

THE INSIDER



An exclusive publication for ASFPM members

—July 2019

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National CFM® Program Reaches 20-Year Milestone!

Written by Louie Greenwell, GISP, CFM, CBOR President & Director of Operations for MTech Solutions, LLC in Columbus, Ohio

In 1995, ASFP formed a special task force to look into a way to recognize the professionalism of floodplain management activities and formulate a process for those professionals to continue their education and stay up-to-date with changes to regulations, legislative requirements and building a comprehensive understanding of the NFIP. After several years of effort from many talented and dedicated people, ASFP offered the first national, standardized Certified Floodplain Manager exam in May 1999 at the annual conference in Portland, Oregon. While New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas had been offering their own versions of the exam, the creation of the national exam and subsequent certification program was a major benefit for the floodplain management community. Anyone serving in a floodplain management role could finally substantiate their job knowledge, and their CFM credentials would let everyone know they "knew their stuff!"

Twenty years later, more than 10,500 people across the United States continue to maintain their CFM status. The CFM program is known worldwide as the benchmark for demonstrating proficiency in floodplain management principles and regulations. The 120-question exam measures knowledge from seven categories: floodplain mapping, NFIP regulatory standards, regulatory administrative procedures, flood insurance, flood mitigation, natural and beneficial functions and overall floodplain management. In addition to passing the exam, CFMs must adhere to a Code of Ethics and must keep their job knowledge current through continuing education credits.

This year, at the annual conference in Cleveland, Ohio, ASFPM honored all those who passed the national exam in 1999 as our first inductees into the **CFM Hall of Fame** (see list below). These individuals recognized the value and importance of obtaining and maintaining certification and their dedication to the profession have earned them “rock star” status!

Gerard Brems
Cynthia Crecelius
Donald Gauthier
Pete Ghelfi
Al Goodman
Thomas Hieb
Scott Lyle
Kari Mackenbach
Michael Parker
Jeanne Ruefer
Alisa Sauvageot
Kathleen Schaefer
David Starrett
Lynn Thomas
Christopher Thoms



A handful of the first people who took the exam 20 years ago in 1999, which is when our program went national. We wrangled them at this year's ASFPM Annual National Conference in Cleveland. L-R: Kari Mackenbach, Jerry Brems, Cindy Crecelius, Jeanne Ruefer and Alisa Sauvageot. Photo by John Hays.

Words of wisdom from some of the people who took the CFM exam 20 years ago

Kari Mackenbach, certification no. 26, said, “I started off as a local floodplain manager for Licking County, Ohio under **Jerry Brems** who was the director of planning at the time. In 1998, I left the public sector world and became a consultant at FMSM (now Stantec). Consulting suited me because it let me have the positive impact I was looking for on the environment, and it let me blossom into a promoter of more sustainable alternatives when it comes to developing our lands. Anyone who knows me, knows I am passionate about the environment and the sound uses of our floodplains. I will say that if I did not have the experiences in managing floodplains in Licking County, I am not sure where I would be today. Keeping my certification is critical to me because it helps to define me professionally and sets me apart from the engineering community who I work with hand in hand.”

Alisa Sauvageot, certification no. 7, said, “Way back in 1998 I was brand new to Wyoming Emergency Management Agency, brand new to Cheyenne, and fresh out of graduate school. I needed to quickly learn my role in managing the NFIP CAP-SSSE and gain confidence in my position as a civilian in a military-dominated office. FEMA Region VIII encouraged ASFPM participation, and all my state counterparts encouraged me to join this great organization. I learned about the new CFM Program at the first Triennial

National Floodproofing Conference in Baton Rouge (February 1999) and decided passing the test would give me the ability to succeed in my job. I remember sitting in the conference hotel lobby studying with a few other state coordinators, quizzing each other in the last five hours before the test (how hot the testing room was, those little blue books we had to write in, missing out on a field tour, the stress of testing, but it was worth it...I passed the test!

"I renew every year because I like the floodplain credibility the CFM designation provides. It also has allowed me to obtain positions and advance my career, because I am a CFM while others were not. I was hired for my current position as a FEMA environmental floodplain specialist at a higher level because I am an experienced CFM. I am proud and honored to be CFM lucky #7!"

Jeanne Ruefer, certification no. 34, said, "I was new to floodplain management in 1999, having just started a new job with the state of Nevada as the NFIP coordinator in 1998. In that role, I was able to attend the ASFPM conference in Milwaukee (1998) for the first time and take training at EMI. My boss at the time encouraged me to get involved with ASFPM, and I felt that having the certification would be beneficial in my work. The CFM® Program was just getting started, and I remember taking the beta test at EMI, just to see what it was all about. I have kept my CFM fresh because it lends credibility to my work in floodplain management. Even though I have had several different roles over the last 20 years, having that basic understanding of how to administer the NFIP and development in the floodplain has been an asset to my career."

Cindy Crecelius, certification no. 32, said, "For those of you who weren't here yet, 1999 was a happening year! **President Bill Clinton** was acquitted, **John F. Kennedy, Jr.** was killed in a plane crash and **Sponge Bob Square Pants** was coming on strong (a missed opportunity by not making Sponge Bob the LOMC champion!).

"As the NFIP coordinator and floodplain program manager in Ohio, I related to 'Livin' La Vida Loca' by **Ricky Martin**. I was eyeball deep in flood response from two federal declarations in 1996, followed by major disaster declarations in 1997 and 1998. In 1999, the FPM Program was midway through a major information technology project to boost GIS capability and preparing to partner with FEMA on digital mapping. OR was I just looking for a way to distract myself from Y2K worry? Anyhow, there was an opportunity at the 1999 ASFPM Annual National Conference to take the first-ever CFM exam.

"In 1999 the floodplain manager profession was very broad. There were many disciplines and areas of expertise practicing our methods, developing our policy and supporting the science behind flood-risk identification and management. I saw the CFM as a way to provide common ground and expectations among those practicing floodplain management at the federal, state and local level. Although our jobs differed, it gave us a consistent basis for talking and managing.

"We had a state coordinator/FEMA lunch session at the conference, which cut into the time block scheduled for the exam. A few of us showed up an hour late and still managed to complete it. In the first exam version, there were questions and mapping exercises that could benefit from more clarification. I think I wrote as much in the margins of the test as I did on the answer sheet! (Poor **John Ivey** and his committee had to wade through our legitimate and editorial type comments because I know we were not a shy bunch.) At the Thursday night social event, John let the 'cat out of the bag' that I had passed! That was a great relief (no study guide or tutorial assistance on the first run). I felt like my credibility was on the line as there were several new staff in my program, and how could I lead them if I didn't have the knowledge?"

“As for how the CFM helped throughout my career...I used the CFM as a professional growth and development tool within our state program and among Ohio’s local floodplain managers. The state program was in a building phase and most of the staff were young and diverse (e.g. engineering, GIS, planning, environmental science and natural resources). The CFM body of knowledge became a benchmark for us. Within a few years we had achieved 100% CFMs in our technical staff. Although there were no direct monetary compensations or promotions tied to the CFM, I do believe the program staff and I gained satisfaction in knowing we “knew our stuff!”

“Even after retirement from the state coordinator and a decade of self-employment, I maintain my CFM because of the connection and continuing growth amongst our profession. I hope that I can continue to share the knowledge gained as a CFM, and help to develop the future floodplain management professionals and CFMs.

“If I had it to do over – yes, I would still become a CFM!”

CFM Corner—Where your Career and Practice Meet

CFM Renewal 7/31/2019—ASFPM CFMs who are up for their biennial CFM certification renewal July 31, 2019, have been sent a letter and renewal form via snail mail. If you have not received yours, please contact **Anita Larson** at cfm@floods.org or (608) 828-3000 so your CFM does not lapse.



REMINDER! All CFMs, regardless of being an ASFPM member or not, now have access to the CFM portal. [To get to the portal, go here](#), and if you forgot or need a password, just enter the email address you use for our records and we’ll send one to you. There are links behind the portal to upload CECs electronically and update your information. To help you know what qualifies, refer to the [Guidance for Continuing Education Credit](#) and new [CEC Verification form](#).



