NFIP Reform Legislation

By Chad Berginnis, CFM, Associate Director, ASFPM

It appears the NFIP reform legislation, including a 5 year reauthorization, may very well pass Congress this fall. The Flood Insurance Reauthorization and Reform Act (HR 1309) passed the House on July 12th. The Senate Banking Committee reported its bill out of committee on September 8th and the measure is awaiting Senate floor consideration and a bill number. There are significant similarities in the two bills and the differences do not seem impossible to resolve. If both House and Senate committees agreed to a final version, that measure could be brought to the House and Senate floors for approval before the November 18 expiration date, and then sent to the President for signature.

The nature and breadth of many of the reform measures is reflective of current program challenges yet surprising given where the mood of Congress was when the last reform act passed in 2004. Unlike that time, there is now bipartisan support for measures to increase the fiscal solvency of the NFIP—undoubtedly driven by the $17+ billion debt to the US Treasury. Yet some of these would have been unheard of 7 years ago such as the automatic movement of non-residential classes of structures to actuarial rating. FEMA’s Map Modernization program brought many issues to light concerning levees—and the proposed reform legislation contains measures reflecting that concern, whether it be related to mapping residual risk areas to better quantify the risk of areas protected by levees, or the delay in mandatory insurance purchase behind levees. The heaviest focus of the legislation is on flood insurance followed by mapping and then mitigation.

While there are significant issues in both bills, there are two provisions of particular note that have the potential for lasting impacts to the program. First, the Senate bill authorizes an ongoing national flood mapping program, with authorized funding up to $400 million per year. Since its inception, while flood mapping has occurred under the NFIP it was never an explicitly authorized activity. What this means, especially in austere budget times, is that flood mapping is a lower priority to fund versus programs that Congress has specifically authorized. The amount of that authorization is not nearly as important as the recognition by Congress that flood mapping is an activity that FEMA should be doing, and certainly it will help when Congress and the President try to balance competing funding priorities. The second is the reorganization and refinement of the flood mitigation programs funded under the NFIP. This reorganization is important because it will make them more efficient, easier for both FEMA and states to manage, and ultimately should result in speedier mitigation projects.

ASFPM has been active in supporting reforms of the NFIP since its inception, and continues to do so in light of the current legislation. For additional information visit ASFPM’s website at www.floods.org.
It is that time of year again: autumn colors, cooler temperatures, and short term reauthorization of the NFIP. However, this year there are bills in both the House and the Senate that have notable revisions to the NFIP. A number of the key provisions are in keeping with positions supported by ASFPM. The Washington Report by Merrie Indefurth is a must read.

Emails are buzzing with ASFPM alerts. A critical issue is the dramatically reduced funding level in House and Senate appropriations bills for FFY2012 ($103 and $93 million, respectively). ASFPM issued the rallying call for Chapters and all floodplain managers to contact their congressional delegations and ask for restoration of funding levels to at least that of FFY2010 ($220 million). Please contact your congressional representatives. We have a long way to go before the inventory of floodplain maps is up to date and we need to keep the momentum. Current floodplain maps nationwide will only happen with funding!

In September, I had the pleasure of attending two Chapter conferences: the Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management and the Arkansas Floodplain Management Association. Great conferences with informative presentations and lots of engaged floodplain managers! Thanks for the invitation to attend and present.

This is a particularly active period in time for floodplain management, FEMA’s roll out of Risk MAP; new levee analyses guidance in the slow-cooker; NFIP reauthorization bills with significant changes to the status quo, and the FEMA “Rethink of the NFIP.” ASFPM staff are monitoring these and other issues as they progress. Keep an eye out for “Alerts” and The Insider and News and Views to stay informed.

Have a great fall!
Best Regards,
Sally

The 5th triennial National FloodProofing Conference will be in Sacramento, CA, Nov. 28 to Dec. 1, 2011. It is hosted by ASFPM, the USACE National Nonstructural Floodproofing Committee, and FEMA. For the updates, full program, and registration, please check the NFPC-V web page here.
The opportunity to present the views of our members to national leaders is a role ASFPM takes seriously. FEMA Administrator, Craig Fugate, has appointed a National Advisory Council (NAC) established by law as a Council to “advise the Administrator on all aspects of emergency management.” The NAC is comprised of up to 35 members and meets once per quarter, with meetings open to the public. The NAC consists of emergency management providers from State, local and tribal governments, the private sector and nongovernmental organizations. The current Chair of the NAC is Jim Featherstone, the EM director for Los Angeles, and the Vice-Chair is BG Don Dunbar, Adjutant General of Wisconsin. I was appointed to the NAC for a 3-year term in December 2009, and Chair one of four subcommittees---specifically, the one covering Flood Insurance and Mitigation.

The NAC met in Washington, DC the last week in September, in order to discuss a number of key issues impacting ASFPM members. Craig Fugate discussed the latest go around on the federal budget and disaster relief. In order to have enough immediate response funds in the Disaster Relief Fund to make it to October 1, the new fiscal year, he was forced to put a hold on many recovery and mitigation projects. The debate on disaster funding will continue to be part of the budget debate that Congress cannot seem to resolve. Craig indicated that while Congress has made big cuts in FEMA grants and flood mapping money, they have not cut FEMA staff. FEMA is filling 600 vacancies at this time.

