

Resources for Rural Floodplain Managers

Becca Fricke-Croft, CFM - Atkins

Corey Garyotis, CFM – Alabama DECA – Office of Water Resources

ASFPM Conference, Kansas City

Background

Rural communities often lack the resources and organizational structure within their agency to properly and sufficiently meet the requirements for regulating floodplain development under the NFIP.

Unique Challenges for Rural Floodplain Managers

- No (or limited) staff
 - “S/He who wears many hats”
- No budget
- No (perceived) authority
- No training



Alabama DECA - Office of Water Resources

Currently developing a how-to guide and training workshop to provide tools and resources to Floodplain Administrators that are in rural NFIP communities

Research Findings

Successful communities:

CFMs on staff

More time spent on floodplain management

Struggling communities:

No permitting procedures

Lack of organizational structure

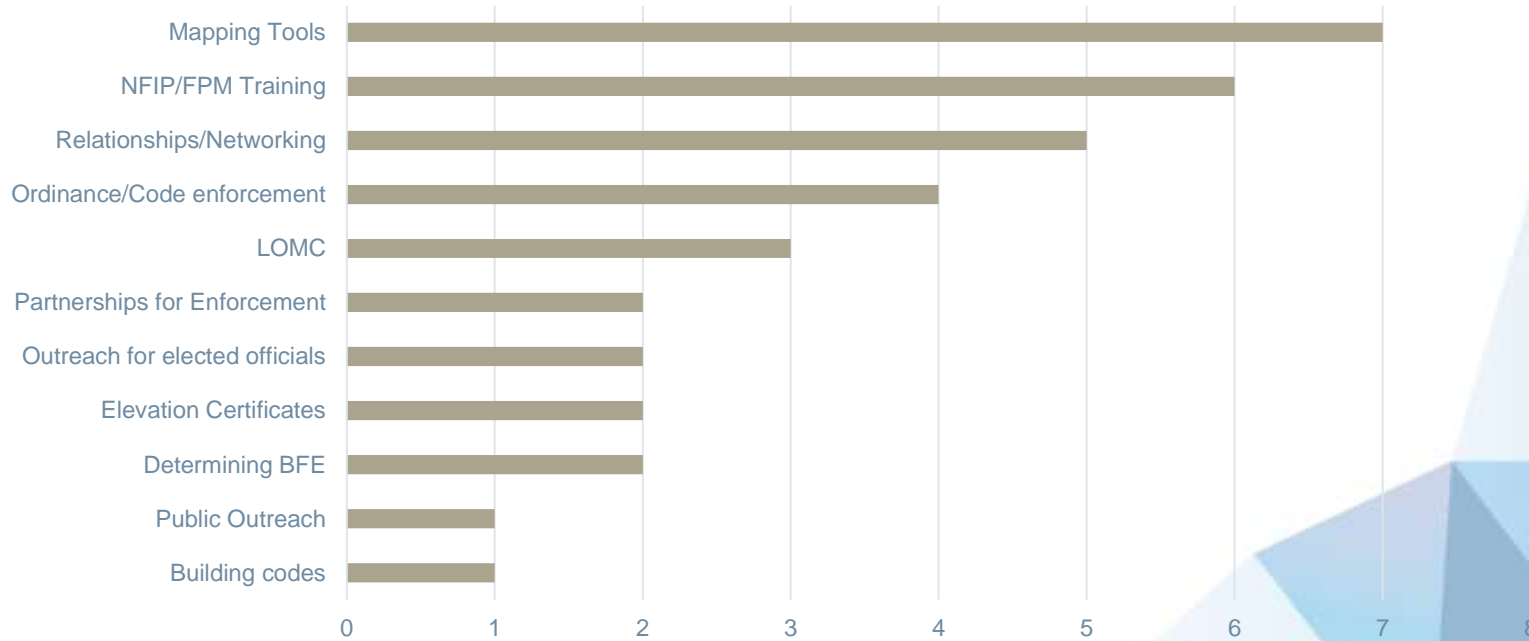
More obstacles for small communities

- Inaccurate floodplain mapping
- Loss of credibility
- Elected officials need training about the NFIP

So, where do we begin?


There are strategies and tools that can be utilized by the Floodplain Administrators to assist them in keeping their program and their communities compliant.

Guidance Themes



Duties of a Floodplain Administrator

KNOW YOUR ORDINANCE!