Don’t be surprised if you’re at the Emergency Management Institute campus in Emmitsburg and spy ASFPM’s CFM brochure. They were put on display this June (thank you, Robert Perry, for snapping this picture). And if you’d like to print them out and display them yourselves, feel free. They can be found [here on ASFPM’s website](#).

ASFPM Working to Incorporate Floodplain Management Principles into Emergency Management Curriculum

While floodplain management and emergency management are often seen as curriculum disciplines that do not intersect in higher education, ASFPM and the ASFPM Certification Board of Regents for the

[CFM certification](#) are working to change that. Deputy Director **Ingrid Wadsworth** and our [Higher Education Committee](#) Co-chair **Jerry Murphy** presented at the [21st Annual Emergency Management Higher Education Symposium](#) on this topic in June.

“There has been a fundamental shift in thinking the past few years,” Wadsworth said. “Cities and regions are preparing a variety of mitigation measures and progressive planning practices to implement projects and measures to withstand our changing climate and create resilient communities. We are working to inspire universities and programs to incorporate these floodplain management principles in their emergency management curriculum so their graduates can have a full spectrum of skills.”

Afterward, many of the attendees said they had never heard about some of the tools presented like the mapping and flood barrier testing products of the [ASFPM Flood Science Center](#), the myriad issues our policy committees are tackling such as urban flooding, nor the topic areas the CFM exam covers. Since connecting with higher education universities is a goal of the higher education committee, Murphy said he intends to follow up with attendees to help navigate these curricula into their programs.



Jerry Murphy (L) and Ingrid Wadsworth presenting at Emergency Management Higher Education Symposium.

The symposium took place on the Emergency Management Institute campus in Emmitsburg, Maryland and it attracts more than 250 professors and educators from universities around the country that offer emergency management curricula.

The primary goal of the FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Program is to work with colleges and universities, emergency management professionals, and stakeholder organizations to help create an emergency management system of sustained, replicable capability and disaster loss reduction through formal education, experiential learning, practice and experience centered on mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery from the full range of natural, technological and intentional hazards that confront communities, states and the nation.



The CFM Exam Workgroup, a subcommittee of CBOR, was at the ASFPM office in Madison, Wisconsin this July for its annual meeting. The workgroup is responsible for the exam, analysis and questions pool for the CFM exam. They review performance of the exam at least annually, modify/change/add questions and make recommendations to CBOR. L-R: Charla Marchuk, CFM, FEMA/FIMA; Roger Lindsey, P.E., CFM, Metro Nashville Water Services; Dr. Warren Campbell, P.E., CFM, Western Kentucky University; Ingrid Wadsworth, CFM, ASFPM; Jerry Murphy, CFM, University of Florida. Not pictured is Anita Larson, ASFPM.

Interested in professional development for flood-risk professionals? Do you have ideas that could help enhance and strengthen the floodplain management profession? Get involved by joining [ASFPM's Professional Development & Continuing Education Committee](#).



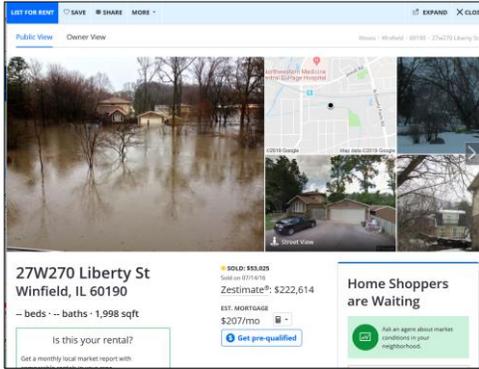
Great news! The [PowerPoints of presentations](#) from #ASFPM2019 are now ready for viewing. Please note this page can only be accessed by people who attended the conference. You should have received an email with the password. If you haven't, please contact sarah@floods.org.

And we just [uploaded 21 videos from #ASFPM2019](#) (no password necessary). Need to get inspired again by the fantastic speakers? Want to show your boss, co-workers or elected officials some of the incredible work happening around the country regarding floodplain management? This is the place!



**Don't forget to save
the date for
#ASFPM2020!**

What if Flood Disclosure Really Looked like this on Zillow?



This is a real property listing in Winfield, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago ([view it here](#)). Wouldn't it be awesome if all listings were this honest about flood risk? Well, we can dream, can't we? It's a mystery, even to the real estate agent we contacted, why this property is listed on Zillow in the first place (it's not for sale or available to rent). But according to the recent [Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management newsletter](#), the village of Winfield purchased the property. So...YAY!

Things You Just Don't Want to See in a Flood

Full Disclosure: We're not saying who provided us with these photos in order to respect the Privacy Act.



Flood mitigation technique probably not FEMA approved. This air conditioner unit was mounted on top of a plastic garbage can to avoid flooding.



Turn Around, Don't Drive on the Levee! We have been assured that this was not photo shopped. The driver kept driving on this levee because his GPS told him he was on a road. The driver eventually was evacuated by a helicopter.



Technically, this does count as "elevation."



Seemed like such a brilliant idea at the time. Homeowner used a Bobcat to cut a hole in a berm and flooded his walkout basement (and the Bobcat).

Get to know Your New ASFPM Board of Directors & Committee Co-chairs



Ricardo Pineda is our new chair. In addition to being a supervising engineer with the California Department of Water Resources, Pineda is an avid bicyclist, commuting to work every day!

"In 2013, a group of us cycled around Crater Lake at Crater Lake National Park in Oregon. We tried again in mid-June 2016, but got caught in an unexpected snowstorm. The skies cleared just long enough for this picture (at left). As a water engineer, I like to explore the headwaters of watersheds and better understand the relationship of snowpack on flood risk and water supply."



Glenn Heistand, our new treasurer, is the senior hydraulic engineer in the Coordinated Hazard Assessment and Mapping Program, or CHAMP, at the Illinois State Water Survey. He has an MS in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois and a BS in Civil Engineering from Ohio Northern University. Heistand joined the ISWS in 2009 and manages the H&H studies used for FEMA mapping projects and other collaborators. Previous to that, he practiced as a private consulting engineer in Ohio for 14 years, specializing in water resources engineering and floodplain modeling. Heistand is the current past chair of the Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management and lives in Monticello with his wife, three daughters and a lazy golden retriever. He spent his teenage years living in Wapakoneta, Ohio across the street from **Neil Armstrong's** parents, where he met the famous astronaut and was completely unimpressed as a 16-year-old kid, but now wishes he could relive the experience of shaking Neil's hand.



W. B. "Bill" Smith, our new [Professional Development & Continuing Education Committee co-chair](#), has been a registered professional engineer specializing in hydrology and hydraulics for more than 45 years. He's owned Hydropower International Services, Inter-National Consultancy, LLC for the past 19 years, and is recognized as a world leader in hydropower development and dam design. Smith is a CFM, past chair (twice) of the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association, created the OFMA Institute (the library of training materials for Advanced Training); teaches the L-273, and created and coordinates the OFMA Disaster Response Team. He developed the original floodplain maps and FIS in 23 communities in northeast Oklahoma in 1978-1979 and is a floodplain administrator for three communities in Oklahoma. Smith was ordained as a Deacon in the Episcopal Church June 29, 2019, after four years of study through the IONA Program of Formation in collaboration with Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas, and serves at Christ Church Episcopal in Tulsa.

Steve Ferryman, ASFPM's new Region 5 director, joined the Ohio Emergency Management Agency in December 2008 and serves as the mitigation branch chief for Ohio. The Mitigation Branch administers FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs for the state and is also responsible for maintaining the *State of Ohio Hazard Mitigation Plan*.



Prior to joining the Ohio EMA, Ferryman, a CFM, worked at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water, Floodplain Management Program for nine years. His responsibilities included assisting communities in maintaining NFIP compliance and providing technical assistance and information about floodplain management. Ferryman helped develop and implement the Floodplain Management Program's first grant to Ohio communities, which provided funding and technical assistance to create local natural hazard mitigation plans.

