Silver Jackets: Many Partners. One Team.

If you’ve never heard of the Silver Jackets program, we think it should definitely be on your radar. And even if you are familiar with it, you might be surprised by the wide range of projects completed over the years.

Back in the 2000s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and FEMA discussed the need for a more integrated federal/state approach to flood risk management. These discussions resulted in development of the concept of an interagency state-led team that would promote cross collaboration and continuous communication to find interagency solutions in flood risk management.

In 2005 and 2006, two “pilot” Silver Jackets teams were formed in Ohio and Indiana, respectively. In 2008, USACE worked with FEMA to encourage other states to establish Silver Jackets or comparable interagency flood-risk management teams, and ASFPM supported the effort broadly. USACE supports the initiative nationally and funds local USACE employees to participate on each Silver Jackets team.

These state-led teams bring together multiple participants to learn from each other and apply their knowledge to reduce flood risks. A team might include the state floodplain manager, SHMO, Cooperating Technical Partners, emergency managers, water boards, transportation departments, GIS analysts, FEMA, NOAA, NWS, USGS, USACE, EPA, HUD, NRCS, BLM, USFS, tribes, local governments, NGOs and universities.
Ellen Berggren with USACE said during an ASFPM/CTP webinar that the beauty of having all of these different perspectives sitting in the same room, is that there is a more holistic approach to flood risk management, which supports more of a “watershed” perspective.

So far, 49 states and the District of Columbia have Silver Jackets teams (Hawaii doesn’t at this time, but there is an ongoing effort to develop an interagency flood risk management team there). Berggren also said that not every state is called a “Silver Jackets” team, but the cooperative participation to reduce flood risk follows the Silver Jackets approach. No single agency has all the answers, but leveraging multiple programs and perspectives can provide a cohesive solution.

The Silver Jackets program goals are to:

- Facilitate strategic life-cycle flood risk reduction.
- Create or supplement a continuous mechanism to collaboratively solve state-prioritized issues and implement or recommend those solutions.
- Improve processes, identifying and resolving gaps and counteractive programs.
- Leverage and optimize resources.
- Improve and increase flood risk communication and present a unified interagency message.
- Establish close relationships to facilitate integrated post-disaster recovery solutions.

Read the poster summaries of the 142 interagency projects presented at last year’s Interagency Flood Risk Management Workshop in St. Louis, Missouri. Projects can range from providing information for the future modeling of glacier outburst and better delineation of at-risk areas in Alaska, to High Water Mark signage projects, like the recently erected sign in Lawrence, Kansas (shown right), to the Alabama Flood Warning System Enhancement project.

A new high water mark sign is up in Lawrence, Kansas. The signage project is a collaborative effort of the Kansas Dept. of Ag, USACE, Kansas DEM and Silver Jackets. Photo taken by Matt Bond, P.E., CFM, a stormwater engineer for the city of Lawrence, Kansas.
Want to Learn More?


If your state has a Silver Jackets team, click here to contact them and get involved.

Get signed up for the program’s quarterly newsletter called “The Buzz” by sending an email to IWR.SilverJackets@usace.army.mil. Here is its most recent issue.

Silver Jackets also host many webinars and presentations, like this May webinar, “Changes in the Magnitude and Frequency of Riverine Flooding in the United States.” Dr. Robert Hirsch, a research hydrologist for USGS, was the presenter, and the recorded webinar can be heard here.

More examples of Silver Jackets “in action,” from slides provided by Ellen Berggren, USACE, during the August 2017 CTP webinar.
ASFPM Happenings

ASFPM released its detailed priority list of what we want to see in the NFIP Reauthorization April 27. It's short and sweet, but includes some powerful ideas.

ASFPM sent a letter April 20 to the chairman of the Subcommittee on Homeland Security House Committee on Appropriation expressing disappointment in FEMA's Fiscal Year 2019 budget request for flood-risk mapping and pre-disaster mitigation.

ASFPM joined multiple groups in a May 17 letter to show our support of S. 2862 "Promoting Flood Risk Mitigation Act" and the companion bill H.R. 5846. The letter asks for a study of ways to speed up the buyout process for homeowners whose properties have repeatedly flooded. Reducing the nation’s flood risk will help ease the financial burden on the NFIP of repeatedly paying to repair and rebuild at-risk properties.

ASFPM Chair Maria Cox Lamm and Executive Director Chad Berginnis had the honor May 2 of representing ASFPM at FEMA’s strategic planning meeting. They listened to a compelling kickoff by FEMA Administrator Brock Long, and were asked to provide bold and tangible ideas!

The Technical Mapping Advisory Council recently appointed ASFPM Flood Science Center Director Bill Brown to a new subcommittee focusing on insurance. Also appointed to that subcommittee is ASFPM Past Chair Lisa Sharrard (Jones), who is also with Choice Flood Insurance. The purpose of the subcommittee is to evaluate how the FEMA National Flood Mapping Program can increase flood insurance coverage nationally. The subcommittee will propose insight and/or recommendations to possibly be included in TMAC’s annual report, which is submitted to the FEMA administrator and evaluates the status and performance of Flood Insurance Rate Maps and mapping activities. Brown and Sharrard join a long list of ASFPM members, including the Subcommittee Chair Carey Johnson, and these other members: Jeffrey Giering, Rachel Hogan Carr and Wendy Lathrop.

Robyn Wiseman, ASFPM’s research scientist with our Flood Science Center, made history a couple times recently. First, she was the first woman to play professional ultimate Frisbee for Madison’s Radicals. Then on May 13, she logged her first score as a pro! The Radicals beat the Detroit Mechanix 37-8. You can read about the match and Robyn here. The photo at left, of Robyn signing autographs after the game, was taken by Alan Lulloff, ASFPM’s chief scientist with our Flood Science Center.

