

Communicating Technical Information to Laymen: A Kentucky Perspective

Alex VanPelt, CFM, Kentucky Division of Water
Katherine Osborne, Stantec, Lexington, KY

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Agenda

Risk

Potential Traps

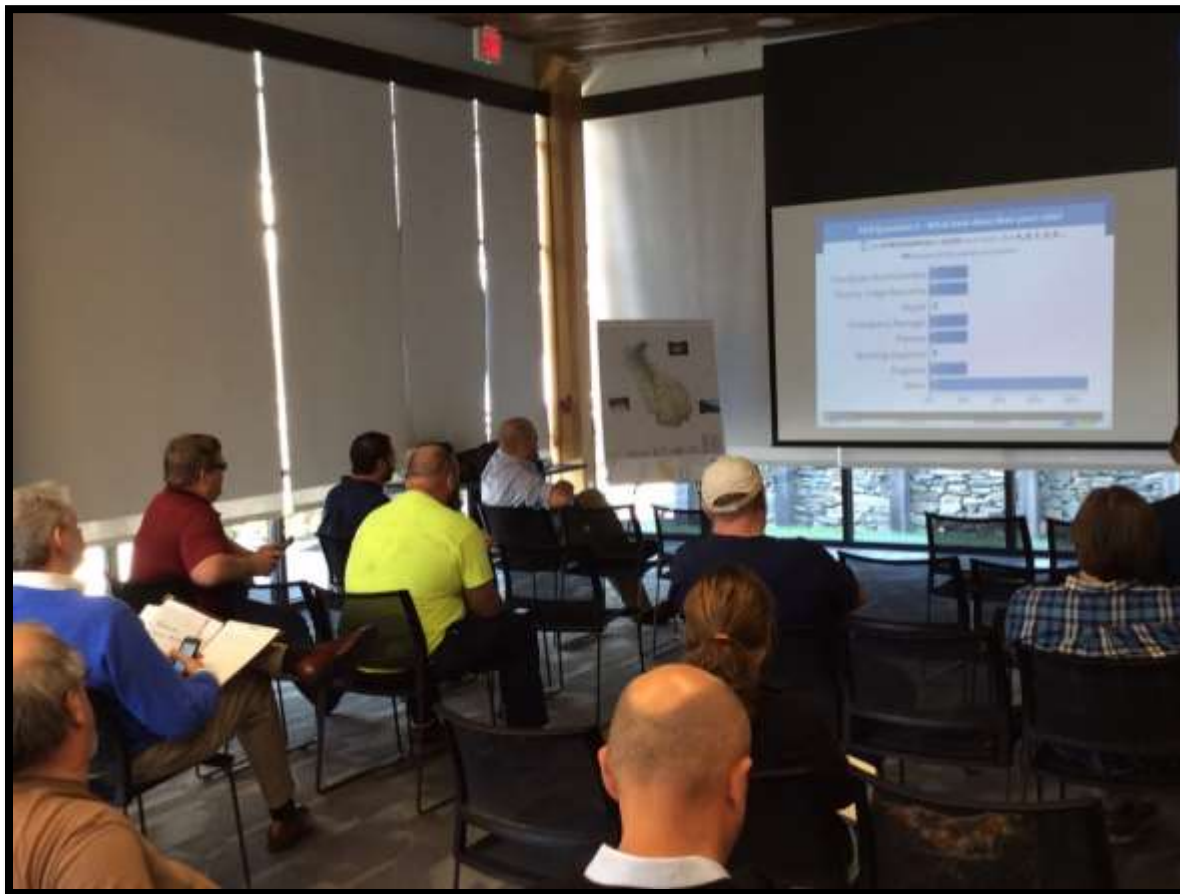
Communication
Methods

Risk

- Kentucky Division of Water (KDOW) Floodplain Management and Risk MAP Programs present a multitude of technical data
- If information is not easily understandable it can lead to:
 - Inaction by a community,
 - Disengagement in the management process by officials,
 - Indifference to flood risks by citizens, and/or
 - An overall sense of apathy.