He graduated from Ohio State University in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science in Sustainable Resource Management with an emphasis in Water Resources. He said, "I love spending time with my wife **Gretchen**, and two teenage boys, **Bryan** and **Joe**. I enjoy most anything in the outdoors including hunting, fishing, hiking and camping."



Bill Nechamen is hardly new to ASFPM, but he does have a new position, having just been elected as our **District 1 Chapter director** (and also serving as our **Floodplain Regulations Committee co-chair**). In his own words, he wrote, "For those who don't know me, I'm one of the 'geezer' board members, having been on the board off and on since 2003, including a memorable (to me anyway) stint as chair from 2013-2015.

"I've been in the floodplain management arena since 1996, when my employer, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, offered early retirements and lost most of its central office floodplain staff. Against my wishes, I was transferred to the floodplain management unit and learned to love the topic. I ran for the board again because I want to offer my experience and because I want to help ASFPM provide more services to its chapters and members. I retired from state service two years ago and now provide floodplain management related consulting services. I love living in the Northeast. My adopted hometown of Schenectady, New York is far enough from the big cities to have easy access to the woods, mountains, lakes and streams of New York and New England, and close enough to have easy access and lots of local culture. My outdoor pursuits tend to be goal oriented. I'm one weekend backpacking trip from completing my walk along Vermont's Long Trail from Massachusetts to Quebec in once-a-year weekend segments. And when you read this, I will have just completed a 390 mile, week-long New York state bike tour from Buffalo to Albany along the historic Erie Canal, where I'm certain I was busy annoying people by pointing out inappropriate floodplain development."



Anna Serra-Llobet, our new **International Committee co-chair**, is an environmental scientist whose research focuses on flood-risk management policies. She received her Ph.D. in Environmental Sciences from the Autonomous University of Barcelona in 2011. After that, Serra-Llobet interned at the Directorate General for the Environment at the European Commission in Brussels, working on the analysis of EU funded research related to hydro-meteorological risks (floods and droughts) and vulnerability assessment in Europe. Currently, she is a researcher at the Institute of International Studies of the University of California at Berkeley,

conducting comparative research on sustainable flood management strategies comparing the U.S. and EU. In 2017-2018 she was a fellow researcher at the Institute of Advanced Studies of the University of Aix-Marseille conducting research on regulatory flood maps in France.



Karen McHugh is also no stranger to the ASFPM Board of Directors. She's served as our secretary and treasurer, and was just elected as the **Region 7 director**. McHugh also is the Missouri state floodplain manager, and it's her unflinching determination that helps her set and achieve high goals for herself.

"It took me a mere 30 years to get my college degree! I began my college adventure at Kansas State University in the 1970s, but then 'life' interrupted, as life often does, and I moved out of state and began my family. But I never gave up on my wish to have a college degree, and I finally made the decision to go back to college in 2005, even though I was working full time. They say older students are the best students, and whether it's true or not, I obtained my B.A. in Business Administration in 2010, graduating Summa Cum Laude. College tuition is a passionate conversational subject these days, so I'll throw in my two cents and say that I paid for my education one class at a time, full tuition. But it was worth it. It's NEVER too late to fulfill your dreams!"



David Powers, our [International Committee](#) co-chair, is a water resources engineer and hydrologist at CDM Smith with 25 years of experience specializing in surface water issues. Based in Richmond, Virginia, he works extensively on flood-risk management projects around the country, including flood modelling and mapping, disaster recovery and risk communication. Powers' experience includes urban stormwater management and permitting, water quality assessments and stream restoration projects. He has been involved in research on flood-risk management and green infrastruc-

ture in the EU, China and the U.S. In his free time, he likes to dive, spearfish, travel and explore ancient ruins. Before his career was tragically cut short in a mammoth stampede, Powers was on track to compete in the North American atlatl championships in Clovis, New Mexico (not true, but a testament to his great sense of humor).

ASFPM knows what a commitment it is to serve as a volunteer for us, in addition to your full-time jobs, families and hobbies. So we wish to give a heartfelt thank you to the following for their dedicated service to ASFPM, our members and this profession: Chair Maria Cox Lamm, Vice Chair Brian Varrella, Treasurer Amanda Flegel; Region 5 Director Rod Renkenberger, Region 7 Director Steve Samuelson, Region 9 Director Jeanne Ruefer, District 1 Chapter Director Janet Thigpen, District 5 Chapter Director Dianna Woods, International Committee Co-chairs Bo Juza and Shana Udvardy, Professional Development & Continuing Education Committee Co-chair Jessica Baker, Mapping & Engineering Standards Committee Co-chair Steve Story and No Adverse Impact Committee Co-chair Alisa Sauvageot.

ASFPM's Newest Floodplain Manager Arrived in June

Rebecca Pfeiffer, ASFPM's board secretary and [Natural and Beneficial Functions Committee](#) co-chair, and **Chris Brunelle** welcomed **Augustus (Gus) Xavier Brunelle** June 9. Gus has already started studying for the CFM exam and is excited with his current fCFM certification (future CFM)! Congratulations Rebecca and Chris, and welcome aboard Gus!



Did you know Guam just established the nation's first territorial Silver Jackets team?



The coast of Guam.
Photo by Ellen Berggren, 2019.

According to the [spring 2019 issue of The Buzz](#), a historic moment took place Feb. 5, 2019—the Guam Silver Jackets team convened for the first time.

The U.S. Corps of Engineers Honolulu District initiated discussions with the Guam government in August 2018 with the Coastal Management Office and the Office of Civil Defense. "What we have done these past few months is an exemplary demonstration of leveraging resources," said Edwin Reyes, administrator of Guam's Coastal Management Program, according to the article.

Despite the challenge of being 19 hours ahead of the Honolulu District, coupled with being 15 hours ahead of the U.S. East Coast, the Guam Silver Jackets team serves to be the catalyst for interagency collaboration across all the agencies and territory. The team met for the second time in March to develop an interagency proposal for the upcoming federal fiscal 2020 proposal cycle.



Members of the Guam Silver Jackets team gather for its initial meeting Feb. 5, 2019. This marks the first official Territorial Silver Jackets team in the nation. Photo by Jeff Herzog.

Grant Opportunities...

Just a reminder to bookmark the Florida Climate Institute's website for a comprehensive list of [funding opportunities](#). It's a fabulous resource.

Flood Insurance Committee Corner



Deeds and Misdeeds

A question was recently asked of the [Flood Insurance Committee](#). Is a community official allowed to put a deed restriction on a property requiring the owner to buy flood insurance? We learned that in this case the home is located outside of the floodplain in an area subject to localized stormwater flooding.

The rationale seemed to be that because this property is outside of the floodplain, there wouldn't be a mandatory purchase requirement through the lender even though the area is flood prone. We can all agree it is a good idea to have flood insurance. And it's a good idea to recommend flood insurance to our citizens. That being said, we can't see how it would be legal for a local community official to require a property owner to purchase flood insurance in this instance.

There is a question that comes up about arbitrary enforcement even if this were possible. How would a local community floodplain manager be able to state that one property must purchase flood insurance when not making the same requirement of another property? There is no local law that would support doing this. Even if it were legal, the next question is how would a local community floodplain manager enforce this law? Would property owners be required to file copies of their flood insurance annually at City Hall?

This topic opened up a broad range of discussions related to deed restrictions, covenants and notices in general. One member noted that this type of requirement could be entered into as an agreement under a condition for a mitigation grant. Subdivision plats require notations of base flood information be on the plat. Not exactly the same thing as requiring flood insurance for any homes in the subdivision.

An example was provided of somewhat similar requirements when there was a security/performance bond for a site. The bond was used to take corrective measures if the responsible property didn't address the problem. The issue here would be the duration of the bond, who it is drawn against and what happens when the bond is exhausted? That point is similar to a common practice in leases for oil wells and zoning for quarries that have a bond to restore the property at the end of the use.