ASFPM Region 7 Director Steve Samuelson was just named Kansas’ state floodplain manager, replacing Tom Morey, who recently accepted a job with Stantec. Samuelson previously was the NFIP specialist with the Kansas Department of Agriculture. Congratulations!
Natural Hazards Center Announces Mary Fran Myers Scholarship Winners

Each year, the Mary Fran Myers Scholarship—named in honor of the late Natural Hazards Center co-director—recognizes outstanding individuals who share Myers passion for disaster loss reduction nationally and internationally.

The scholarship, which ASFPM contributes to every year, provides financial support to recipients who otherwise would be unable to attend and participate in the Annual Hazards Research and Applications Workshop to further their research or community work and careers. The Mary Fran Myers Scholarship Selection Committee chose three recipients to receive the 2018 scholarship:

**Lily Bui** (shown center above) is a PhD student in MIT’s Department of Urban Studies and Planning. Her work focuses on disaster risk reduction planning on urbanized islands. Bui is also a researcher for the Civic Data Design Lab and Urban Risk Lab, where she works on projects at the intersection of information systems and disaster risk reduction. Bui has served as a research fellow at the National Disaster Preparedness Training Center in Honolulu, Hawaii; the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources in San Juan, Puerto Rico; SensingCity, a smart city initiative in Christchurch, New Zealand; and Making Sense EU and SmartCitizen at Fab Lab Barcelona in Spain. She is as an affiliated expert on urbanization for the U.S. Naval War College Humanitarian Response Program and is a staff officer in the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. Bui received her master’s from MIT’s Comparative Media Studies and a dual B.A. in Spanish and international studies from the University of California Irvine.

**Hannah Eboh** (shown right) is a master’s student at Northern Illinois University where she studies risk perception in small island developing states and geographic information science. In 2017, she received a Fulbright grant to the Commonwealth of Dominica in the Caribbean where she conducted a case study looking at the population’s perception of the island’s notable volcanic risk. While conducting research in Dominica, Eboh experienced the eye of Hurricane Maria. This experience further increased her interest in risk perception as she observed differing reactions during the preparation, landfall and immediate response to the hurricane. Eboh was contracted to co-develop a GIS course by the Barbados Red Cross Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Reference Center. She has also served as a national preparedness intern with FEMA where she worked on the 2015 Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment.
Chongming Wang (shown left on previous page) is an assistant emergency management professor at Jacksonville State University. Wang’s research revolves around the themes of vulnerability and resilience to natural hazards—particularly elder vulnerability to coastal hazards. As a broadly-trained human-environment geographer, she draws on research from various disciplines to understand what makes people vulnerable and how vulnerability can be reduced. Wang’s master’s thesis was a fine-grained quantitative vulnerability analysis of older adults to hurricane hazards, which earned the Gilbert F. White Thesis Award given by the Association of American Geographers. Her doctoral dissertation used a qualitative inquiry to answer questions surrounding hurricane risk perception and preparedness, as well as evacuation attitudes and decision-making among older adults. She received doctorate and master’s in geography from Pennsylvania State University. She also holds a bachelor’s in GIS from East China Normal University in Shanghai, China.

Job Corner

Check out these career opportunities and more on ASFPM’s job board. Visit our job postings here, and if you’re an employer and want to post an opening, it’s FREE!

- HDR Inc. in Phoenix is hiring a water resources engineer.
- A planning and zoning tech is needed at Hillsborough County, Florida.
- Illinois State Water Survey, PRI, Univ. of Illinois is looking for an H&H engineer.

If you have a story you’d like to share with ASFPM newsletter readers, contact ASFPM Public Information Officer Michele Mihalovich at michele@floods.org.
Deputy Director Report – Ingrid D. Wadsworth

The countdown to conference is something we in the executive office look forward to every year. Our 2018 Phoenix national conference continues our tradition, and in continued salute to David Letterman, here is my Top 10 List with reasons why you should attend this year’s Managing Floods where the Mountains meet the Desert conference:

No. 10: Bigger than New York and Los Angeles, by land area. At more than 500 square miles, there are only a few major American cities that are bigger. Anchorage, Alaska of course, and then since everything is bigger in Texas, Houston is a contender.

No. 9: The Nation’s Largest City Park is in Phoenix, named South Mountain Park. At 16,000 acres, you could walk your dog for several days. At nearly 20 times the size of Central Park in NYC, this city park is state and federal park sized.

No. 8: No Snow! Phoenix got 0.4 inches of snow in 1990, in December, making that the only white Christmas since the 1930s when they got a dusting, twice.

No. 7: More folks live in the capital city of Phoenix than any other state capital in the U.S. Almost 1.5 million people call Phoenix home, with only Indianapolis, at 850,000 people, a distant second.

No. 6: A chilly 16 degrees is the coldest ever recorded there. And for this Midwestern gal, we call that “unzip your coat and no-gloves weather.”

No. 5: 40% of Phoenix residents were born in Arizona. That means that the reputation for being “a city of transplants” is mostly true.

No. 4: “Downtown” is pretty wide. While most consider the big buildings to be downtown, most residents know downtown goes on for miles and miles.

No. 3: Convention Center built on 3,000-year-old ruins! In 2006, while the Phoenix Convention Center was under construction, archaeologists found that the old Phoenix Civic Plaza had been built over 3,000-year-old houses.