Potential Traps

- As technical experts we can all fall into common traps or shortcomings when meeting with communities:
 - Not knowing your audience
 - “One-Size-Fits-All” approach
 - Assuming understanding
 - Failure to listen
 - Lost in the details
 - Using nonspecific terms



Communication Methods

Understand your Audience

- Learn prior to meeting
 - Surveys
 - Phones calls
 - Research
- Detail content accordingly
- During your talk, read your audience & adapt

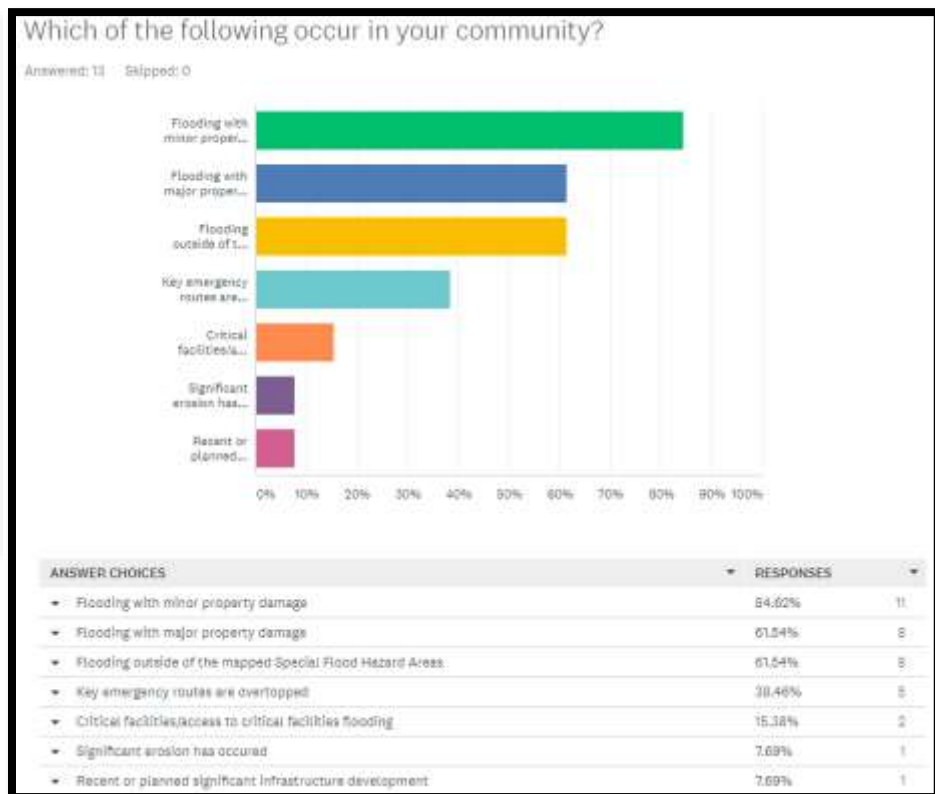
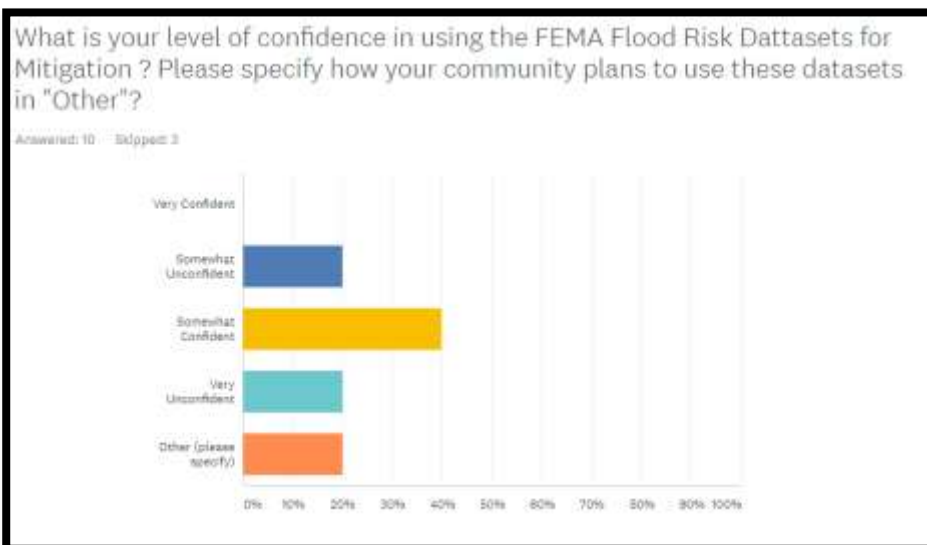
2. Which of the following occur in your community?