Another member agreed that flood insurance could not be required, but posting a notice on the deed to say the property is prone to flooding is a good idea. Future buyers of the property would do a title search before the purchase and become aware of the fact the property is flood prone. With that knowledge, it would be up to them to purchase flood insurance. Property sellers would probably not be very happy with this type of notice.

Several people commented on the fact that non-conversion agreements attached to deeds are common. This is typically used when there is a full story crawl space and the owner agrees not to convert the enclosed area below the lowest floor to living space.

Co-chair Steve Samuelson has advocated for the use of notices on deeds as part of the process to correct violations. This protects new buyers from purchasing a property without knowing there are violations, such as the lowest floor below the base flood elevation. New buyers will hire an abstract company to do

a title search and discover the notice. New buyers do not have access to the 1316 list and may not find out about 1316 until after closing. A notice letter can be attached to the deed by paying a fee to the Register of Deeds. Typical notice is in the format of an affidavit of noncompliance. Legal description on the affidavit must exactly match the legal description on the deed. And the affidavit should cite the specific regulation the property is in violation of and the year the regulation was adopted. The specific Flood Insurance Rate Map information should be spelled out with the dates as well. Dates are important because maps and regulations can be revised later. Once the problem is corrected, a new affidavit of compliance is posted on top of the existing non-compliance affidavit.

There are a wide variety of special notices that can be put against the deed by floodplain managers in local communities. Requiring flood insurance is not a common practice for this type of use. Community officials should not put a notice against a deed that mandates flood insurance without advance consultation with their legal counsel.

Have you experienced something like this before, or do you have some additional suggestion? Please send those comments and any other insurance questions or topics to InsuranceCorner@floods.org.

Humbly yours,

Bruce Bender and **Steve Samuelson**

—[Your Flood Insurance Committee Co-chairs](#)



Hurricane season began in June, and FloodSmart has lots of promotional materials (in English and Spanish) to encourage people to get flood insurance:

<https://agents.floodsmart.gov/hurricaneseason>

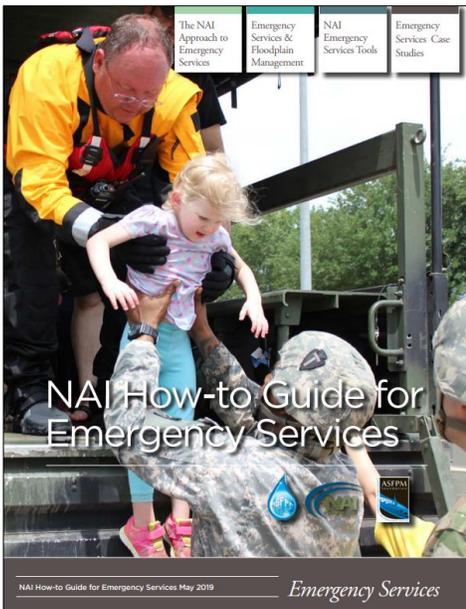
In addition, the [NFIP Resource Library](#) contains informational videos, post-disaster photography, customizable postcards and ready-to-use fact sheets to help you tell the story of flood risk. All of these resources, including the [Cost of Flooding Tool](#), can be [found here](#).

Job Corner

Looking for a job? Looking for someone to fill a position at your company or agency? Please check out available career opportunities on ASFPM's website. **It's free**, whether you're looking at [job postings](#), or an employer wanting to [post an opening](#)!

- Director of Flood Science & Community Assistance needed for the Texas Water Development Board in Austin.
- The Texas Water Development Board in Austin is also hiring a director of flood planning.
- St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners in St. Augustine, Florida is looking for a floodplain manager.

Seventh No Adverse Impact How-to Guide Completed This one Focuses on Emergency Services



Communities that effectively reduce flood losses and promote and protect public safety make sure the actions of one person do not adversely affect others. That is the essence of **No Adverse Impact** floodplain management.

One of the seven tools of the NAI approach is providing a well-planned and effective response to a pending flood that will protect life, property and natural floodplain functions. Such a response should take advantage of available floodplain management data, programs and staff. Therefore, **a key tenet of this approach is for the floodplain manager and emergency manager to work together before, during and after the flood.**

Emergency services should make life safety and protecting critical facilities a priority and ensure that flood response efforts do not adversely impact properties already exposed to flood damage.

The [NAI How-to Guide for Emergency Services](#) reviews what can be done when the floodplain manager and the emergency manager use available resources and coordinate their activities to develop an effective warning and response plan. Seven factors are recommended for communities to follow to improve their warning and response plans and programs:

1. Clearly designate roles and responsibilities
2. Communicate and coordinate
3. Take advantage of help
4. Obtain and share the best available data
5. Educate the public
6. Train and exercise
7. Evaluate and improve

While there are different approaches to organizing emergency services, this guide describes four tools that illustrate the basic parts of such a program: flood threat recognition, flood inundation maps, flood response, and critical facilities.

Experience has shown that when an emergency or disaster response plan includes flood-specific measures, it will help save lives and reduce property damage when a flood occurs. This guide encourages close cooperation between the floodplain manager and emergency manager to develop, practice, use, evaluate and revise emergency services tools that take advantage of the early warning time, a system that provides the early warning, and flood inundation maps that show where a flood will go.

[**Check out all of ASFPM's NAI How-to Guides here.**](#)

ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis Testified before House Subcommittee July 10



To meet today's challenges of riverine and coastal flooding in an era of more frequent and severe storms, sea level rise, and skyrocketing disaster costs, it is important that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers take a broad, comprehensive and watershed-based view of overall flood-risk management.

ASFPM Executive Director **Chad Berginnis** stressed this point, along with other policy recommendations, during a July 10 hearing before the congressional Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment. The subcommittee is part of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Some of his testimony, [which can be viewed here](#) and/or [read his full written testimony here](#), focused on the benefits of natural and nonstructural flood-mitigation approaches to flood-risk management such as buyouts, relocating homes in flood-prone areas and elevating buildings. These types of projects are often less expensive and more sustainable than more traditional structural projects like levees and floodwalls that also sometimes have unintended consequences, like increasing flood hazards upstream, downstream and across the river. The operation and maintenance costs are often exceeding communities' ability to pay, which is their obligation.

Berginnis served on the second panel along with **Rob Innis** on behalf of the of Waterways Council Inc.; **Tom Waters**, chairman of the Missouri Levee and Drainage District Association; **Julie Hill-Gabriel**, vice president for water conservation (National Audubon Society); **Derek Brockbank**, executive director of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association; and **Dr. F. Martin (Marty) Ralph**, director of the Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes (Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego). They followed the first panel made up by **Rickey Dale "R.D." James**, assistant secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army – Civil Works; and **Major General Scott A. Spellmon**, deputy commanding general for Civil and Emergency Operations, United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Read more about the hearing, [including written testimony from others, here](#). You can also [watch the full recording of the hearing here](#).

ASFPM & Flood Mitigation Committee Submit Comments to FEMA on BRIC

ASFPM and our [Flood Mitigation Committee](#) submitted comments July 15, 2019, on the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (or BRIC) program.

Overall, we support BRIC and think it has the potential to be a game changer in mitigation and reducing flood losses around the country. But we do have concerns and offer suggestions, [which you can read here](#). **ASFPM just learned that comments are still being accepted, preferably before Aug. 1. Submit comments to buildbric@fema.dhs.gov.**

FEMA **Mitigation Minute** **HMA**
Hazard Mitigation Assistance

Since May 20, FEMA has received over 200 comments through IdeaScale to consider when developing the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program.

Suggestions to HMA include:

1. Addressing upfront financing challenges for large mitigation projects
2. Enhancing current capacity and capabilities
3. Creating incentives for developing and implementing Hazard Mitigation Plans
4. Providing solutions for how to enforce stronger building codes

In the coming weeks, HMA will host two Tribal Stakeholder Input Sessions to:

- Provide a brief overview of BRIC
- Ask for feedback on key topics in the development of BRIC

Recommendations from these sessions will be integrated with the 4500+ stakeholder comments submitted through IdeaScale and all past HMA BRIC Input Sessions to inform BRIC program design.

