Introduction and Overview

Region 9 represents Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the island nations of Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. It serves a culturally diverse population in excess of 47 million people and covers almost 400,000 square miles with a breadth of more than 8,000 miles and three time zones, including the international date line. The region’s most common disasters are hurricanes, typhoons, and other storms such as atmospheric river events that can cause flooding, flash flooding, and landslides. It also experiences earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and wildfires.

Priorities for Region 9

In Arizona, the Arizona Floodplain Management Association (AFMA) continues to provide a means of local representation on a state-wide basis regarding policies and activities dealing with floodplain management within the state of Arizona. This includes promoting the common interest in flood hazard mitigation, enhancing cooperation between the various related private, local, state, and federal agencies, and encouraging and ensuring new and innovative approaches to managing the state’s floodplains.

California initiated the H2F - Headwaters to Floodplains: Flood Safety Partnership in 2019. H2F is not a program or a grantmaking group. The partnership strives to leverage existing resources to make them more available and perhaps more effective. The partnership also may identify new opportunities for funding, data, and technical assistance.

Hawaii intends to carry out the duties and functions as the State Coordinating Agency for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Hawaii will continue to service its communities with the core functions fully state funded. Hawaii DLNR will no longer participate in the CAP-SSSE grant.

In Nevada, the Nevada Division of Water Resources (NDWR) Floodplain Management Program, formerly a part of the Engineering Section with Water Planning and Dam Safety, has been transferred to the newly established Water Planning and Drought Resiliency Section. The overall planning goals of the NDWR Water Planning and Drought Resiliency Section support the division’s mission to conserve, protect, manage, and enhance the state’s water resources for Nevada’s citizens. The new section will take on the responsibilities and duties outlined in NRS Chapter 540, which include floodplain management.

Challenges for Region

In 2019, Region 9 continued to experience devastating fires in Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada. The annual fire season for the western region states is starting earlier and ending later each year. Climate change is considered a key component of this trend. There were also flooding disasters, typhoons, and an earthquake in the region.

- Arizona declared the Museum Fire on Sunday, July 21, 2019. The Museum Fire was a 1,961-acre blaze in the Coconino National Forest that lasted from July 21 until full containment was declared Aug. 15. Also in Arizona, a Navajo Nation Snowstorm and Flooding event was declared on Monday, May 20, 2019.
• **Nevada** experienced wildfires again in northern Nevada and made three Fire Management Assistance Declarations including the Jasper Fire declared on Friday, July 12, 2019, Canyon Fire declared on Tuesday, August 20, 2019 and the Long Valley Fire declared on Friday, August 23, 2019.

• **California** experienced fires in northern and southern California again and made 10 Fire Management Assistance Declarations in October/November of 2019, including: Saddleridge Fire, Kincade Fire, Tick Fire, Getty Fire, Hill Fire, Easy Fire, Hillside Fire, 46 Fire, Maria Fire, Cave Fire. The California fires can be attributed to drought, a buildup of dry vegetation, and extreme winds. These wildfires caused the loss of life, destroyed homes, and impacted urban and rural Californians. The state also experienced severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides in March, April, and May of 2019 due to atmospheric river storms. Due to a Magnitude 7.1 earthquake, the second in a series of two large earthquakes in Southern California in the Ridgecrest area, California made an Emergency Declaration on Sunday, July 7, 2019.

• **Hawaii** made a Fire Management Assistance Declaration for the Kahana Ridge Fire on Tuesday, October 22, 2019. The wildfire burned under 1,000 acres above Kahana Ridge in West Maui.

• The island of **Guam** was impacted by Typhoon Wutip, the first typhoon of 2019. Typhoon Wutip was the second one on record to occur in that part of the Pacific in February. The **Northern Mariana Islands** made Emergency Declarations for Typhoon Hagibis declared on Sunday, October 6, 2019 and Typhoon Bualoi declared on Saturday, October 19, 2019.

In 2020, Major Disaster Declarations for the Covid-19 pandemic were made by California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. The pandemic has led to the cancellation of many scheduled events in Region 9 due to stay-at-home orders.

**Feedback to ASFPM and Recommendations**

• Recommend ASFPM continues to provide members with access to webinars and virtual trainings that offers continuing education credits (CECs). With the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, many organizations have had to reschedule or cancel training and conference opportunities that many members depended on to gain CECs. A robust series of webinars and virtual training programs will allow CFMs to maintain their certification.

• It would be helpful if ASFPM could offer guidance on substantial damage and substantial improvement plans. Many of the Region 9 states are updating their substantial damage and substantial improvement standard operating procedures and plans for their state.

• Encourage ASFPM to continue to share policies, activities, and educational materials promoting sound floodplain management in communities. It is beneficial to share success stories from communities in other regions.