- Flooding with minor property damage
- Flooding with major property damage
- Flooding outside of the mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas
- Key emergency routes are overtopped
- Critical facilities/access to critical facilities flooding
- Significant erosion has occurred
- Recent or planned significant infrastructure development



Example: Understand your Audience

- “Perhaps a better understanding of the purpose of the meeting. Resilience is vague. I thought this watershed mapping project was complete. Not sure the purpose of the upcoming meeting.”



No Acronyms

- Use English
- Define otherwise



Present the Big Picture Equation

- Be Concise
- Use Simple words
- Use relatable frames of reference
- Stick to your outline
- Don't get lost in the details
- What is important to end user

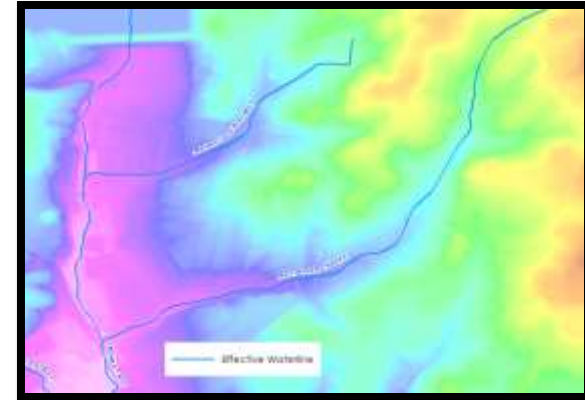
Input Data + Application = Results



Example: Big Picture Equation

Floodplain Mapping Process Overview

- Input Data
 - Topographic Data
 - Flow Data
 - Channel delineation and flow direction
 - Cross Section Data
- Application
 - HEC-RAS
- Results
 - Floodplains



Reference Point

- Give examples
- Tell stories
- Make it personal/relatable



Example: Reference Point

- The Flood of March 1997 DR-1163
- 92 counties in Kentucky declared disaster areas
- Total damage across the region \$400,000,000



Reframe Their Perception

- “Why did you put me in a floodplain? I’ve lived here all my life and it has never flooded!”
 - Map shows where its most likely to flood.
- “I’m not in the floodplain so I don’t need to worry about flooding.”
 - Flood risk still exists



Example: Reframe Their Perception

- “The water level at your house, during the 1% chance flood, is 837.4 feet above MSL”
- “Your home can expect 4 feet of water during a flood event”