ASFPM is pleased FEMA has filled the position of Associate Administrator for Flood Insurance and Mitigation Administration (FIMA) with David Miller, the former State EM Director with Iowa. Dave dealt with many flood disasters, and was heavily involved in the Mitigation activities. Dave addressed the NAC with his vision for FIMA, including his sense that mitigation must have connectivity with all aspects of EM. He mentioned that the Phase 4 report on “Rethinking the NFIP” has been presented to Fugate and DHS, and should be made public any day. This has recommendations to Congress on options for major changes in how flood insurance and mitigation could be improved in the U.S. We will share this report with members, as soon as it is available to do so. Dave and Craig indicated FIMA will be developing a National Mitigation Framework over the next 12 months, and ASFPM will be providing input to that activity.

Ed Connor, of FIMA insurance, indicated the Flood Insurance fund will likely see a hit of $1.2 to $2.8 billion from Irene and Lee (60-80,000 claims), but they do have $1.2 billion in cash on hand to pay claims and income is about $125 million per month. Current debt is $17.75 billion, with borrowing authority to $20 billion. This means they may be able to reach the end of the 2011 year, within the cap, if no further major flooding occurs.

FEMA presented version one of the National Preparedness Goal and Strategy which we are now pleased to see includes some core capabilities for mitigation, consistent with recommendations from ASFPM and others. Those capabilities relate to community resilience to risk and disasters, as well as hazard identification.

Our participation on the FEMA NAC provides an opportunity for the leadership of FEMA to hear the issues, concerns, and ideas of our members. And so, I urge any of you to send me your ideas and concerns so that I can represent your interests in these meetings.
Engaging the Public


Room for Debate is The New York Times' forum seeking to introduce differing expert opinions, such that they may promote further discussion on key issues. ASFPM Member and Insurance Committee Co-Chair, Bruce Bender, was recently asked to weigh in on "Who Benefits From Federal Flood Aid", available here: http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2011/09/30/who-benefits-from-federal-flood-aid

Given recent Congressional happenings, Editor Susan Ellingwood posed the following question: "The Senate approved a stopgap spending bill on Monday, September 26, that ends the threat of a government shutdown and provides $2.65 billion in federal assistance to victims of floods, hurricanes and other natural disasters. Some House Republicans had balked at paying for the disaster and flood aid programs until cuts could be found elsewhere in the federal budget to cover the expenses. The assistance includes disaster relief and coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program, which has long been despised by fiscal hawks and environmentalists alike, on the grounds that it provides taxpayer money for homeowners who don't have flood insurance and who live and rebuild in places prone to flooding. Why are some people entitled to federal flood insurance while other homeowners aren't? Does the federal policy need to be changed, and if so what specifically needs to be fixed?"


White House Introduces Public Feedback Petitioning Tool
On September 23, 2011, The White House launched We the People on www.WhiteHouse.gov. It's a new way for Americans to create and sign petitions calling on the Obama Administration to take action on a range of issues that are important to them - such as small business contracting, environmental justice, or civil rights.

We the People is easy to use. Here's a message from the White House on how We the People works for you:
1. **Create or Sign a Petition:** Anyone 13 or older can create or sign a petition on WhiteHouse.gov asking the Obama Administration to take action on a range issues. Your petition will finish the sentence "We believe the Obama Administration should _____."
2. **Build Support and Gather Signatures for Your Petition:** It's up to you to build support for a petition. Use email, Facebook, Twitter and word of mouth to tell your friends, family and coworkers about the petitions you care about.
3. **The White House Reviews and Responds:** If a petition reaches 5,000 supporters within 30 days, it will be reviewed by a standing group of White House officials, referred to any other relevant policymakers and an official response will be issued.

The idea of petitioning the White House or the government isn't new, but this tool is. The White House has never tried anything like this before, and as a result, they will probably have to make some adjustments as they go. The White House blog will post updates on using We the People. So think about an issue you care about, who you can reach out to join you, and get started: http://www.WhiteHouse.gov/Petitions

FCC & FEMA: How to Communicate Before, During & After a Major Disaster
Maintaining effective communication during a disaster is no easy feat, yet it is a crucial element of successful response and recovery efforts. As communication technology shifts, so do the best methods to relay information.

On the FEMA Blog, Craig Fugate, Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Julius Genachowski, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, recently released practical advice geared toward assisting the public in better preparing for this dilemma. Outlined within two categories, including Before a Disaster: How to Prepare Your Home and Mobile Device and During and After a Disaster: How to Reach Friends, Loved Ones & Emergency Services, are 18 easy-to-follow tips.

To view these tips, please visit: http://blog.fema.gov/2011/09/fcc-fema-how-to-communicate-before.html
Lifeline Facebook App Challenge - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Deadline: November 4, 2011

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response at the Department of Health and Human Services is soliciting software applications that will further preparedness among Facebook users. Entrants will create apps that promote the personal preparedness of both users and those in their social network, with the goal of creating community resilience and increased public health. More information can be found here: http://challenge.gov/HHS/220-the-aspr-lifeline-facebook-application-challenge

Creative Use of Vacant Lots to Rehabilitate Neighborhoods & Reduce Hazard

By Kimberly Bitters, CFM, ASFPM Natural and Beneficial Functions Committee Co-chair, Ohio DNR

This article was originally published in The Antediluvian, Ohio’s Floodplain Management Newsletter, Fall 2011. Significant contributions were made to this article by members of ASFPM’s Natural and Beneficial Function and No Adverse Impact Committees.