No. 2: Phoenix is high and sunny. Phoenix is at an elevation of more than 1,100 feet. There are 365 days in the year and of these days, 334 are filled with sunshine. According to data compiled by the National Climatic Data Center, Phoenix basks in sunshine more often than any other major metropolitan area in the U.S.

And the No. 1 reason for attending the Managing Floods where the Mountains meet the Desert conference in Phoenix? Reconnecting with floodplain colleagues from around the world, meeting new friends and learning something new!

See you in Arizona!
ASFPM to Launch its State Mentoring Program at Conference in Phoenix!

Strong, capable states are critical to reducing flood losses and protecting natural floodplain functions.

ASFPM is uniquely positioned to assist with the development of future floodplain management leaders and effective state floodplain management programs. Many of the nation’s most experienced and successful floodplain managers are dedicated ASFPM members who are willing to commit their time to mentoring others in the profession.

The program is designed to support effective principles, professional growth and leadership development by providing enough structure for success but room for flexibility. Participants gain access to ASFPM mentoring resources and form goal-oriented mentoring partnerships.

ASFPM mentors transfer knowledge, provide insight and share experiences to develop highly effective and capable floodplain management programs and professionals. Bill Nechamen, the recently retired New York state floodplain manager and past ASFPM chair, is the mentoring program administrator and will be available at the conference to answer your questions and help you sign up.

Visit the ASFPM pavilion in the exhibit hall during socials and session breaks to learn more and to register as a mentee or mentor.

As part of ASFPM’s commitment to mentoring, we are offering a State Floodplain Manager One-on-One workshop at the conference in Phoenix, designed for state level floodplain managers Tuesday from 1:30-5:30 p.m. to discuss details about the CAP-SSSE program and to learn more about the ASFPM Mentoring Program.

Mentee Eligibility
Currently, only state floodplain managers, state NFIP coordinators, state mapping coordinators, and their staff are eligible.

Mentor Eligibility
Preferably an ASFPM member, minimum of five years of practiced floodplain management, CFM preferred but not required.
Cooperating Technical Partners Information Exchange

The ASFPM Cooperating Technical Partners Subcommittee and Flood Science Center host quarterly webinars to support the FEMA CTP program. The May 11 webinar focused on Flood Mapping for the Nation- How FEMA Tracks Progress and Validity Using CNMS.

Interested in receiving invitations to CTP webinars? Indicate interest in the ASFPM Mapping and Engineering Standards Committee on your membership page.

Visit http://no.floods.org/CTPwebinars for slides and recordings of previous CTP webinars.

Events for CTPs at ASFPM’s National Conference in Phoenix

Monday, June 18, 2018
3-5 p.m.: National Policy Issues Cooperating Technical Partners (Room 129A)
7-9 p.m.: Off-site CTP Social at Hanny’s (40 N. First St.)

Tuesday, June 19, 2018
Day/time/location to be announced: 2nd Annual CTP Recognition Awards
1:45-3:15 p.m.: Concurrent Session B7: CTP Initiatives

Thursday, June 21, 2018
2:30-5 p.m.: CTP Best Practices from the Field: A Special Presentation from the First Annual CTP Recognition Program Recipients (Room 127A)
4-5:30 p.m.: Concurrent Session J7: Mapping Toolbox Innovations

Inside the National Flood Barrier Testing & Certification Program

Have you ever wondered about how a flood-proofing system would work if tested by a real flood? Do you own a building at risk from flooding and are considering floodproofing it? If you are a local floodplain manager, do you ever get requests for technical assistance or advice on floodproofing systems, or have to process FEMA Floodproofing Certificates?

Six years ago, ASFPM, in partnership with FM Approvals and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers launched the National Flood Barrier Testing and Certification Program in Rhode Island. Photo by Chad Berginnis.
Certification Program. Given the increased interest in floodproofing as a technique for mitigating older at-risk buildings, and the large number of issues post-flood investigations have uncovered (i.e. FEMA’s mitigation assessment team investigations and reports), the NFBTCP is needed more than ever to ensure floodproofing systems (or their components) are reliable flood mitigation solutions and work as advertised.

Program Overview
The purpose of this program is simply to provide an unbiased process of evaluating flood abatement products in terms of resistance to water forces, material properties and consistency of product manufacturing. Currently the program tests and certifies four types of flood abatement products:
1) Temporary (perimeter) barriers
2) Closure devices (also called opening barriers – you know things like barriers over windows or flood-proofed door systems),
3) Backflow valves, and
4) Flood mitigation pumps (these are often used on conjunction with barrier systems to control seepage).

The program intends to test and certify semi-permanent (perimeter) barriers and sealants in the future. Presently, there are more than a dozen tested and certified products in the program.

The Testing Standard
The standard used in the program for testing is ANSI/FM Approvals 2510. First published in 2006, the FM 2510 standard was developed following many of the guidelines, recommendations and protocols of ASFPM’s Nonstructural Floodproofing Committee. In 2014 the standard became “ANSIfied,” which means it became a consensus standard.

Often consensus standards are adopted or referenced by government agencies or used by the broader market. In fact, the 2510 standard was the basis for the recently adopted European Assessment Document used as the basis for technical specifications for products manufactured/sold in the European Union.

Testing done to meet the 2510 standard can be lumped into two categories: water testing and materials/component testing. Some of these tests include:

- Pressure retaining components are subject to hydrostatic strength and leakage testing.
- Moving parts are subject to durability – cycle testing.
- Gaskets are subject to tensile and compression tests.
- Certain materials are subject to abrasion resistance.
- Environmental and corrosion testing.
Water testing of perimeter barriers is usually conducted in a wave basin facility at the Corps Engineering Research and Development Center’s Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Water testing of closure devices, as well as material/component testing, is done by FM Approvals, usually at their testing laboratory in Rhode Island.