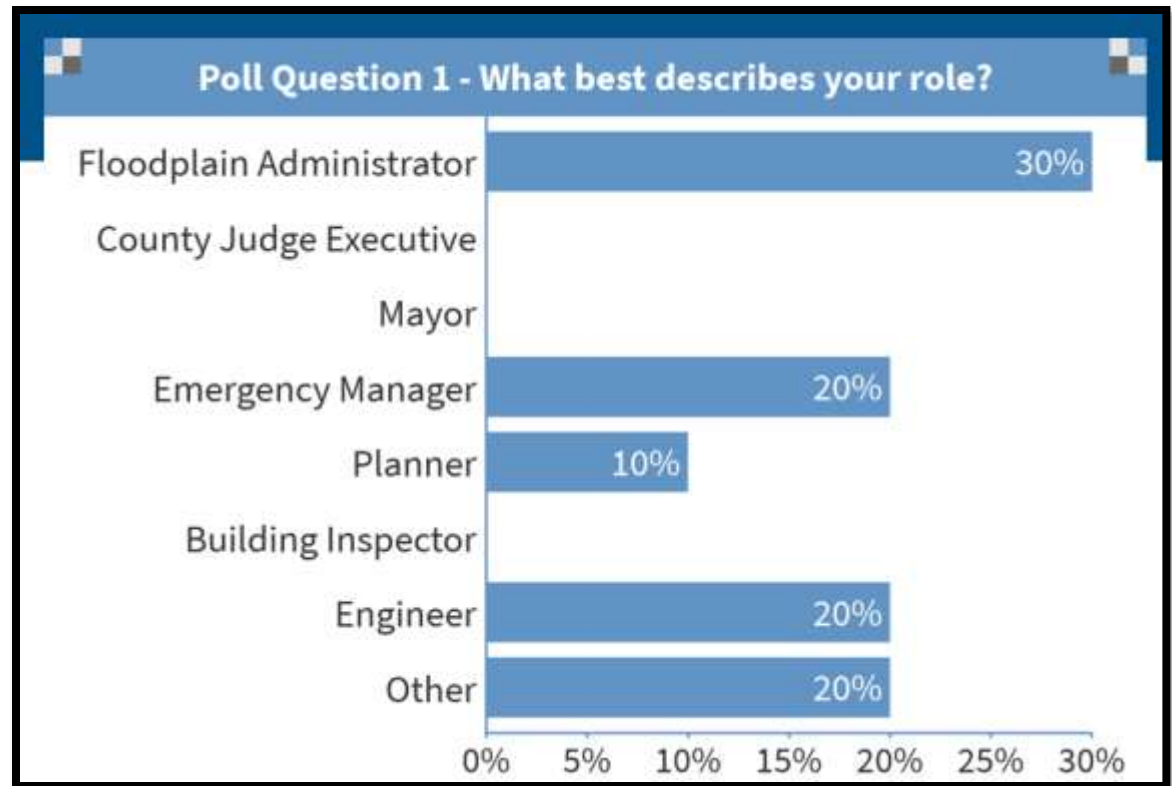
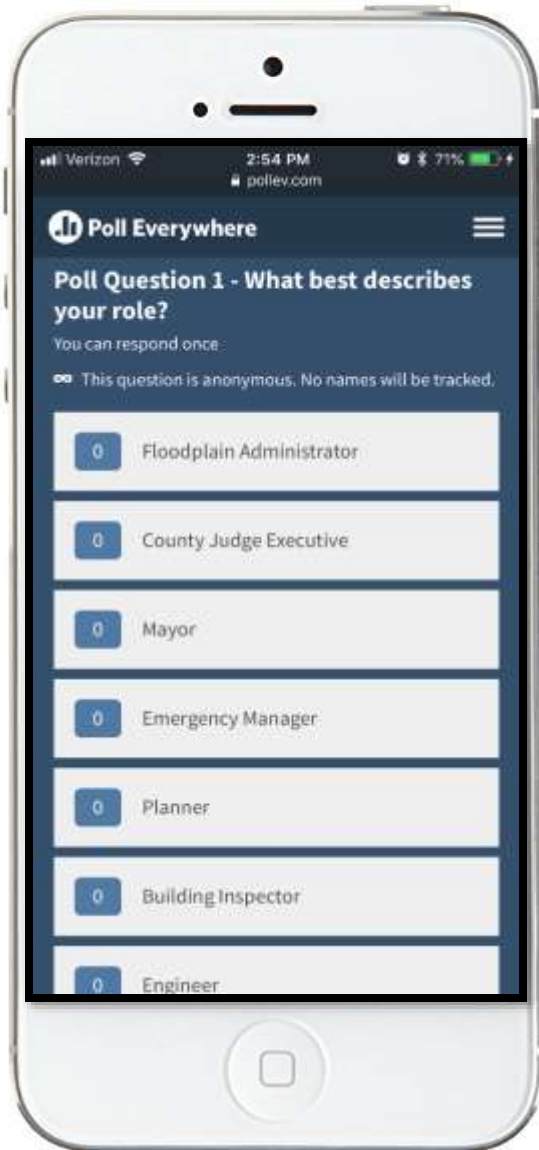


Don't Put Them to Sleep



- Use visuals
- Engage on multiple levels
- Ask questions
- “So What?”
- Speak don't read

Example: Don't Put Them to Sleep



Example: Don't Put Them to Sleep

CITY OF HAZARD

KNOW YOUR RISK

KENTUCKY RIVER
AREA DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT



19 REPETITIVE
LOSS
PROPERTIES



4,456

POPULATION BASED
ON 2010 CENSUS



2,777,796

TOTAL LOSSES PAID



7.6

SQUARE MILES
OF THE COMMUNITY
IS IN THE
NORTH FORK
KENTUCKY
WATERSHED



NFIP
PARTICIPANT

DRAFT HAZARD
MITIGATION
PLAN UNDER
REVIEW WITH
THE STATE AND
FEMA

7.9

STREAM MILES



253

NUMBER OF
INSURANCE
CLAIMS
RECORDED



7

PRESIDENTIAL
DISASTER
DECLARATIONS
IN YOUR COUNTY
(FLOOD/SEVERE
STORM RELATED)