A disturbing and increasing pattern of vacant lots can be found throughout the urban landscape. In some communities, this problem can be a symptom of devastating blight caused by rising unemployment and crime, as well as volatile real estate market pressures. These problems can be further aggravated or initiated by exposure to a natural hazard, such as flooding. Many of these vacant lots were long ago abandoned and remain in absentee owner or bank ownership, which poses serious obstacles to maintenance, property clean-up or mitigation efforts. Often the burden of maintenance falls upon the municipality without the benefit of sufficient property tax revenues to cover the cost of clean-up and/or ongoing maintenance. Still, other vacant lots are City-owned with the majority acquired through back taxes or donation, and, for most, the dwellings have been demolished due to unhealthy or unsafe living conditions.

Of the vacant structures abandoned as a result of flood exposure, causation may be direct repetitive flood damage or indirect effects by proximity to the flooding source. Deferred maintenance, as well as unhealthy or unsafe building conditions, contributes to a blight spiral that may spread to nearby areas. While the intentional practice of acquiring and demolishing floodprone structures can mitigate the risk of future flooding, the effects of vacant lots can be compounded where mitigated properties are poorly maintained and/or structures are removed in a checker-board pattern. However, these mitigated flood-prone properties have an enormous potential to benefit the neighborhood, as well as the individual property owners, through well-planned flood mitigation practices.

In the midst of these struggling neighborhoods, there is the potential for each community to apply for, and receive, support to voluntarily mitigate the structures that are most impacted by flooding. Frequently, the mitigation funding source is one of FEMA’s flood damage reduction programs, including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), or one of four other hazard mitigation grant programs. These programs provide for a number of options to mitigate the flood potential of the property including acquisition/demolition and relocation. Due to various funding and project limitations, including permanency of the action, the majority of funded mitigation projects fall into the acquisition/demolition category. Since some property owners are averse to completely giving up their homes, due to sentimental value or family heritage, the potential to mitigate these structures is lost. However, there is a potential solution available related to the large number of vacant lots that are located outside of the high flood risk areas.

To take advantage of the numerous vacant lots outside of the high flood risk areas, a community might consider setting up a creative program that could benefit both the high flood risk property owners and the community at-large. The initiative would essentially create the opportunity for a “land-swap” funded from a variety of sources and intended to meet several community goals. This land-swap could include relocating existing structures currently located in high flood risk areas to City-owned vacant lots in lower flood risk areas. Alternatively, the land-swap could simply be an exchange of parcel ownership and/or development rights so that the previously City-owned property was exchanged for the high flood risk parcel. Both of these options reduce future flood risk to private investment and retain the tax base within the community. Financial institutions holding loans on the floodprone properties may initially be stumbling blocks, but when
lenders understand the benefits of improved value-land swaps they may become advocates. As advocates of this practice, some lenders can offer additional loans to help in the relocation process. To maintain eligibility for FEMA mitigation funds, the City must maintain the high flood risk parcel as open space in perpetuity. Such a land-swap program could enable multiple community goals to be met. Private and public gains are realized as existing or planned flood-prone structures are positioned out of high flood risk areas to safer locations. In addition, relocation or construction on the previously vacant lot could bring life and reinvestment into these neighborhoods whose ongoing efforts to revitalize have not yet been realized. Long-term this initiative could motivate change in blighted neighborhoods and bring a renewed energy that may encourage more sustainable private investment.

Whether a mitigation project is pursued as acquisition/demolition or relocation of existing or planned structures, there are numerous benefits for ensuring that the floodplain property will be held as open space in perpetuity. These projects provide numerous benefits to both individual property owners and to the broader community. Benefits include reducing flood exposure to individuals and their properties, reducing public expenditure on emergency response and recovery, affording additional open space amenities, and providing permanent storage area for flood waters. However, there is the potential for vacant mitigated lots to become an eyesore and contribute to the downward spiral of already blighted neighborhoods without proper care and maintenance. In addition, maintaining mitigated sites can be a monetary liability for communities, where lack of funding and an erratic, scattered pattern of mitigated properties to care for can drain already overburdened budgets. These problems stem from an unfortunate lack of planning and, additionally, represent an enormous missed opportunity for the community!

Optimal investment returns, from both federal mitigation and community match dollars, may be achieved through integrating hazard mitigation and open space planning into one cohesive package. Integrated planning efforts will assist in strategically implementing mitigation projects so that multiple community goals are met. Locating projects so as to get the highest return on investment doesn’t necessarily have to be complicated. Giving priority to aggregated properties, especially when they are in close proximity and/or connected to existing greenways can be an easy way to meet multiple objectives. Coupling the acquisition with an ecological restoration project that returns the area to a primarily vegetated state with natural sorption capabilities, can greatly expand the flood damage reduction benefits for the neighborhood. In addition, a quick scan of the neighborhood can frequently identify priority needs such as green urban parks, recreational facilities, localized stormwater remediation, or community garden initiatives.

