beginning among stakeholders and others interested in and engaged with the NFIP.

Legislation discussed in this article can be reviewed by going to: www.Congress.gov and typing in the bill number or title.

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This report appears regularly as a member benefit in “The Insider,” ASFPM’s member newsletter produced in the odd months. See ASFPM’s Goals and Objectives for FY15 here.

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