



**NEW YORK STATE  
FLOODPLAIN AND STORMWATER MANAGERS ASSOCIATION**

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March 11, 2015

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New York Congressional Delegation  
Sent by Facsimile

**RE: Executive Order 13690 and the new Federal Flood Risk Management Standard**

Dear Member of Congress:

The New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association (NYSFSMA) is a statewide professional organization dedicated to reducing loss of life and property damage resulting from floods. As flood damages in New York State and across the country continue to increase, our members recognize that the existing federal standards for protecting new development in floodplains are not adequate. President Obama has addressed this concern by issuing Executive Order (EO) 13690, which revises Executive Order 11988 and proposes a new Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS). **On March 11, 2015, the NYSFSMA Board of Directors approved the attached resolution supporting the new FFRMS. We ask that you join us in supporting this standard, which promotes improved flood resilience for federal projects.**

The purpose of the new standard is to protect federal taxpayer investments in floodplains. The standard would only apply to actions that are built or funded by federal agencies, not private development. The definition of federal actions is unchanged from EO 11988, which does not apply to local floodplain development standards, flood hazard mapping procedures, flood insurance, or non-federal projects. The draft guidelines allow flexibility in how each agency implements the new standards based on the type of project, flood characteristics, and available data. The FFRMS requires consideration of alternatives that are located outside of flood-prone areas and would not contribute to increased flood hazards. When federal actions are located within the flood hazard area, a higher level of flood protection would be required. This will have a positive economic impact by reducing future disaster recovery costs.

The proposed standard promotes wise investment of taxpayer dollars, resiliency, and improved public safety. We thus ask you to support the new FFRMS and the revision of agency procedures to apply this standard to federal programs. For additional information, please contact the NYSFSMA Public Policy Committee Chair Janet Thigpen at 607-737-5271 or [jthigpen@co.chemung.ny.us](mailto:jthigpen@co.chemung.ny.us).

Sincerely,

Kenneth Jennison, CFM  
Chair

## **Resolution supporting the new Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS)**

Whereas, the New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association (NYSFSMA) is a Chapter of the Association of State Floodplain Managers and represents more than 400 community officials, engineers, scientists, and other professionals working in the field of floodplain management in the State of New York;

Whereas, flood losses in New York State and across the country are increasing, with national losses now exceeding \$10 billion each year;

Whereas, current approaches to flood risk management, including the older standards found in Executive Order 11988, are no longer adequate to reduce losses in the country;

Whereas, the President's Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force adopted a higher flood standard for the Sandy-affected region to ensure that federally funded buildings, roads, and other projects were rebuilt stronger to withstand future storms;

Whereas, the proposed Flood Risk Management Standard in EO 13690 updates EO 11988 by adding freeboard to additionally elevate those federally funded actions in floodplains to improve life and safety, protect property and reduce flood insurance premiums;

Whereas, more than 20 states and US territories , including New York, have effectively adopted freeboard standards for floodplain development that exceed the NFIP minimum standards and over 350 communities have already adopted freeboard standards consistent with the new Executive Order; and,

Whereas, community resiliency in the face of increasing flood risk due to a variety of factors, including watershed development, climate change and rising sea levels, not only can help with long term community sustainability, but is also a wise investment of taxpayer dollars;

*Therefore be it resolved* that the New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association:

1. Supports the development, issuance and implementation of the new FFRMS that was issued by President Obama on January 30, 2015;
2. Urges the Administration and Congress to quickly implement the FFRMS after obtaining public input; and
3. Urges federal agencies to work more cooperatively with states and communities when funding, financing or undertaking development and to adhere to state and local standard when they are found to exceed those found in the FFRMS.

Moved: Colleen Fullford

Seconded: Brian Zitani

Date: March 12, 2015

Contact: For more information contact Janet Thigpen, NYSFSMA Public Policy Committee Chair, at 607-737-5271.