When multiple connected properties are available, there is tremendous opportunity to not only provide more space for flood waters, but also to return a hydraulically connected area back into the flood water sponge that it would naturally be. Improving the soil make-up and compaction as well as restoring vegetative diversity can go a long way towards restoring the area’s ability to store, slow, and dissipate water effectively reducing the extent of flooding. Restoring natural floodplain function can be accomplished through rain gardens or other low impact development techniques, daylighting culverted streams, or planting and maintaining appropriate native vegetation.

Strategic investment, steered by an integrated mitigation planning effort, can minimize the adverse impacts of existing and mitigated vacant properties and have a tremendous impact on revitalizing blighted neighborhoods. Benefits are compounded when projects can meet multiple community goals: reducing unproductive vacant lots within the City, taking citizens out of harm’s way, and ultimately rejuvenating the scarred urban landscape. In this case, multifaceted benefits may stem from giving space to the watercourse to function naturally, thereby allowing it to live up to its potential as an amenity instead of a looming flood threat.

Please send comments, examples, and other related ideas to Kimberly Bitters, CFM, ASFPM Natural and Beneficial Functions Committee Co-chair, Ohio DNR, at Kimberly.Bitters@dnr.state.oh.us
Conference Update

ASFPM 36th Annual National Conference
Call for Presenters Deadline is October 31

If you have not yet submitted your presentation for consideration in the conference program, please do so now! You don’t want to miss this opportunity to share your story with over 1,000 of the nation’s floodplain management professionals.

Additional information on the Call for Presenters, including the link to submit your presentation, is found on our website at http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuid=762.

5th National Floodproofing Conference & Exposition
Levees and Beyond: Making Wise Choices

Registration is now open for NFPC-V. This event, being held November 28 – December 1, 2011, at the Hyatt Regency in Sacramento, CA, is one you won’t want to miss. Building upon the previous four Floodproofing Conferences, we will highlight the various floodproofing methods, products, techniques, programs, funding sources, and issues prevalent in the nation. In addition to the workshops, concurrent sessions, and plenary sessions, a dynamic exhibit hall will showcase the products and services vital to getting the job done. The full conference brochure, including registration materials and hotel reservation information, is available on the ASFPM website at: http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuID=739. If your company is seeking additional exposure, sponsorship packages are also available.

Please contact Chad Ross at chad@floods.org or 608-441-3005 for more information.

NFIP

NFIP Extended Through November 18, 2011
FEMA, Risk Insurance Division

Early on October 5, 2011, President Obama signed the continuing resolution that includes a provision reauthorizing the NFIP through November 18, 2011.

Federal Flood Plan Gets Breathing Room; Expiration Date Now November 18
Washington- A bipartisan budget deal narrowly avoided a federal government shutdown and will serve to keep the National Flood Insurance Program active until November 18, 2011. This was achieved by a 79-12 Senate vote in favor of a continuing resolution to keep the government going through that date. Also included in the legislative language was one sentence extending the NFIP from the previous expiration date of September 30, 2011. A source of recent political turbulence, Democrats and Republicans have been butting heads over disaster relief funding.

To read further, please follow the link to Federal Flood Plan Gets Breathing Room
The Elevation Certificate {translated}  The American Surveyor, Volume 8, Issues 5 & 6,  By C.Barton Crattie, LS, CFM and Wendy Lathrop, LS, CFM

Part 1- Explains Section A of the Elevation Certificate after underscoring the significance of filling out the form correctly in the big NFIP area, aside from the surveyor’s professional responsibility.  

Part 2- Offers guidance to Sections B through E, completing the discussion.  

Flood Insurance Committee Corner

It’s true, folks.  Your beloved insurance committee co-chairs get a little depressed, sometimes defensive and, once in a great while, we start feeling a little put upon.  Why is that you ask?  Well, it’s no great secret that flood insurance is not as universally beloved and lusted after as we would like.  Is whipping boy too strong a description?  We think not.

If you believe all the media stories, congressional testimony, quotes from the politician of your choice and nasty, swirling rumors, you could not be blamed for thinking that flood insurance is the latest weapon to be employed by the evil socialist forces seeking to take over our fair republic.

So when a positive story about our beleaguered flood insurance program rears its angelic head, we need to get the word out.  We have such a story to share with you today.

While doing the research for a Community Assistance Visit, co-chair Heinrichs uncovered some interesting facts about flood insurance penetration and retention in one of the Milwaukee suburbs.

This upper-class bedroom city is known for mini-mansions, a great school system and lots of flood disasters.  In fact, the Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission recently reported that this city has experienced the greatest number of significant rainfall events in a seven-county region.

Until recently, this city of 40,000 had over 350 policies in force.  After receiving new maps three years ago with better topographic data, the number dropped to 112.  Not surprisingly, my office received no complaints about this change.  What is surprising is the policy distribution by flood zone.  Of the 112 policies, 104 are in a B/C zone and only eight are in an A zone.

I double-checked the figures and that is correct.  104 policy holders, mostly single-family residential, have elected to maintain flood insurance coverage even though it is no longer required.  Now it’s true that some lenders may still be requiring coverage, but if those folks really felt they had no flood risk and didn’t want to pay the reduced premiums, they could have chosen another lender.  With interest rates going down almost weekly, who wouldn’t choose that option?

For the B/C policies, the aggregate premium is about $54,500/year, coverage is $28.4 million and total losses are $415,000.  Looks like these folks made an informed decision based on past flood history.  For the eight A zone policies, the premium is $12,600/year, with $2.4 million in coverage.