FEMA

ASFPM Upcoming Webinar Opportunities

[Check the ASFPM Webinars Schedule Regularly for Upcoming Events.](#)

Have a story you'd like to share with ASFPM newsletter readers? Email ASFPM PIO Michele Mihalovich at michele@floods.org.



Floodplain Manager's Notebook

Rebecca Quinn, CFM

This month, as I realized I was running late to get my column to "The Insider" editor, I looked back at previous issues (we're supposed to recycle, right?). Six years ago this month I observed that one of the clues you might be "getting on in years" professionally speaking, is how often you're asked how you came to know what you know. My answer is unchanged: experience and a willingness to always keep learning.

What has changed is how often I hear or become aware that people don't have time to read (not even my Notebook columns!). How can you do your job – conveying technical information and interpreting regulations – without reading? Underneath all floodplain management regulations and building code provisions are the NFIP regulations, good ol' CFR § 60.3. Regulations are not literature. They're not subject to wildly varying interpretations of meaning.

Ideally, every person rendering an interpretation of a regulation will give the same answer. Of course, we know that's not the case. The real world is always coming up with a nuance or scenario that wasn't precisely anticipated when regulations were written. This is why FEMA produces so many guidance documents – to increase the chances that we'll rely on documented, acceptable interpretations. Well, that's one reason. The other is if you don't apply your regulations properly there may be consequences for your community (probation, suspension) and property owners (increased risk, higher insurance costs).

And so, I think to properly do the job of a floodplain manager you need to be willing to read guidance documents. And by that, I mean actually read – not just do a few keyword searches. Taking the time to actually read is part of your job, especially if you're new to the field or faced with an unusual situation. Yes, I understand and occasionally succumb to the lure of instantaneous word searches in lengthy documents (more on that later). I also know how risky it can be to do that without **also** reading the surrounding content.

FEMA no longer produces guidance materials in hardcopy – now they're all readily available online (just search the publication number). I recommend you print the ones you use most. I keep hard copies of my most-used publications, filled with penciled margin notes. There are benefits to keeping your own notes. One is uniformity when the same question arises in the future, and the other just might be passing your knowledge on to your successor.

Now, about taking the time to read. When was the last time you read an NFIP technical bulletin start to finish? Even the longest ones are only 30-some pages – and that includes diagrams and photographs. Isn't it worth the hour or so to read it through, at least once? How about the "[Substantial Improvement/Substantial Damage Desk Reference \(FEMA P-758\)](#)"? Have you read it? This manual is, hands-down, one of the most valuable that any floodplain manager can have, packing decades of FEMA guidance into just over 100 pages. I teach a 3- to 4-hour class on it. One of the first things I say to the class is that it's impossible to teach the entire manual in just a few hours. But it **is** possible to read it in about four hours ... "class, please turn to page 1." No, I don't make them sit there and just read, although doing so would

yield greater benefits. Many times someone asking my advice has started with “I was told at a training that ...” only to discover the instructor wasn’t teaching based on FEMA guidance.

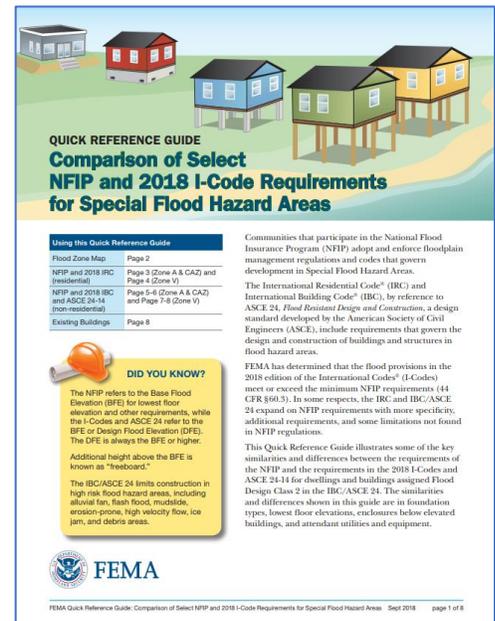
Six years ago I put together a recommended reading list for newcomers to floodplain management. I’ve updated it below. An introductory reading list isn’t supposed to be the end-all, be-all. But it should cover the basic knowledge every state and local floodplain manager should have. And consultants – before you advise a client (or teach a class), I sure hope you’ve done the research to keep your advice in line with FEMA’s guidance.

We need to know the basics before we advise others. Remember, if what we tell a community official or a property owner is wrong, it’s bad enough that people and property could be at risk, but property owners could end up paying for our lack of understanding through much higher flood insurance premiums. And here’s another hint – right after a flood event is the wrong time to decide to learn the ABCs of floodplain management, especially about handling substantially-damaged buildings.

My suggested reading list is shown below, but always check that you have the most recent version. This list is focused on the fundamentals. What would you add to it for the practicing floodplain manager? I’d appreciate your comments and suggestions for additions.

1. [NFIP Technical Bulletins](#), the most frequently used TBs cover flood openings, flood damage-resistant materials, breakaway walls and free-of-obstruction. Do you know there are TBs for dry floodproofing certification, elevators, below-grade parking, wet floodproofing, corrosion-resistant connectors and placement of fill? And then there’s my least favorite, the still-draft after 18 years and misleadingly titled TB for below-grade crawlspaces (please, please read the strict limits on allowing this deviation from the basic premise that below-grade areas are basements and basements are not permitted).
2. [FEMA 480](#), “NFIP Floodplain Management Requirements, A Study Guide and Desk Reference for Local Officials,” about 15 years old and incomplete in some respects, so be sure to pair with more recent guidance documents.
3. [FEMA P-758](#), “SI/SD Desk Reference.”
4. [FEMA 213](#). “Answers to Questions about Substantially Improved/Substantially Damaged Buildings,” this is a complete rewrite of the old “green cover” edition.
5. [FEMA P-85](#), “Protecting Manufactured Homes from Floods and Other Hazards,” be sure to check out some pre-engineered foundation solutions.
6. [FEMA P-348](#), “Protecting Building Utility Systems from Flood Damage.”
7. [FEMA P-936](#), “Floodproofing Non-residential Buildings.”
8. [FEMA P-499](#), “Homebuilder’s Guide to Coastal Construction,” in a handy fact sheet format, with lots of illustrations and content that are valuable in all flood zones, including riverine communities.
9. [Non-engineered Opening Guide](#), chock full of pictures and measurements of common products, not a FEMA publication.
10. For states and communities that enforce building codes, download and review the following from the FEMA Building Science webpage for [Building Code Resources](#):

- Flood Excerpts of the 2018, 2015 and 2012 I-Codes (and a checklist that shows how the I-Codes and ASCE 24 meet the minimum NFIP requirements for buildings).
- Highlights of ASCE 24-14 (ASCE 24 is referenced by building codes (order it from the [American Society of Civil Engineers](#)).
- [Quick Reference Guide: Comparison of Select NFIP & Building Code Requirements for Special Flood Hazard Areas](#) (illustrated).
- [Reducing Flood Losses through the International Codes](#), especially chapter 3 which describes several differences between the I-Codes and the NFIP minimum requirements – FYI, a new edition will be published in the coming weeks.



How to Do Global Searches in Multiple PDFs: Despite my plea for you to read, I understand the reality of word-searches. Plus, since there are a large number of FEMA guidance publications, I'm passing along this handy-dandy tip. I hope it'll improve the chances you'll check all the applicable ones. First, be sure you have the most recent versions. Then save a copy of all the pertinent publications in one directory (for starters, download those in the reading list). Next, open Adobe (but not a publication). Click <Edit> and on the dropdown menu, select <Advanced Search.> Click the radio button for <All PDF Documents in> and in the drop-down menu select <Browse for location.> Navigate to the directory where you saved the publications. After you select the directory, input the word or phrase and hit <Search>. Every publication in which that word or phrase appears will be returned. Click on one of the search results and that PDF opens to where that word appears (if the word is used a lot, a lot of links will show). Click on the results for all the publications to get a complete picture. The key is to think broadly about what terms are applicable to each issue you're interested in and do searches on each term.

