ASFPM Vice Chair
Annual Report

Annual Conference-Atlanta, Georgia

Ceil C. Strauss, Vice Chair
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During my second year as vice chair, I continue to be impressed by the knowledge, efforts and passion of the ASFPM’s Pod facilitators, committee co-chairs, executive office staff and officers. As a member, I understood that ASFPM provides lots of valuable information and updates on national and local issues of interest to the members through the “Insider” and “News & Views” newsletters and member alerts. But as vice chair, I have been exposed to more of the depth and breadth of ASFPM involvement and efforts.

The primary responsibility of the vice chair, in addition to serving on the board, is to interact with the ASFPM’s co-chairs of the 14 policy committees through a summer retreat, bi-monthly calls, and in other conference call/email forums on a regular schedule or as issues arise. Our committees are grouped into four Pods, each with a Pod facilitator who helps with communicating between all the committees that should be involved with a particular issue or topic. Our committee co-chairs and Pod facilitators have a great breadth of knowledge and experience.

This year the committee retreat was held July 29-31, 2014 in Madison, WI. It was a very productive time, with high energy and great ideas being discussed. We got briefed on the evolving and continuing issues of concern, while leaving time to work at the committee and POD levels to focus on work plans and determining priorities for the year.

Throughout the year, staff and volunteers have provided invaluable comments, recommendations and analysis through a variety of formal and informal comment opportunities. The committees are often called upon to provide comment or insight on very short timelines. With implementation of Biggert-Waters Reform Act of 2012 (BW-12) and the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014(HFIAA), our executive office and many of our committees and Pod facilitators continue to be very busy this year. Extensive comments were provided on a draft of a report on Section 26 (consideration of flood risk reduction methods that warrant reduced insurance premiums). We have members who are part of the newly re-established Technical Mapping Advisory Council, and there is coordination between them and the applicable committees, especially the Mapping and Engineering Standards Committee. There have been some formal comment
opportunities, including updates to FEMA forms, Waters of the U.S. definition (for the Clean Water Act), and the draft implementing guidelines for the new federal flood risk management standards resulting from the new Executive Order 13690. The committees have contributed heavily to commenting on these, and other review opportunities through the year. The Flood Insurance and Flood Mitigation Committees continue to be especially busy with helping ASFPM to be able to comment on impacts of the new law or policy changes and to disseminate information on what the new legislation and policies mean at the local level.

The committees have also been involved in many other types of projects. Some examples include the National Mitigation & Floodproofing Workshop held Oct. 26-31, 2014 in Bloomfield, CO; No Adverse Impact Committee’s “How-to Guides” on “Planning” and “Education and Outreach” should be available soon, and writing is in progress for the “Regulations” and “Mapping” guides; and a multi-committee white paper effort on riverine erosion hazards.

We had realized last year that many members were not familiar with what our committees do, or how they as a member could be more involved in the committee efforts. So in order to help our members understand the work our committees do, ASFPM’s Public Information Officer, Michele Mihalovich, has been highlighting several of the committees in each issue of “Insider” over the past year. We hope this will help our members to be aware that committee-level work is where a major portion of ASFPM’s work is done. And we will continue to try to find additional ways to let members know that if they have a particular interest or passion for a topic, the committee level is the best way to get involved!

It has been my honor to serve as your vice chair the past two years. I truly appreciate the hard work of so many of our volunteers and staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Ceil Strauss, CFM