**Testing vs. Certification – What is the difference?**
The short answer to that it is significant. Testing is done by an independent entity against standards that have been developed. In the case of flood abatement products, the standard would be ANSI/FM Approvals 2510. However, testing is one and done. If testing was done on a particular product a decade ago, who is to say that product being manufactured today is of the same quality? With testing only, there are typically no manufacturing process or plant inspections, nor follow-up audits to ensure quality control is maintained.

With certification, an entity is willing to put their name and reputation on the line that not only has the product been tested, but there are ongoing actions to ensure consistent quality (such as manufacturing plant inspections/audits). In the case of the NFBTCP, our certification partner is FM Approvals and certified products in the program are given the FM Approved Diamond.

**Future Applications**
Certainly property owners who wish to install floodproofing systems to protect older buildings may be interested in NFBTCP products. Design professionals and engineers may want to consider a 2510 tested and/or certified products as components of the floodproofing system to be designed for new or retrofitted facilities. Finally, communities where floodproofing is a popular option may wish to consider adding requirements or preferences for 2510 tested/certified products in codes and standards, or at least a requirement in RFPs for floodproofing projects. The NFBTCP website is a one stop shop for 2510 tested and certified products, and includes not only links to different products that have been certified, but also other information like the testing reports. As we adapt to an increasingly flood-prone environment, especially in coastal areas, floodproofing will become a bigger tool in the toolbox and with products tested and certified to the 2510 standard, you can at least have a little peace of mind.

**Attending ASFPM’s annual national conference in Phoenix and want to learn more about the National Flood Barrier Testing & Certification Program?** Visit the ASFPM Pavilion in the Exhibit Hall during breaks and receptions.
Apply now for the Strengthening Coastal Counties Resilience Challenge!

The National Association of Counties – in partnership with ASFPM and the Coastal States Organization – has launched the Strengthening Coastal Counties Resilience Challenge to train local leaders on strategies to improve their community’s resilience to changing coastal and economic conditions.

Supported by NOAA, the Strengthening Coastal Counties Resilience Challenge is a regional pilot initiative with the mission of supporting counties as they work to identify ways to strengthen existing and implement new local plans and policies to increase resilience to extreme weather and climate-related hazards across the Gulf of Mexico region. The goal of this challenge is to bring enterprising technical solutions and forward-thinking partnership approaches to rural and mid-sized communities that are facing increasingly difficult capacity and financial burdens. The initiative will develop a national cohort of local coastal management practitioners and elected officials to promote the exchange of best practices and innovative solutions that can support long-term coastal resilience in the Gulf of Mexico Region.

NACo invites coastal counties in the Gulf of Mexico region with populations of less than 250,000 to form multidisciplinary teams to apply. Teams that submit winning applications will attend an in-person, two and a half day training and peer exchange workshop Oct. 15-17, 2018 in Fairhope, Alabama. APPLY TODAY! For more information and to apply, visit http://www.naco.org/coastalcounties. The application deadline is June 15, 2018.

---

Grant Opps…
Just a reminder to bookmark the Florida Climate Institute’s website for a comprehensive list of funding opportunities. It’s a fabulous resource.
FEMA Released “Planning-related Activities Using Hazard Mitigation Grant Program 7% Funding” Fact Sheet this month

Planning-related activities that are eligible for funding under Hazard Mitigation Grant Program:
- Update the mitigation strategy to reflect current mitigation and/or disaster recovery goals;
- Update or enhance sections of the current FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan;
- Develop and deliver planning-related training;
- Provide technical assistance to sub-recipients on mitigation planning;
- Evaluate the adoption and/or implementation of ordinances that increase resilience;
- Integrate information from the current mitigation plan to enhance other planning efforts.

To view the full fact sheet, click here.
**FEMA News You Can Use**

**New Resilience Organization Established within FEMA May 28**

*Eric Heighberger*, FEMA chief of staff, announced that as of May 28, the administrator is establishing a new resilience organization within FEMA, combining the National Preparedness Directorate, Grant Programs Directorate, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, National Continuity Programs and other Protection and National Preparedness Offices.

He said resiliency is the backbone of emergency management and the foundation of the FEMA mission. The resilience organization will consolidate FEMA’s preparedness programs and grants, insurance, mitigation and continuity programs by simplifying processes, breaking down silos, and integrating activities.

Heighberger said this reorganization does not change current authorizations or appropriation allocations. It is a tangible way FEMA will drive change and concentrate its resources toward building a culture of preparedness. This reorganization will enable FEMA and its workforce to focus on what matters most: helping people before, during and after disasters.

*View the organizational chart reflecting these changes.*

**New NFIP Bureau & Statistical Agent Website**

FEMA announced April 26 of its new and refreshed [NFIP Bureau and Statistical Agent website](https://nfip-service.com). The updated site includes changes to navigation and dropdown menus, as well as more resources and information. They also improved content structure, which should positively impact the user experience. Please be aware the nfip-service.com and bsa.nfipstat.fema.gov websites will no longer be available after April 27. If you have any feedback, please let them know at NFIPWYOMailbox@fema.dhs.gov.

**ASCE 24 Building Codes for Mitigation Webinar Available for Viewing**

FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Assistance Division delivered a webinar in January to share information on ASCE 24 Building Codes for Mitigation. Presenters provided information on ASCE 24 flood-specific building code requirements as they relate to hazard mitigation assistance, including information about elevations, floodproofing and mitigation reconstruction. Participants who would find value in this webinar include floodplain administrators, city and building code officials, insurance adjusters and others who have an interest in understanding and applying ASCE 24 requirements. [Video and related materials are available here.](https://www.fema.gov/)

**Video Series on 2018 NFIP Changes**

Want to learn what the 2018 changes are in the NFIP? Here are a series of short videos explaining the changes.