And there you have it, my just-in-time-for-summer beach reading list. Enjoy!

Submit your own items or suggestions for future topics to column editor Rebecca Quinn, CFM, at rcquinn@earthlink.net. Comments welcomed! Explore back issues of the [Floodplain Manager's Notebook](#).



FEMA News You Can Use

Learn About Hurricane Michael Recovery Advisories from the FEMA Mitigation Assessment Team

Hurricane Michael's flooding and high-winds in 2018 resulted in extensive damage to all types of buildings in the Florida panhandle. FEMA recently released Hurricane Michael Recovery Advisories and has scheduled three webinar sessions in August to discuss the advisories. These RAs are intended to assist various stakeholders in rebuilding more resiliently by providing design and construction guidance to help minimize damage from future storm events. Registration is required for these webinars.

For the first two offerings, participants must register for both content sessions. For the third webinar, only one registration is needed. Each session will have a 15-minute period for questions and answers. The webinars are available to anyone interested in the topics and content and will offer mitigation suggestions to attendees. The webinar schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2019 (Noon to 1:45 p.m. EDT)

[Session 1: Successfully Retrofitting Buildings for Wind Resistance](#) Suggested attendees include: building owners and operators, design professionals, contractors, and entities that fund retrofits.

[Session 2: Best Practices for Minimizing Wind and Water Infiltration Damage](#) Suggested attendees include: building owners, operators and managers; design professionals; building officials; contractors; and municipal building and planning officials.

Thursday, Aug. 15, 2019 (Noon to 1:45 p.m. EDT)

[Session 1: Successfully Retrofitting Buildings for Wind Resistance](#)

[Session 2: Best Practices for Minimizing Wind and Water Infiltration Damage](#)

Monday, Aug. 19, 2019 (1:30 to 3 p.m. EDT)

[Session 1: Successfully Retrofitting Buildings for Wind Resistance](#) with Q&A

[Session 2: Best Practices for Minimizing Wind and Water Infiltration Damage](#) with Q&A

Registration: [Please register by clicking here.](#) Registration is required to join any session.

To learn more about FEMA's Mitigation Assessment Team Program, please [click here](#).

To learn more about FEMA's Building Science Branch, please [visit its website](#).

If you have any questions about this webinar, please contact the FEMA Building Science Helpline at FEMA-Buildingsciencehelp@fema.dhs.gov.

Review of Changes to the Policy for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping

FEMA has a maintenance plan for the Risk MAP guidelines and standards and issues updates on an annual basis. This notice provides information about the 2019 annual update which is expected to be released in November 2019. A summary of the planned changes was published in June 2019. [Those changes are explained here.](#)

What's Happening Around the Nation?

A collection of the most viewed stories on our [Facebook](#) page

Florida—"While elevating fully-intact homes like Noah's is uncommon, city officials say it may soon become more popular. Flooding is a perennial threat for low-lying coastal communities in St. Petersburg, and federal flood insurance premiums have risen steadily for years—a cost experts predict will only intensify as flooding becomes more frequent in years to come." [Read the article here.](#)



The Nation—"In renewing the NFIP—which lawmakers must do by Sept. 30—America's elected officials should change the law to require sellers to disclose available information about a property's flood history and risk." [Read the article from Pew here.](#)



The United States spends far more on helping people rebuild after disasters than preventing problems, with great quotes from ASFPM members Paul Osman and Tom Palko. [Read the NYT article here.](#)



Today more and more communities are beginning to realize that 20th-century development practices are harmful. It's ushering in a new era of thinking about floodplain management — one that involves letting rivers behave like rivers. [Read "Let Rivers Flood" here.](#)



Great piece from Wetland's Watch Executive Director Skip Stiles. If you attended [#ASFPM2019](#) in Cleveland, you may have heard him speak at one of our three plenaries. Read "[Cost Poses Biggest Challenge to Regional Resilience.](#)"



Thailand—In Bangkok, it's called an "anti-flood park." Whatever the name, we love it! [Watch the video here.](#)



Virginia—"In 2018, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission unanimously approved a set of sea level rise planning scenarios (1.5 feet for 2050; 3 feet for 2080; 4.5 feet for 2100). All 17 localities of our region came together to approve these consistent standards. We are one of the only regions in the country to accomplish this task." [Read the OpEd piece here.](#)



West Virginia—Following one of the worst disasters in West Virginia history, nearly 3,500 homes were deemed structurally damaged by FEMA. At least 1,500 homes were destroyed, state officials said. But those bottom-line numbers have not been so simple. Read "[Debate over Housing Needs.](#)"



Missouri—St. Charles, one of the most flood-prone cities in the state, is planning a \$1.5 billion riverfront development along Missouri's banks, 120 acres of upscale shops, restaurants and apartments mostly in the river's floodplain, an area that has been partly submerged this summer. [Read here.](#)

FEMA Flood Risk Communication Toolkit and Videos for Community Officials

FEMA's Risk Management Directorate debuted its Flood Risk Communication Toolkit and YouTube video series at ASFPM's annual national conference in Cleveland. The toolkit and video series are intended to empower community officials to more effectively communicate with the public about flood risk to help residents and other stakeholders become full partners in increasing resilience. The resources showcase benefits of the mapping program and its connection to risk reduction and resilience. The toolkit and videos use plain language, and the information they provide is standardized but not traditional. The series helps FEMA deliver on its promise to provide simpler, more consistent experiences for its customers.

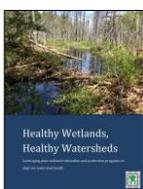
The Flood Risk Communication Toolkit includes several components with tips for discussing complex risk topics in a meaningful way. The YouTube video series includes eight 2- to 5-minute videos that tell personal stories from around the country that communicate technical information in a relatable manner. Both are now available on the [Risk MAP](#) page of FEMA.gov as the fifth featured story in the banner. They can be directly accessed [here](#). Links to the toolkit and videos on FEMA's YouTube channel are also saved under Publications on ASFPM's [Risk Communication & Outreach Committee](#) page.

These new and exciting resources will be featured on the Resilient Nation Partnership Network Lunch and Learn Aug. 14, and the subject of a 2-hour facilitated workshop at the August CTP training at the Emergency Management Institute. Please contact **Michelle Madeley** at michelle.madeley@fema.dhs.gov for questions.



Above: The cover of the social media component of FEMA's Flood Risk Communication Toolkit featuring an excerpt from the guide itself.

The Association of State Wetland Managers Releases White Paper



Nature-based approaches for water quality, hazard mitigation, climate change, biodiversity, economic growth, agricultural productivity and other issues have received a significant amount of interest and support in recent years. However, few studies have been performed to analyze how these approaches have been implemented, what the barriers to success may have been, and what kinds of lessons learned can be shared for others interested in pursuing a nature-based approach. This white paper, "[Healthy Wetlands, Healthy Watersheds: Leveraging State Wetland Restoration and Protection Programs to Improve Watershed Health](#)," captures and provides in-depth analyses of eight state program integration case studies as well as nine on-the-ground watershed projects to identify what worked, what didn't work, what some of the barriers to success were, how those barriers were circumvented and lessons learned that can be shared. Additionally, the white paper addresses the challenge of measuring the value of integration and information for users about common ways to build integration capacity. ASWM hopes this study will result in an increase in state and tribal wetland program capacity to implement and support regional, state and local efforts to restore, enhance and create wetlands for the improvement of overall watershed health and increased resiliency.