One problem I noticed is that 10 properties in B/C zones still have a standard policy.  Education for insurance agents has been a priority of mine as an NFIP coordinator and I can see my job is not done (sigh).

—Your Humble Insurance Committee Co-Chairs  
Gary Heinrichs & Bruce Bender

This column is produced by the ASFPM Insurance Committee. Send your questions about flood insurance issues to InsuranceCorner@floods.org and they will be addressed in future issues of the newsletter.

News & Views  October 2011  8
Climate Risk and the Insurance Industry

This year, the United States has been hit by ten separate billion-dollar weather disasters and such severe weather is expected to increase as climate change advances. This trend is rendering the traditional insurance practices, of analyzing historical patterns, significantly less reliable. Yet, despite the broad industry consensus on increased risks attributed to climate change, few companies have formal climate change policy in place. Of those that do, it is often a narrow focus on extreme coastal weather without sufficient policy in place for other weather related risk.

Paul Kovacs, the founder and executive director of the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, stresses that “climate risk is the real issue, and climate change is a context.” Kovacs further states, “If the question to an insurer is, ‘How many climate risks led to claims this year?’ then the answer is ‘a lot.’ But if you ask how many claims were paid because of climate change, the answer is not yet that many.” In other words, the specific danger to insurance companies is still unclear. That being said, it is not an issue to put on hold.

Consider the Insurance Information Institute’s claim that 2010 delivered a record 247 natural disasters in the United States. The previous record, set in 2009, was just over 200 natural disasters. “This is a major public policy issue,” Kovacs highlights, “If we look across the U.S. and rest of the world, we look at climate risk, at who’s actually going to pay the bill,” and the majority will be paid by the insurance industry working with government.


To access the full report, Climate Risk Disclosure by Insurers: Evaluating Insurer Responses to the NAIC Climate Disclosure Survey, visit http://www.ceres.org/resources/reports/naic-climate-disclosure

Some Federal Flood Insurance Risks May Be Shifted to Private Reinsurers

Evan Lehmann, ClimateWire, September 30, 2011

“Congress is poised to give the Federal Emergency Management Agency the power to shift some of its massive financial risk from flooding to private financial firms that charge expensive fees to absorb liability from extreme natural catastrophes, like Hurricane Katrina.

The move marks a significant transition for the agency's National Flood Insurance Program, which collects enough money annually from 5.6 million policyholders to pay damage claims during standard flood years. But the program, experts say, is less prepared for "black swan" disasters, the rare mega-catastrophes that might happen more frequently as populations rise and, in some cases, as the atmosphere warms.

Both chambers of Congress are including provisions in a five-year extension of the flood program clarifying FEMA's ability to buy reinsurance. These are tailor-made contracts with financial institutions willing to pay billions if a catastrophe inflicts extraordinary damage.

Reinsurance is for entities with outsized risk, like traditional insurance companies that sometimes cede portions of their exposure to reinsurers, in some cases to satisfy regulators that they have enough cash to cover potential claims. But other organizations are increasingly pushing off their risks. They include states, countries and, perhaps soon, the U.S. government…”

Please click the following link to read further: http://www.eenews.net/public/climatewire/2011/09/30/1

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Lots in the Works

At the beginning of October and the beginning of a new fiscal year for the federal government, we have the entire government’s funding extended until November 18th and we have the National Flood Insurance Program’s authority also extended until November 18th. We have FY 2012 appropriations bills for FEMA, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Natural Resources Conservation Assistance programs, NOAA and the National Weather Service that have passed the House and have been reported out of committee in the Senate. We have a flood insurance reauthorization and reform bill that has passed the House of Representatives and we have another that has been reported out of committee in the Senate. We have a bill making many amendments to the Stafford Act which has just been introduced in the Senate with the possibility of committee action later this month.

Between now and November 18th, some further action will have to be taken on funding the government. Speculation includes an omnibus appropriations bill, several smaller groupings of appropriations bills referred to as “mini-buses” or another Continuing Resolution until at least the end of the calendar year.

Some further action will also be needed to extend the authorization for the NFIP. That could take a number of possible forms including Senate passage of its bill and subsequent House and Senate concurrence in a Conference agreement, a negotiated agreement subsequently passed by both House and Senate, passage in some form of FEMA appropriations for FY 2012 including a one year NFIP reauthorization or further extension of the NFIP in another Continuing Resolution.

Appropriations

The Continuing Resolution
The President signed the newest Continuing Resolution (H.R. 2608) just after midnight on October 5th, averting a government shutdown. A previous CR had extended federal government funding through October 4th. Current funding, until November 18th, is at a level approved in the Debt Limit legislation passed in early August. The only objections in the House were from those who preferred a spending level provided for in the House-passed Budget Resolution, an amount $24 billion below the now approved level. The CR includes $2.65 billion in disaster aid, most of which goes to FEMA. The measure was able to avoid an earlier impasse when FEMA indicated it had sufficient disaster funds to get through September 30th, enabling the Congress to reduce the CR disaster funds by $1 billion and to avoid the controversy about whether or not those monies needed to be offset by other budget reductions. The CR also extends the NFIP’s authorization through November 18th.