131

NUMBER OF
FLOOD
INSURANCE
POLICIES



19,225,200

FLOOD INSURANCE COVERAGE

YOU ARE HERE

KEEPING HAZARD SAFE: Your Risk MAP Timeline

Discovery Meeting

Flood Study Review

CCO and Public
Meetings

Resilience
Meeting

Effective Maps

Example: Don't Put Them to Sleep

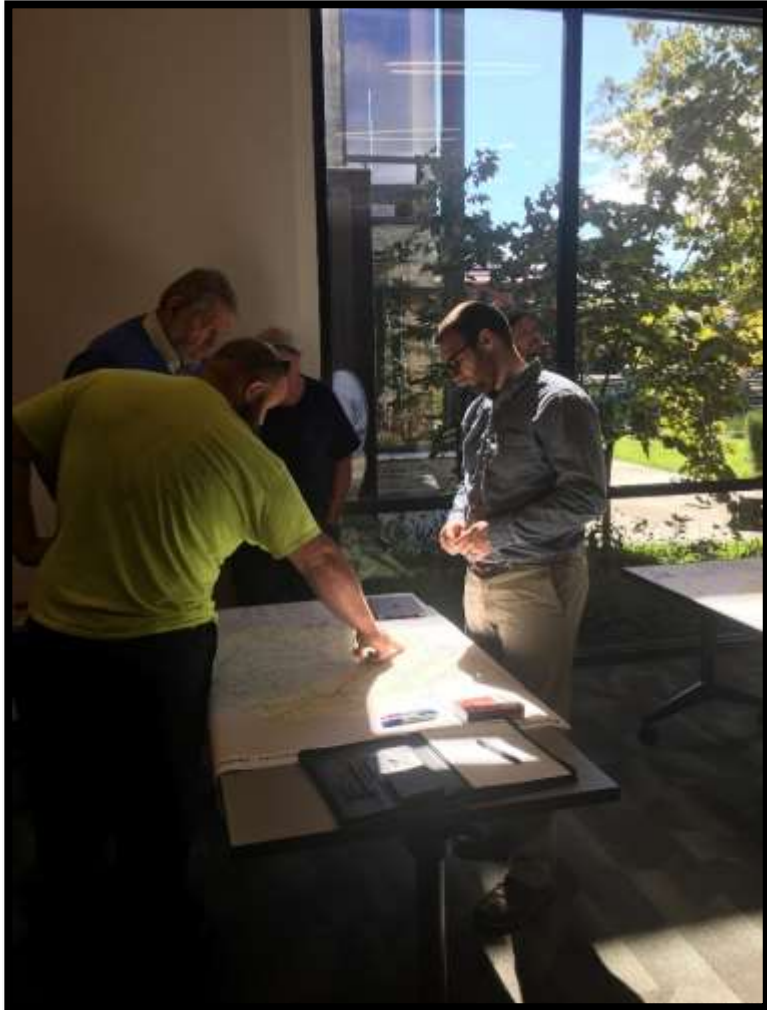


Kentucky
UNBRIDLED SPIRIT

Example: Don't Put Them to Sleep



Frequent Communication



- Provide bite sized information frequently
- Refer back to previous messages to draw connections
- Empower your audience

Example: Frequent Communication

- Monthly email blast to all local coordinators
- Phone calls
- Risk MAP follow-up
- KY Watermaps
 - Flood Risk Portal
 - FEMA Map Updates
- KAMM Conference & Seasonal Training
- Webinars



Example: Frequent Communication

Lyon County

- Withdrew from the NFIP in Jan 2013
- Risk MAP
- Frequent, onsite meetings
 - FEMA Representation
- Online Tool for Prelim Maps
- Reinstated on 3/15/2018



Contact Info

- Alex VanPelt, CFM
 - Kentucky NFIP Coordinator

alex.vanpelt@ky.gov

- Katherine Osborne
 - Project Engineer
Stantec

Katherine.Osborne@stantec.com



Questions