Alliance of Flood Survivors Launch Nationwide Campaign of Community Action Called “United Flooded States of America”

More than 30 local and regional leaders across 16 states are joining together to start a national campaign to combat flooding. The [United Flooded States of America](#), an initiative of Higher Ground, launched July 1 and represent hundreds of thousands of people in cities, suburbs, towns and villages from across the U.S. who have been impacted by flooding. They want action now to stop development in wetlands and floodplains, reform flood insurance laws, and reduce human-caused greenhouse gases that cause global warming. Their flag shows 50 stars, representing the 50 states, above a scene of flooded streets.



The campaign was initiated by **Harriet Festing**, who leads Higher Ground, the largest flood survivor network in the country. “I’ve been working with some of these community leaders for almost two years, helping them find the resources they need to rebuild. But every time we meet, the subject returns to how to stop future flooding, not just recover from past disasters. After this year’s record-breaking flooding in the Midwest, we agreed that the time to speak up is now.”

The group of survivors has eight demands, and are letting elected officials across the country know. The demands are: stop paving wetlands and building in flood-prone areas; prevent excessive runoff into rivers, creeks, streams and bayous; secure federal funds to elevate or buyout vulnerable homes; Install rain gardens and bioswales to locally manage stormwater; protect and expand natural buffers against floods such as wetlands, forests and barrier islands; ensure that the NFIP puts communities and science first; use climate predictions in every local government zoning, building regulation and finance decision; and reduce global warming by using only clean, renewable energy sources.

Festing said that since the launch, residents supported the campaign by attending the Charleston, SC City Council meeting July 16. They [unrolled the banner in protest](#) at a 126+acre planned development proposal (240 homes) for flood-weary Johns Island. She said the development was deferred. [Community In-Power and Development Association Incorporated](#) led by **Hilton Kelley** of Port Arthur, TX, is hosting a public event with political invitees Aug. 3. [The Coalition for Wetlands and Forests](#) in Staten Island, NY, hosted [Climate Change and Flooding: Stapleton to Graniteville](#) July 14, and [Stop the Flooding Now!](#) in Virginia Beach, VA hosted an event July 13. And during the August recess, 11 flood survivor groups will be using social media to request meetings with their members of Congress.



Farmers and landowners across the U.S. are struggling to recover after recent devastating floods. So the **USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service is offering more than \$200 Million in emergency funding to restore flood-prone lands.**

[Read the press release here.](#)

A Hearty Welcome to Individuals who Joined ASFPM in June 2019!



Adam E. Lefort, S. Central Planning & Dev. Commsn., LA
Adam I. Klein, Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc., Oakland, CA
Albert E. Smythe, Gadsden County, FL
Alejandro Colon Garcia, FEMA, Ponce, PR
Alyeasha C. Clay, City of Monroe, LA
Amarilys Rosa Torres, FEMA, Caguas, PR
Anne C. Baker, American Flood Coalition, DC
Anthony R. Cox, Sr., City of Atlantic City, NJ
Autumn K. Friday, Hamilton County, TN
Benjamin S. Cary, Kleinschmidt Assoc., Portland, OR
Brian Ribarro, Borough of Fort Lee, NJ
Camille Graham, SmartVent, Inc., NJ
Carmen J. Vega Lugo, FEMA, San Juan, PR
Cherie Estelle LeCompte, Sellers & Assoc., Inc., Lafayette, LA
Connie Youngblood, Crisp County, GA
Cristina M. Gonzalez-Rivera, FEMA, Canovanas, PR
Curtis Craig McRaney, USACE, Vicksburg, MS
David RF Young, Tennessee Valley Authority
Denisse Rosario Alvarado, FEMA, Trujillo Alto, PR
Devin A. Foil, St. John the Baptist Parish, LA
Eric M. Behan, FEMA, San Juan, PR
Felix E. Suarez, Jr., 3TCI, Inc., Miami, FL
Francisco Rodriguez Gordils, FEMA, Ponce, PR
Frank A. Dominguez, FEMA, Guaynabo, PR
Gerard Santos Mercado, FEMA, San Juan, PR
Ginger M. Delaughter, Winn Parish Police Jury, LA
Heather Tank, Hillsborough County, FL
Hector M. Gonzalez, FEMA, San Juan, PR
James A. Odom, IBTS, Central, LA
Jason K. Shackelford, Freeses & Nichols, Inc., Baton Rouge, LA
Jason Sciuлло, Sciuлло Engineering Services, LLC, Margate City, NJ
Jeanette L. Clark, City of Denham Springs, LA
Jeffery C. Neal, Jeffrey C Neal Inc., Maderia Beach, FL
Jorge E. Lopez-Rivera, FEMA, Guaynabo, PR
Joseph M. Touvell, City of Wheeling, WV
Joshua W. Robbins, Billings, MT
Juan A. San Miguel, FEMA, Manati, PR
Julio I. Santiago Saso, FEMA, Manati, PR
Kareem R. Bonugli, Metro Nashville Water Services, TN
Katherine M. Gonzalez, FEMA, Guaynabo, PR
Kenneth J. Roberts, Town of Bloomburg, PA
Kevin Thai, Santa Clara Valley Water Dist., CA
Kimberly J. Rosario Melendez, FEMA, Ponce, PR
Laura Adleman, AECOM, Oakland, CA
Laura Mendoza, Adaptation Strategies, New Orleans, LA
Mairim Martinez Baez, Municipio Autonomo de Guaynabo, PR
Margaret E. Zuercher, Jacobs, St. Louis, MO
Matt Powell, City of Bowling Green, KY
Meagan E. Calahan, Santa Clara Valley Water District, CA
Megan E. Crowe, Livingston Cnty., NY
Miaekia W. Wilcox, City of Denham Springs, LA
Natalie A. Gill, Hamilton County, TN

If you have any questions
about your membership,
please contact:
memberhelp@floods.org

Nathan J. Morgan, City of Sultan, WA
Niels van Eybergen, HDR Engineering, Inc., Cedar Rapids, IA
Paola M. Burgos Delgado, FEMA, Guaynabo, PR
Richard Allen, City of Wildwood/Borough of W. Wildwood, NJ
Rocky A. Wilde, Wakulla County, FL
Ryan Littell, Valley Water, CA
Sean E. MacCotter, Borough of Beach Haven, NJ
Shanameeka S. Frank, Evangeline Parish Police Jury, LA
Silvio J. Baruzzi, U.S. Coast Guard, DC
Sonja M. Ommundsen, Stonefield Engineering, Rutherford, NJ
Stephen C. Poposki, City of Cape Coral, FL
Steven M. Bell, CWE Inc., Placentia, CA
Summer M. Renzi, City of Ventnor, NJ
Tanner D. Langer, Cowley County, KS
Terry D. Moore, City of Mt. Vernon, MO
Terry Frelot, Calcasieu Parish, LA
Tin Lin, Santa Clara Valley Water District, CA
Tonia A. Pence, FEMA, Baton Rouge, LA
Trina Gilliam, City of Rockledge, FL
Tyler J. Keenan, Olsson Assoc., Omaha, NE
Vincent J. Caruso, Borough of Lodi, NJ
Vincent J. Lupo, Township of West Milford, NJ
Wanda I. Cameron Aviles, FEMA, Manati, PR
Wendy S. Bouilly, Livingston Parish, LA
Wilfredo Mangual Gonzalez, FEMA, Guaynabo, PR
William J. James, Santa Clara Valley Water Dist., CA
William W. Lawson, Livingston Parish Council, LA

Washington Legislative Report

Meredith R. Inderfurth,
ASFPM Washington Liaison

Progress, but No End in Sight Yet

June and July have been busy months for progress on NFIP reauthorization and reform, appropriations for Fiscal Year 2020 and beginning work on the next Water Resources Development Act.



The House Financial Services Committee has reported out its five-year NFIP reauthorization and reform, but work on technical corrections and a delay in getting a “score” from the Congressional Budget Office have prevented a House floor vote. In the Senate, a bipartisan group of senators introduced a comprehensive reauthorization and reform bill July 18, but no action on that bill has been scheduled as yet. With the House having left for its August recess July 25, it’s clear the House bill cannot be passed until September. The Senate will not leave for the August recess until Aug. 2, but is not likely to take any flood insurance action before Sept. 9 when Congress returns. Given all of that, another short-term NFIP extension is likely since the current authorization expires Sept. 30.