Next Steps
At present, the House has passed 6 of the 12 regular appropriations bills and the Senate has passed 1. Only 3 bills in the House have not yet been acted on in committee. In the Senate, only 1 bill has not been acted on in committee. Interestingly, that is the Interior & Environment Committee and indications are that action has been delayed because of possible amendments to restrict EPA activities. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) has just announced that he will soon bring 3 bills to the floor which apparently have significant bipartisan support: Agriculture, Commerce-Justice-Science and Transportation-HUD. Presumably, full Senate passage would strengthen the Senate position in negotiations with the House.

In the next few weeks, the House and Senate Appropriations Members and staffs are expected to be engaged in addressing differences between their versions of the various bills. At some point, decisions will be made as to whether just one bill, an “omnibus,” should be produced or whether several “minibuses” would be the better route. If some departments and agencies still are not funded for the remainder of the fiscal year by November 18th, then some form of additional CR will be necessary. So, the path forward remains very much “to be determined.”
Mapping Funds
ASFPM has expressed concern about the level of funding likely for FEMA’s RiskMAP program for FY 2012. The Administration’s budget request was $102.7 million, down from $182 million appropriated in FY ’11 and $220 million appropriated in FY ’10. The House passed Homeland Security Appropriations bill includes the budget request of $102.7 million, but the Senate version includes only $93.7 million. ASFPM sent a letter to all members of the House and Senate explaining the importance of risk identification and a mapping effort that can produce updated data and assessment as soon as possible. The letter is posted on the ASFPM website.

Appropriations bills of particular interest are:
- Agriculture: H.R. 2112; H. Rept. 112-101 and S. Rept. 112-73
- Commerce, Justice, Science: H.R. 2596; H. Rept. 112-169 and S. Rept. 1572; S. Rept. 112-78
- Energy and Water: H.R. 2354; H. Rept. 112-118 and S. Rept.-112-75
- Interior and Environment: H.R. 2584; H. Rept. 221-151

NFIP Reform Legislation
Prospects for passage of NFIP reform legislation including a 5 year reauthorization are better than they have been in many years. Final action this fall is not at all certain, however, apparently largely due to other demands on Senate floor time. Legislation passed both the House and Senate in 2007 and 2008, but differences were never resolved and the legislation was never finalized. The present situation is that the Flood Insurance Reauthorization and Reform Act (HR 1309) passed the House on July 12th. The Senate Banking Committee reported its bill out of committee on September 8th and the measure is awaiting Senate floor consideration. Because the report has not yet been filed for that bill, it does not yet have a bill number.

The biggest change from the 2007-2008 impasse is that the Senate bill no longer includes forgiveness of the NFIP’s $17.75 billion debt to the U.S. Treasury. House rules requiring debt forgiveness to be offset by other budget reductions were the primary reason for lack of final action in 2008. Although the on-going debt will apparently remain a problem for the NFIP, FEMA has just negotiated a favorable interest rate of 0.5% on the debt with the U.S. Treasury.

Indications from staff of both the House Financial Services Committee and the Senate Banking Committee are that they see significant similarities in the two bills and that the differences do not seem impossible to resolve. Senate floor time is a problem, however, largely because a significant number of amendments could be offered, some of which could be controversial. It is also possible that staff level negotiations over differences could take place using the bill as reported out of the Senate Committee. If both House and Senate committees agreed to a final version, that measure could be brought to the House and Senate floors.

If neither of these paths are followed, then further action to extend the NFIP’s authorization beyond November 18th will be necessary.

A side-by-side comparison of provisions in the two bills is available on the ASFPM website.

Stafford Reform bill
Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS) introduced the Disaster Recovery Act of 2011 (S. 1630) on September 23rd. This bill has been in development for quite a long time. The accompanying press release states that it builds on recommendations from FEMA and HUD as well as several organizations including the Association of State Floodplain Managers. The legislation seeks to improve recovery from major and catastrophic disasters and it includes significant elements to strengthen hazard mitigation, particularly as a component of recovery.

Section 201 of the bill amends Section 403 of the Stafford Act. Among its provisions, it would:
- authorize assistance for inspection of damaged structures
Section 203 of the bill amends Section 404 of the Stafford Act and deals specifically with hazard mitigation. Provisions include:

- Streamline reimbursement for mitigation work and the pre-approval process
- Provides for a unified interagency process and consideration of multiple structures as a group for the purpose of environmental, and historic reviews, benefits-cost analysis and fulfillment of cost-share requirements
- Provides a 10% increase in the federal share for states having adopted a nationally recognized model building code and actively enforcing it
- Provides for an advance of up to 10% of a state or local government’s estimated Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) assistance
- Clarifies that the required benefit-cost analysis shall not include the costs of federally imposed review requirements
- Adds building code enforcement by state and local governments to the list of eligibility criteria for the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program
- Requires promulgation within 180 days of overdue regulations required by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 relating to program administration by states
- Requires FEMA to develop a report within a year, in consultation with state and local governments, outlining obstacles to timely disbursement of mitigation funds, recommending improvements and determining the feasibility of development of a uniform application for mitigation assistance.

The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. There is some possibility that the committee could consider and mark-up the bill later in October.

ASFPM has been invited to submit any further comments or suggestions. Thoughts or suggestions should be submitted to the ASFPM Executive Office as soon as possible.