**VITEMA and FEMA Preparation for the Upcoming 2018 Hurricane Season**

The Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency and FEMA are working together to better prepare for the upcoming 2018 hurricane season. VITEMA Director *Mona Barnes* said, “We learned a lot from last fall’s unprecedented experience of facing two major hurricanes, Irma and Maria, back to back, in such a short period of time. Using ‘lessons learned,’ VITEMA is working with FEMA to better prepare for the upcoming 2018 hurricane season.” [Read full release here.](https://www.fema.gov/)
INSURANCE COMMITTEE UPDATES

A lot is happening with the Flood Insurance Committee. Here is a snapshot of recent activity and what’s in the pipeline.

INSURANCE COMMITTEE CALL

The committee held a one-hour call April 26 to update members on some insurance-related topics and discuss the upcoming ASFPM conference. During the call, topics discussed included:

- The Elevation Certificate – An update was provided on FEMA’s EC work group (which ASFPM is part of) progress in updating the EC. Minor changes will be made to the form and several clarifications are being made to the Instructions.
- Base Level Engineering – more FEMA regions are beginning to use this as a way to determine BFE for unnumbered A Zones. It is also being proposed to include mention of BLE on the EC.
- The latest on the NFIP reform/reauthorization – Chad Berginnis gave an update. Not a lot of movement at this time.
- Private Flood Insurance – stories from the field were shared as well as limitations that floodplain managers should be aware of (e.g., drop in NFIP policies could affect BCAs as well as interest a community may have in staying in the CRS due to less NFIP policies receiving a discount; for a property to be eligible for repetitive loss status, private flood claims don’t count; a property owner who switches from an NFIP policy that is subsidize-rated (pre-FIRM) or with the Newly Mapped Procedure rating option will lose those options and potentially face higher premiums if they try to come back to the NFIP).
- Insurance Committee Meeting plans at ASFPM – see below

If you missed the call or were so fascinated by it that you want to hear it again, a link to the recording is on the Insurance Committee’s webpage!

INSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – ASFPM CONFERENCE

While things are somewhat quiet on the reauthorization-front, there is still a lot going on that we will review at this year’s meeting at 1-3:30 p.m. June 18 in Phoenix. Below is a look at our proposed agenda:

- Year in Review (high-level)
- NFIP Flood Insurance Update
- Advocate’s Office Update
- Ag Structures in the Floodplain Update
- Elevation Certificate Update
- BLE Overview
- Private Flood insurance - issues and challenges
- New Business

We have a lot to cover in a short period, but if there is something else you wish to be included, let us know. And what a “cool” place to be during the Phoenix conference in June!
ASFPM EARLY BIRD SESSION
Ag Structures in the Floodplain – Discussing Potential Recommendations

At last year’s Flood Insurance Committee Early Bird Session, FEMA participated in a roundtable discussion about the challenges of building, maintaining and insuring agriculture structures in the floodplain. We had floodplain representatives from eastern and western U.S., as well as the heartland of America, share experiences and discuss possible solutions along with great input from the audience. FEMA utilized this valuable input along with interviews during the conference (and then in different states) in their research project.

FEMA has completed the research project, resulting in internal recommendations on actions FEMA (or others) could take. The committee has offered FEMA the opportunity to share these learnings at the Early Bird and get feedback on recommendations and possible options. We will then have a similar panel address each recommendation/option as well as look for the same level of audience participation.

So, if you have ag structures in your community, don’t oversleep and miss this session! We (and FEMA) want to hear from you. **Come to this session Wednesday, June 20 from 7-8:15 a.m., Room 122BC.**

FLOODSMART.GOV AND NFIPSERVICES SITES GET A NEW LOOK

If you missed the alerts, FEMA has released a revised FloodSmart website. While FEMA ended the FloodSmart campaign as of October 2016, they have kept the website. A new version was recently released: [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov). Check it out! There is also [www.FEMA.gov/NFIP](http://www.FEMA.gov/NFIP) for additional resources.

Meanwhile, for those of you who like to visit the Bureau & Statistical Agent’s website to see Flood Insurance Bulletins and other NFIP resources, it has moved to a new web location, look and feel: [http://NFIPServices.FloodSmart.gov](http://NFIPServices.FloodSmart.gov). From this page, you can access the Bulletins, NFIP Manual, Training and more.

So, lots going on...we hope to see you...and stay cool!

Humbly yours,

Bruce Bender and Steve Samuelson

—Your Flood Insurance Committee Co-chairs
By Rebecca Quinn, CFM

This issue I’m tossing the ball in your direction. What questions would you like answered in the coming year? Send your ideas or comment on the following suggestion I’ve run into in recent months.

- With the interest in more affordable housing, we’re getting inquiries about garage conversions. What are the key things we need to know when someone proposes converting detached garages, attached garages and garages (enclosures) under elevated buildings?

- What requirements apply to machinery and equipment that doesn’t serve buildings, such as swimming pools and outdoor kitchens?

- We just found out the revised coastal FIRM will show a Limit of Moderate Wave Action, delineating a Coastal A Zone. What requirements apply between the LiMWA and the Zone V boundary?

- We’ve seen an uptick in homeowners retrofitting to minimize future wind damage. Owners in SFHAs want to stay under the substantial improvement threshold. Can we subtract the cost of replacing old windows with impact-resistant windows because they’re required by the code for new buildings?