The House has passed 10 of the 12 regular appropriations bills for FY20. The Senate, however, has not even marked up any of its bills in committee. Senate leadership did not want to begin mark-ups until an agreement on overall budget amounts was reached. After lengthy negotiations between Congress and the White House, an agreement was finally reached and passed in the House July 25, just before the House began its August recess. It is widely expected that the Senate, which is in session for another week, will pass it before leaving for its August recess. That means that September will see many appropriations mark-ups in the Senate Appropriations Committee and perhaps some bills passed. However, since the House and Senate do not return until Sept. 9, that only leaves three weeks until the new fiscal year begins. It seems very unlikely that all of the bills can be marked-up, reported out of committee, passed and agreements reached between Senate and House versions in three weeks. A Continuing Resolution to keep federal agencies operating at FY19 levels is almost inevitable.

In other business, there is movement toward the next WRDA. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has begun to collect ideas and recommendations. The Water Resources Subcommittee held its first hearing July 10 to examine implementation of WRDA 2018 and to develop thoughts for the next WRDA. ASFPM Executive Director **Chad Berginnis** testified at the hearing. A separate article in “The Insider” provides more detail about his testimony and about the hearing (pg. 15). During the hearing itself, witnesses are limited to a five-minute presentation and then responses to questions from subcommittee members. Written testimony can be any length and is distributed to all subcommittee members and is made part of the official hearing record.

There is noticeably more focus on climate change and its projected impacts in the House of Representatives during this session. In addition to establishing a new Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, other committees are including climate issues in their hearings on agencies and policies within their jurisdiction.

NFIP Reauthorization and Reform

There are now three bills awaiting further action in Congress. [H.R. 3167](#) was reported out of the House Financial Services Committee unanimously – a rare happening in this very divided, partisan Congress. Both sides compromised to achieve an agreed upon result. [H.R. 3111](#) addresses claims and appeals issues. That bill was also reported out of committee unanimously. It was expected that the bills would move quickly to the House floor, but the Congressional Budget Office has not finished its work to “score” H.R. 3167. Knowing how much the provisions in the bill will cost and whether or not savings are included to offset costs is important information for members before a vote is taken. [Here is the Section-by-Section Summary of this bill.](#)

S. 2187 was introduced in the Senate July 17 and referred to the Senate Banking Committee. The measure has a bipartisan group of influential sponsors including Sen. **Robert Menendez** (D-NJ), Sen. **Bill Cassidy** (R-LA), Sen. **John Kennedy** (R-LA), Sen. **Marco Rubio** (R-FL), Sen. **Kirsten Gillibrand** (D-NY), Sen. **Cindy Hyde-Smith** (R-MS), Sen. **Chuck Schumer** (D-NY), Sen. **Jack Reed** (D-RI), Sen. **Cory Booker** (D-NJ), Sen. **Elizabeth Warren** (D-MA) and Sen. **Chris Van Hollen** (D-MD). In the last congressional session, the chair and ranking minority member of the banking committee had their own skeleton bill, but no similar bill has emerged this Congress. The path forward is less than clear. Will they use the House bill as a base and add elements of S. 2187? Will they use S. 2187 as the base and add elements of H.R. 3167? Will the banking committee write its own bill? Will the Senate take up another short-term extension? If so, will it be for three months, six months or more? Will it be kept as a clean reauthorization or will some want to include reform elements? Many, but not all, of these questions will be answered in September.

There are many similarities and differences between the two bills on the table at the moment. Both would reauthorize the NFIP for five years; both would increase ICC coverage from \$30,000 to \$60,000 and would allow ICC payments above the maximum policy coverage amounts; both have provisions for assisting lower income homeowners; both provide for a state revolving loan fund for mitigation; and both would cap premium increases at lower than at present. The House bill does not address the NFIP debt. The Senate bill would suspend interest payments on the debt and re-direct those funds to mitigation. The House bill would authorize \$500 million for mapping, but the Senate bill would authorize \$400 million, which is the current authorized amount. [Here is the Section-by-Section summary of S. 2187.](#)

Appropriations

Now that Congress/White House agreement has been reached, Congress can avoid sequestration that would have required major budget cuts below existing levels. The appropriations process can now continue, but with only three weeks until the next fiscal year begins, passage of the 12 regular appropriations bills is highly unlikely. Therefore, a short-term Continuing Resolution is very likely to be enacted in September.

Ten of the House bills were brought to the House floor in bundles known as “mini-buses.” The two remaining bills are Homeland Security (which includes FEMA) and Legislative Branch. The Homeland Security bill has been held up due to ongoing issues surrounding funding for “The Wall” between the U.S. and Mexico. The bill has been reported out of committee. It includes \$250 million for flood-risk mapping – the highest level ever appropriated for the program. And it provides \$375 million for EMPG, an increase over the \$350 million appropriated for many years. Another disaster emergency supplemental appropriations bill is likely to be needed, but there is no timing announced for addressing those issues.

Other Pending Legislation of Interest

There are several other bills moving through the legislative process or are expected to do so.

H.R. 3702 Reforming Disaster Recovery Act: This bill would codify the [CDBG-DR](#) program and provide some uniform program guidance. It would set timelines for distribution of funds and would establish an Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilient Communities in HUD. It includes a focus on technical assistance and capacity building for local governments. The bill was sponsored by Rep. **Al Green** (D-TX) and Rep. **Ann Wagner** (R-MO) and was reported unanimously out of the House Financial Services Committee in July. On July 26, a similar bill was introduced in the Senate by Sen. **Brian Schatz** (D-HI) and Sen. **Todd Young** (R-IN). The bill number is not yet available.

H.R. 3462/S. 1958 The Shelter Act: The bill would authorize a tax credit for 25% of qualifying mitigation expenses up to an annual limit of \$5,000 per taxpayer. Homes or businesses located in or close to areas of declared disasters in the past 10 years are eligible. The Senate bill, sponsored by Sens. **Michael Bennet** (D-CO) and **Bill Cassidy** (R-LA), was referred to the Senate Finance Committee. The House bill, sponsored by Reps. **Charlie Crist** (D-FL) and **Gus Bilirakis** (R-FL) was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

H.R. 2189/S. 1069 The Digital Coast Act:

This bill would codify the Digital Coast initiative at NOAA. ASFPM is an active member of the Digital Coast Partnership, a group of organizations that work with and promote use of the Digital Coast tools. The measure has passed the Senate twice, but has not been brought to the House floor for a vote in previous Congresses. Sens. **Tammy Baldwin** (D-WI) and **Lisa Murkowski** (R-AK) have again introduced the bill in the Senate and Reps. **Don Young** (R-AK) and **Dutch Ruppersberger** (D-MD) have again introduced the bill in the House. Prospects for House passage seem brighter this year. The House Natural Resources Committee has already held a hearing.

H.R. 3541 Coastal Climate Change Adaptation Preparedness and Response: This bill would amend the Coastal Zone Management Act to establish a coastal climate change adaptation preparedness and response program at the Department of Commerce. A hearing was held July 25 by a House Natural Resources Subcommittee. Another bill considered during that hearing is H.R. 2185, which would include the District of Columbia in the Coastal Zone Management Act!

H.R. 3623 Climate Risk Disclosure Act: The bill would require companies to disclose greenhouse gas emissions, fossil fuel assets and their risk from climate-related changes. The House Financial Services Committee reported the bill out of committee July 24.

Other Hearings

House Homeland Security Committee held a hearing in June on FEMA Preparedness.

House Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing on the direction of EPA with four former administrators.

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing in June on Waters of the U.S.

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee held a hearing in June on the nomination of **Jeffrey Byard** to be FEMA administrator.

All bills referenced [can be found here](#) and typing in the bill number or title.

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