Other Legislation
The Natural Disaster Mitigation Act (H.R. 2099) was introduced on June 1st by Representatives Bennie Thompson (D-MS) and Tom Rooney (R-FL). The measure would provide a tax credit for 25% of mitigation expenditures up to $5,000. The bill was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Hearings and Briefings
Recent Floods and Lessons Learned
The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee may schedule a hearing during October on both the Mississippi/Missouri floods and the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic floods that took place this year. The hearing would include a focus on lessons learned and implications for future policy development.

National Ocean Policy
The House Natural Resources Committee held an oversight hearing on the National Ocean Policy. The Policy was strongly criticized by committee Republicans, and by the fishing and business communities including the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Home Builders. Critics said it “could lead to a new system of zoning the ocean and reach far inland – overriding community zoning and planning and affecting everything from housing developments to farms”. Democrats generally viewed the Policy as “a needed response to coordinate efforts to develop and use the sea.” (Energy and Environment Daily)

Although the programs pursuant to the Policy have been put in motion during this Administration, the development of a national ocean policy was initiated during the Bush Administration. Former First Lady Laura Bush wrote an Op-Ed for the Wall Street Journal this year pointing out the need for this kind of planning and coordination of ocean policy.

Two Year Budget Cycle
The Senate Budget Committee held a hearing on October 4th to consider the merits of moving the federal government to a two year budget cycle. Multiple last minute short-term budgets have generated an interest in providing greater stability. The idea would mean that the Congress would enact department and agency appropriations during the first year of its two year sessions and would utilize the second year for oversight and authorizing legislation.

All legislation referenced (except the Senate flood insurance bill) can be viewed by going to: http://thomas.loc.gov and typing in the bill number, title or subject.
“There is always some risk of flooding for those living or working behind a levee. Levees are designed to reduce the risks of flooding, but as we have seen this summer, larger flood events can cause them to be overtopped or fail. Levees also decay and deteriorate over time. When levees do fail, they can fail catastrophically — the cumulative damage to the area behind the levee may be more significant than if the levee wasn’t present. If you live or work behind a levee, you should (1) be aware of your risk; (2) have a plan in case of flooding; and (3) stay informed with up-to-date information from local authorities and be ready to act.”

This is the third edition of Levee Safety Connections, a quarterly newsletter with status updates on the recommendations for a proposed National Levee Safety Program, activities of the National Committee on Levee Safety, and information about the state of levees in the nation. http://www.leveesafety.org/docs/leveesafetyconnections_v1n3.pdf

More in-depth information about the recommendations for a National Levee Safety Program and the National Committee on Levee Safety can be found on the NCLS website at www.leveesafety.org.

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NATIONAL LEVEE DATABASE OPENS TO THE PUBLIC OCTOBER 27
Carole Sanders, US Army Corps of Engineers - Public Affairs

On October 27, 2011, at 2:00 pm Eastern, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will officially open the National Levee Database (NLD) to the public with the first of three public webinars, making a reality of the provision in Section 9004 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 that called for a comprehensive database of our nation’s levees. The NLD is a living, dynamic database that for the first time allows visualization and the ability to search nationally the location and condition of levee systems. Currently the NLD includes information on more than 14,700 miles of levee systems in the USACE program. The ultimate goal is to expand the database to include all levees constructed and/or operated by other Federal agencies as well as non-federal levees. USACE is working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to include information on levees identified during the Mid-term Levee Inventory. When information on all Federal and non-Federal levees is included, the NLD will provide a single comprehensive source for users, will allow those flood-fighting to identify areas of concerns, and will allow residents to become more informed about the levees in their neighborhood. On the official release date of October 27, the NLD will be available at http://nld.usace.army.mil On-line manuals and guides will be available as well as a call-in help desk. In addition to the public webinar at 2:00 pm on October 27, two additional webinars will be held the following week: November 2 at 2 pm Eastern and November 3 at 11 pm Eastern. To attend any of the three public webinars, please register, after October 15, at: http://nld.usace.army.mil/publicrollout
LEVEE SAFETY OFFICER UPDATE

1. Levee Safety Engineer Circular: Since December of 2010 the USACE Levee Safety Policy and Procedures Team has been seeking input on a new Engineer Circular (EC) for the USACE Levee Safety Program. Comments should be sent to Levee_Safety@abtassoc.com. Comment topics may include, but are not limited to, management of the USACE Levee Safety Program, stakeholder involvement, tolerable risk guidelines, risk communication, levee inspections, risk assessment and portfolio management.

2. Periodic Inspection Status/ARRA: USACE conducts two types of levee inspections. These include Routine Inspection (RI) and Periodic Inspection (PI). RI, also referred to as Continuing Eligibility Inspection, is usually performed on an annual basis. PI is typically conducted every five years and includes a more detailed, comprehensive, and consistent evaluation. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided $90 million to USACE to conduct PIs on its federally authorized levee systems. Final PI reports are being provided to levee sponsors to be used in a variety of ways – prioritizing deficiencies for repair, communicating the levee condition, documenting levee performance over time, and informing the assignment of a Levee Safety Action Classification. PI Reports will also be uploaded into the National Levee Database (NLD).