- Our FIRMs are several years old and it’ll be a few years before they’re revised using better topography. What do we do when the FIRM shows ground above the BFE is in the SFHA? What about when a site is shown in Zone X, but the ground is below the BFE?

- We keep hearing about “coordinating building codes and floodplain regulations.” What’s the short answer – what does that mean and why should we do it?

Pick one or two you’d like answered. Or if you have your own suggestions, please send me an email. The bottom line for me is to provide my thoughts on tricky floodplain management situations encountered by those of you on the ground. While I field a lot of questions in my “day job” as a consultant, it’s not the same experience you have every day!

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

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 2018! 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.
Managing Floods where Mountains Meet the Desert
ASFPM’s 42nd Annual National Conference
Phoenix, AZ
June 17-21, 2018

This is the last newsletter you’ll receive from us before ASFPM’s 42nd annual conference in Phoenix! So this is our last chance to try and woo you to attend #ASFPM2018—the world’s largest and most comprehensive floodplain management conference. Here’s what you’ll be missing if you’re not in Phoenix:

Incredible workshops, presenters, technical field tours, demonstrations, exhibits, informative panel discussions and effective networking opportunities to help you do your job.

 يكن The 6th Annual Running of the Chapters (5K Run/Walk).

The annual silent auction, which helps ASFPM Foundation promote sustainable management of the nation’s floodplains and watersheds. Check out the information provided below.

Check out the full program of plenaries, networking events, hotels and things to do in Phoenix. Please note that conference registration increases after May 29, so register now if you haven’t. We look forward to welcoming you to the Valley of the Sun!

ASFPM Foundation News at the #ASFPM2018

New this year: ASFPM Foundation supporters who have donated at least $100 between July 1, 2017 and June 1, 2018, will receive an invitation to the Donors Recognition Reception and Live Auction at ASFPM’s annual national conference in Phoenix. The reception will be held from 6:30-8 p.m., June 20. However, after June 1, the donation amount to qualify for an invitation to the reception is at least $125. You may contact Suzanne Gillingham at suzanne@floods.org or (608) 828-6327 by June 1 to make at least a $100 foundation donation to receive an invitation to the reception. Donations of $125 or more will be accepted at the conference. Look for Suzanne, who will be working at the silent auction. Please also note silent auction purchases do not qualify.

Silent auction at the conference needs your donations

Monies generated from the silent and live auctions at the ASFPM national conference help to support ASFPM Foundation research and projects. If you would like to donate to the silent auction, please provide the following information to the ASFPM executive office at suzanne@floods.org. Description of item, fair market value (minimum value of $25 please), company/affiliation, your phone number, address, email and when and how the item will be available for table placement. If you would like to ship your donation, please ship to:

JE Fuller, Attn: Elise Moore, 8400 S. Kyrene Rd., Ste. 201, Tempe, AZ 85284
What’s Happening around the Nation?

A collection of the most viewed stories on our Facebook page

The Nation—Former FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and NRDC Attorney Joel Scata are interviewed in this Weather Channel piece, offering opposing views of a proposed FEMA policy change that would allow homeowners to rebuild on flood-prone land after a buyout. ASFPM is firmly against this FEMA proposal! Watch the video here.

Brock Long bluntly stressed that FEMA and others that offer disaster assistance have been stretched thin after a series of 2017 storms and wildfires, as well as the ongoing volcanic eruption in Hawaii, so local officials should have their own plans to provide water and other essential services for the first few days following a disaster. Read the story here.


In a galaxy far, far away—“When gone am I, the last of the floodplain managers will you be. The Force runs strong in your family. Pass on what you have learned,” said Yoda (or as we like to call him: Larry Larson 😊).

Texas—ASFPM has been saying this for years (OK, we said “flood zones,” not “urban boundaries.” Close enough). Nice to see it come to life in a headline. Read, “Floods don’t care about urban boundaries. Neither should our mitigation plans.”

There was a Houston golf course, hilly, dotted with ponds, and a bit shabby around the edges. But in this city of floods and footloose building rules, it was a welcome sponge for the seasonal rains. Now work crews are cementing over the former fairways for homes — 900 of them — marking the first new residential development to rise in a floodplain since Hurricane Harvey swept through the city. Read, “Fresh from Hurricane Harvey’s flooding, Houston starts to build anew—in the floodplain.”

Mississippi River—Floods on the Mississippi River are getting more frequent and more severe. But scientists warn that the infrastructure meant to protect towns and farms against flood waters is making the problem worse. Read NPR’s “Levees make Mississippi River floods worse, but we keep building them.”
Lots of Congressional Activity

Congress is in the midst of moving many pieces of legislation to tee up bills for final action during this congressional session. Given the Congressional schedule of an August recess, as well as a focus on campaigning in October, bills moving now have the best chance of being enacted. The number of bills pending, nominations needing confirmation, and determination to avoid another omnibus appropriations bill funding the entire federal government, are leading to calls in the Senate for eliminating or shortening the usual month-long August recess. Congress will take its one week Memorial Day Recess and return to a very busy schedule.

Among bills actively moving in Congress are the Water Resources Development Act and Disaster Recovery Reform Act. The House and Senate have marked up their versions of WRDA in committee. The House has again passed the DRRA, this time as Title VI of the FAA Reauthorization bill. The Senate Commerce Committee intends to move its own version of FAA Reauthorization, and it is unclear whether or not DRRA or elements of it will be attached to the Senate bill.