DUTIES OF A FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR

The Floodplain Administrator is responsible for implementing the community's local floodplain ordinance and ensuring that the community is complying with minimum NFIP standards and enforcing any locally imposed higher standards:

- Require, review, and evaluate floodplain development permit applications for all development located in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). This includes minor development (fences, accessory structures, grading, et al) that may not require building permits.
- Provide information related to the Base Flood Elevation and answer general questions about floodplain/floodway boundaries.
- Review elevation certificates for completeness and accuracy. Identify deficiencies before accepting as part of a development application.
- Review development plans and specifications for compliance with the floodplain ordinance.
- Discourage development in the floodplain when alternatives are possible and restrict development in the floodway (if allowed by local ordinance) to that which will not cause a rise in the elevation of the base flood. Review engineering analyses to ensure local regulations are being met.
- Advise applicants of other State, federal or local permits or approvals that may be necessary when developing in an SFHA.
- Ensure FEMA is notified of any changes to watercourses within corporate limits.
- Inspect floodplain construction to verify location relative to the floodplain/floodway and ensure compliance with local floodplain ordinance.
- Educate community members and local officials about floodplain management.
- Ensure building officials are fully aware of building code requirements related to floodplain development.
- Maintain complete documentation and records of all floodplain activities. Records should be maintained indefinitely.
- Investigate violations of the floodplain ordinance and initiate corrective action.

Read your local floodplain ordinance. There may be additional duties assigned to this role.

Duties of a Local Floodplain Administrator | Updated May 2011

Floodplain Development – 8 Steps

1. Is it “**Development**”?
2. Is it in the **Special Flood Hazard Area**?
3. Is it **Substantial Improvement**?
4. What’s the **Base Flood Elevation**?
5. What’s the proposed **Lowest Floor Elevation**?
6. Are **permits** required from other agencies?
7. Will the development comply with all **local codes**?
8. Do I have **documentation** for all of the above?

Get organized

Set up a filing system

Inventory parcels in the SFHA

- GIS
- Google Earth
- ArcGIS online (FEMA MSC)
- Local colleges may help



Identify resources

- Staffing
- Budget
- Authority
- Enforcement options
- Other Agency and Private Sector Assets
- GIS Mapping



Work with decision makers

Take your boss to lunch!

- Explain importance of NFIP
- Benefits of NFIP participation
- Penalties of probation and suspension

ATKINS

DUTIES OF A FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATOR

The Floodplain Administrator is responsible for implementing the community's local floodplain ordinance and ensuring that the community is complying with minimum NFIP standards and enforcing any locally imposed higher standards:

- Require, review, and evaluate floodplain development permit applications for all development located in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). This includes minor development (fences, accessory structures, grading, et al) that may not require building permits.
- Provide information related to the Base Flood Elevation and answer general questions about floodplain/floodway boundaries.
- Review elevation certificates for completeness and accuracy, identify deficiencies before accepting as part of a development application.
- Review development plans and specifications for compliance with the floodplain ordinance.
- Discourage development in the floodplain when alternatives are possible and restrict development in the floodway (if allowed by local ordinance) to that which will not cause a rise in the elevation of the base flood. Review engineering analyses to ensure local regulations are being met.
- Advise applicants of other State, federal or local permits or approvals that may be necessary when developing in an SFHA.
- Ensure FEMA is notified of any changes to watercourses within corporate limits.
- Inspect floodplain construction to verify location relative to the floodplain/floodway and ensure compliance with local floodplain ordinance.
- Educate community members and local officials about floodplain management.
- Ensure building officials are fully aware of building code requirements related to floodplain development.
- Maintain complete documentation and records of all floodplain activities. Records should be maintained indefinitely.
- Investigate violations of the floodplain ordinance and initiate corrective action.

Read your local floodplain ordinance. There may be additional duties assigned to this role.

Duties of a Local Floodplain Administrator

Updated May 2017

Develop standard operating procedures for enforcement

- What will your elected officials support?
- Work with community attorney to develop protocols for use of citations, injunctions, stop-work orders, and/or Section 1316 declaration
- Develop outreach to inform public of requirements

Identify potential development



Team up with other agencies!

- Addressing agencies (Post Office)
- Emergency managers (911)
- Health Department
- Water and Sewer Department
- Waste Management
- Revenue Department

Work with local utilities

- Natural Gas
- Power/Electric Company
- Phone/Internet providers

Adopt building codes

(Yes, even if your state hasn't mandated it.)

Collect fees

Tiered permit fees for minor to major development can help recoup some costs associated with good floodplain management.

Talk to your State NFIP Coordinator

- Ask for options, examples, ideas, and guidance
- Introduce you to other communities with similar obstacles
- Provide “back up”

Learn about CRS...

...even if you're not ready to join.

Benefits and “best practices” can give you ideas for how to build a solid program and connect you to neighboring communities who may be able to give you a hand up.

Thank you!

ATKINS

Becca Fricke-Croft

becca.croft@atkinsglobal.com



Corey Garyotis

Corey.Garyotis@adeca.alabama.gov

ATKINS