Congress is determined to stay on track with a WRDA every two years. After a seven year hiatus, there have been water resource bills in 2014 and 2016. A WRDA 2018 would continue that progress and is very likely to be accomplished. The House and Senate are moving WRDA 2018 bills on a fast track. The Senate reported its WRDA out of the Environment and Public Works Committee May 22 (S. 2800). The House marked up and reported its bill (H.R. 8) out of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee May 23. The House bill is narrowly focused on only Army Corps of Engineers issues and projects, while the Senate bill does address some larger issues. The House bill proposed moving the Corps from the Department of Defense. The Senate bill, alternatively, calls for a National Academy of Sciences study on whether or not the current organization and structure "is the most effective for its continued operation." The latter is seen as an attempt to achieve a compromise with the House.

Reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program remains in a working status in the Senate. The House passed its version last year. Several bills are in play in the Senate Banking Committee, which continues to grapple with issues associated with growth of the market for private flood insurance and resource (dollar) issues involving ways to address affordability and even the program’s debt.

Appropriations are in full swing as both House and Senate Appropriations committees are committed to passing as many bills as possible before the beginning of the new fiscal year Oct. 1. The House committee has already reported out six of the 12 regular appropriations bills and the Senate committee has marked up two bills – Energy and Water and Agriculture - and has a robust mark-up schedule for June. House leadership has announced plans to bring a package of three bills to the House floor in June. They are calling it a “mini-bus” as opposed to an omnibus! It is likely most of the bills will be packaged into mini-buses this year. The President had indicated in signing last year’s omnibus appropriations...
The bill for the entire federal government that he did not intend to do that again. The bills in the first minibuses will be Energy and Water (Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation), Military Construction/VA, and Legislative Branch. All three are seen as non-controversial and usually easy to pass.

**Appropriations**

**Homeland Security**

Neither the House nor Senate subcommittees have marked up their bills yet. ASFPM has been in touch with both subcommittees to urge appropriations for FEMA's flood risk mapping and Pre-Disaster Mitigation at levels at least equal to the amounts appropriated for FY18 in the omnibus appropriations bill. Due to the agreed upon two-year budget ceilings, the appropriations for mapping and PDM were the highest they have ever been: $262.5 million for mapping and $249.2 million for PDM. ASFPM urged higher levels of $400 million for mapping and $500 million for PDM, while also recommending at least the FY18 levels.

Indications are that it may be difficult for the subcommittees to appropriate those levels again because of increased pressure to fund the border wall in particular and other Homeland Security functions such as cybersecurity. For this reason, it is particularly important that representatives and senators hear from their constituents about the importance of risk identification (mapping) and pre-disaster hazard mitigation.

ASFPM has joined with The Nature Conservancy and other organizations to urge the House and Senate to include 1) a continuing authorization for flood control projects using natural infrastructure, and 2) a GAO study of how the Corps uses natural infrastructure currently and barriers to its use.

**Leadership Changes**

Senate Appropriations Chairman Thad Cochran (R-MS) resigned from Congress as of April 1, citing health matters. He had wanted to complete work on FY18 appropriations, which he was able to accomplish with passage of the Omnibus Appropriations bill in March. The committee voted to approve Sen. Richard Shelby (R-AL) as the new chairman. In the House, Appropriations Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ) has announced his retirement at the end of this congressional session in December.

**Subcommittee Budget Ceiling Allocations**

House and Senate Appropriations have just approved their budget ceiling allocations (302(b) allocations) to each of their subcommittees. Both shifted priorities to more equal appropriations for defense and domestic programs. The House, however, approved a significant increase for the Homeland Security subcommittee, presumably to accommodate the President’s repeated demands for funding a border wall between U.S. and Mexico. The Senate did not follow that example and its allocation for Homeland Security (which includes FEMA) is $8.7 billion below the House. These allocations are not binding, but bills that exceed their allocation would be hard to pass.

**Rescissions Request from the Administration**

The administration sent Congress a package of requested rescissions of previously appropriated funds totaling $15 billion. The request says these are funds that have not been used and are no longer needed. Much of the request targets health care ($7 billion from the Children’s Health Insurance Program or CHIP) and green energy programs. Many members of Congress on both sides of the aisle are questioning aspects of the rescissions package to the extent that its future is in some doubt. The House may schedule a
vote in June, but the path forward is not clear at this time. None of the proposed rescissions affect FEMA or Corps programs, but the proposal does include some conservation and watershed restoration programs. ASFPM joined with many other groups in signing a letter strongly opposing the rescissions for these programs.

Energy and Water
The House bill is scheduled to be voted on in early June, and will provide funding for the Corps of $7.3 billion, which is an increase of $500 million over FY18. The bill does include increased funding for Planning Assistance to States and for Flood Plain Management Services. Other small programs that ASFPM supports received funding at the same level as FY18. Those are the National Flood Risk Management Program, Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies and support for USGS stream gauges. Unfortunately, the bill contains no funds for the Water Resources Priorities Study. Additionally, the committee report specifically states that no funds are provided to implement the Principles and Requirements for Federal Investment in Water Resources (March 2013) or the Interagency Guidelines (December 2014). The bill also contains a policy rider repealing the Waters of the U.S. rule.

The Senate committee has just reported out its bill (S. 2975 and S. Rept. 115-258). That bill also includes increases for PAS and FPMS and keeps NFRMP, FCCE and stream gauge support at the same levels as FY18. The Senate bill does not contain language repealing the WOTUS rulemaking.

Interior and Environment
The House subcommittee marked up its bill, but full committee consideration scheduled for the week of May 21 was postponed until after the Memorial Day recess. Details will not be available until then, but the bill does apparently contain contentious policy riders providing for easing repeal of WOTUS, prohibition of ESA protection for sage grouse and alteration of clean air reporting requirements for agricultural activities. The Environmental Protection Agency is funded at about $8 billion, which is $100 million less than FY18, but $1.9 billion above the administration’s budget request.

The DRRA passed the House again, this time attached to the bill reauthorizing the Federal Aviation Administration (H.R. 4) as Title VI. That bill is now pending consideration in the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee and its Aviation subcommittee. The Senate committee staff indicate that the Senate is likely to pass its own version of FAA authorization rather than an amended version of the House bill. Committee action on the bill is expected mid-June.

Chairman John Thune (R-SD) has indicated willingness to accept some elements of the DRRA on his bill, but he is not inclined to accept the entire measure. Some aspects of the bill are considered controversial for various reasons. The chairman wants to be sure that his bill will pass, so does not want controversial provisions.

Those could include sections with which ASFPM has expressed concern. One is Section 609, which allows for waiver of the Stafford Act’s prohibition of duplication of benefits and specifically allows use of Disaster Relief funds for Corps projects. Another is Section 628, which indicates lack of applicability of the Endangered Species Act to the NFIP. Unfortunately, the really positive and innovative provision to dramatically increase funding for pre-disaster mitigation, Section 635, is likely to also be considered controversial because of cost considerations. ASFPM is urging the Senate Commerce Committee to retain the latter section.
ASFPM is also urging retention of a provision from the House bill that would specifically allow expense reimbursement for floodplain managers, building code officials and others who volunteer to assist with substantial damage determinations and permitting under the Emergency Mutual Aid Compact following declared disasters. ASFPM worked with Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), who offered this provision as an amendment to the House bill. The amendment was accepted as part of an “en bloc” amendment by House Transportation and Infrastructure by Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA). This provision would help to significantly expedite post-disaster inspections and facilitate timely mitigation efforts.

**NFIP Reauthorization Status**

The Senate Banking Committee is still working to develop its version of reauthorization legislation. In addition to ongoing discussions about how to design provisions promoting the growth of the private flood insurance market, there are also questions about how to react to the report on flood insurance affordability recently released by FEMA and to reported interest from some quarters in promoting further forgiveness of the NFIP debt.

Senate Banking Committee staff have indicated that they expect this to be a multi-week process. The current NFIP authority extension will expire July 31. At this point, it seems increasingly likely that resolution of these issues may not be possible by July 31. In that case, another extension will need to be considered to avoid a lapse in the program’s authority.

**Other Legislation of Interest**

**Digital Coast Act**

The legislation codifying the Digital Coast project at NOAA (S. 110 and H.R. 4062) passed the Senate again during this congressional session. The House bill is still pending consideration by the House Natural Resources Committee. Members of the Digital Coast Partnership (including ASFPM) have been visiting with congressional offices to explain the project and its value for coastal communities including the Great Lakes communities. Although the House bill now has many co-sponsors from both parties, it is important to encourage more Republicans to co-sponsor, as that will encourage the committee to move the bill.

ASFPM recently participated in a well-attended congressional briefing by most of the Digital Coast Partners explaining the 10-year-old initiative and its value. Additionally, the Senate Commerce Committee is likely to hold a hearing on Digital Coast in early June. ASFPM has been contacted about possibly testifying.

**Scientific Mapping Act**

H.R. 5559 was introduced April 30 by Rep. Eric Crawford (R-AR). The measure would shift all of FEMA’s flood mapping activities to the USGS. The bill was referred to the House Financial Services Committee and the Natural Resources Committee. At this point, there is no scheduled action on the bill, but it will be important to track any movement.

**Coastal Communities Adaptation Act**

S. 2783 was introduced at the end of April by Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL). A central provision of the measure would create a state revolving loan fund to reduce flooding in coastal areas. The bill was referred to the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. Sen. Nelson is the ranking Democrat on that committee. Committee staff have been in touch with ASFPM to explain the bill. ASFPM will support it.

**State Flood Mitigation Revolving Loan Act**

S. 1507 was introduced by Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) last year. The bill has been pending consideration by the Senate Banking Committee. There is some possibility it could be included in legislation the committee will eventually produce to reauthorize the NFIP. ASFPM has expressed support for the bill.

---

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 FY17](#).

---

Join the NFIP’s Customer-Centered Communications (C3) Team to learn about new 2018 hurricane season marketing activities.

This free webinar will highlight the outreach campaign, set to launch in June, to heighten consumers’ awareness about the importance of purchasing flood insurance to protect the homes, businesses and lives they’ve built.

Learn about FEMA’s marketing campaign and gain tools and tactics—including easy-to-use social media materials, brochures and website copy—to help your community and local residents prepare for Hurricane season now with flood insurance.

**Date:**
June 7, 2018; 3:30-4:30 p.m. EDT

[Register to Attend](#)
ASFPM Editorial Guidelines: ASFPM accepts and welcomes articles from our members and partners. “The Insider” and “News & Views” have a style format, and if necessary, we reserve the right to edit submitted articles for space, grammar, punctuation, spelling, potential libel and clarity. If we make substantive changes, we will email the article back to you for your approval before using. We encourage you to include art with your article in the form of photos, illustrations, charts and graphs. Please include a description of the art, along with the full name of who created the art. If the art is not yours originally, you must include expressed, written consent granting ASFPM permission to use the art in our publications.

Copyright© Association of State Floodplain Managers, Inc.
Information and opinions contained herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the ASFPM Board of Directors. Reproduction, with credit, is permitted for individual ASFPM-authored articles. Please contact Michele Mihalovich at editor@floods.org.