3. Tolerable Risk Guidelines (TRG) Workshop: On March 17-18, 2010 the USACE Levee Safety Policy and Procedures Team hosted an international workshop that focused on, “Exploration of Tolerable Risk Guidelines for Levee Systems.” The workshop examined the concepts and principles of tolerable risk, reviewed the status of TRG in the United States and other countries, and obtained input on the role of TRG and possible issues and concepts that should be considered in developing TRG for levee systems. For more information, please visit: http://www.nfrmp.us/trg2010/.

4. National Levee Database: The USACE Levee Safety Program recently promoted a “soft release” of the Public View portion of the National Levee Database, available at https://nld.usace.army.mil. Progress is being made with FEMA on uploading their Mid-term Levee Inventory (MLI) data. Webinars and training workshops have been ongoing with the focus on federal agencies first, then turning to tribes and state agencies. Overall goals are to develop a collaborative effort with federal and non-federal entities in the transfer of NLD technologies, incorporation of non-Corps data to the NLD, and to provide access and awareness of the NLD to the nation. Progress continues with a new software suite, known as NLD 3.0, intended to provide additional functionality in the use and management of the NLD data in FY11. Physical surveys of existing levees continue and 92% of the total 14,700 miles in the USACE levee portfolio (USACE operated and those in the PL 84-99 program) have been surveyed and entered in the NLD, 7% are under contract and 1% is waiting for contract award.

5. Levee Vegetation Update: USACE is in the midst of three major levee vegetation management actions to be released during the latter half of 2011. These include a final publication of the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center’s (ERDC) report on its initial research on the effects of woody vegetation on levees, a revised system-wide improvement framework policy (SWIF), and the revised draft Policy Guidance Letter (PGL) – Process for Requesting a Variance from Vegetation Standards for Levees and Floodwalls. The revised PGL draft will first be posted in the Federal Register for a public comment period, after which comments will be considered before issuing the final policy.

6. Levee System Evaluation for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP): FEMA is revising its procedures for analyzing and mapping levees that do not meet FEMA’s accreditation criteria, with new procedures intended to be more precise in establishing flood zones. Specifically, levee height and structural characteristics will be used to help determine if and when overtopping and breach calculations might provide a better estimate of flood hazards. This new approach will be a collaborative effort with local communities and, prior to final release, FEMA intends to issue the proposed solution for public comment. At that time, USACE will determine how the proposed methods may or may not influence the implementation of Engineer Circular (EC) 1110-2-6067, USACE Process for the National Flood Insurance Program Levee System Evaluation.

Continued on page 15
7. National Committee on Levee Safety (NCLS): The NCLS delivered its recommendations for a National Levee Safety Program in January 2009, seeking to further the concept of shared responsibility, and based upon the vision of “an involved public and reliable levees.” While USACE has approximately 14,700 miles of levees in its program, it is estimated that there are 100,000 additional miles of levees nationwide. USACE is moving forward on the NLD, while FEMA is moving forward on communicating residual risks associated with levees as part of an overall Levee Awareness Program. The NCLS has also begun publishing a newsletter, Levee Safety Connections, available at www.leveesafety.org.

8. Levee Screening Tool (LST) and Levee Senior Oversight Group (LSOG): The level of detail for data entry in the Levee Screening Tool (LST) is being refined, along with the LST itself. The current phase of the LST development is scheduled for completion in August 2011. Six national rollups have occurred since the first was held in August 2010. Currently, within the LST, there are 459 levee segments in an open status and 79 in the approval process. The next LSOG meeting is scheduled for the week of 5 December 2011 in New Orleans. Districts with less than 50 segments should have their inventory completed by the end of FY2012, those with 51-100 segments should be completed by the end of FY 2013, and those with greater than 100 segments should be completed by the end of FY 2014.


10. Civil Works Review Policy EC 1165-2-209 Coordination: Review Plans intended for Type I Independent External Peer Reviews (IEPR) and Safety Assurance Reviews (Type II) are to be coordinated with the Risk Management Center (RMC) and appropriate Planning Center of Expertise. Plans and projects to be coordinated with the RMC can be submitted to Mr. Colin Krumdieck at Colin.W.Krumdieck@usace.army.mil.

The RMC EC 1165-2-209 Sharepoint site with guidance and examples is available at: https://kme.usace.army.mil/Centers/IWR/RMC/External/Quality/default.aspx

The PCX review policy Sharepoint site is available at: https://kme.usace.army.mil/CoPs/CivilWorksPlanning-Policy/209/default.aspx

The Sharepoint site for EC 115-2-209 is at: https://kme.usace.army.mil/CoPs/CivilWorksPlanning-Policy/209/default.aspx

For additional information on the Levee Safety Officer Update, please access the full report at: http://www.floods.org/ace-files/documentlibrary/Levee/USACE_LSO_Update_92011.pdf

http://www.usace.army.mil/leveesafety
http://www.leveesafety.org/
Association of State Dam Safety Officials

Conference and Seminars - Live Webcast

As part of an effort to expand its distance learning program, ASDSO was pleased to offer several of Dam Safety ’11 Annual Conference sessions via LIVE BROADCAST on Sept. 26-28.

Sessions included:
- National Levee Safety Program: Levee Safety National and International Perspectives
- Monumental Hydraulic Modeling
- Inventive Spillway Designs
- Dam and Rehab Design - Geomembranes
- Extreme Makeovers - Dams Edition

For a complete list of presenters and presentation abstracts click the following link: http://www.damsafety.org/conferences/?p=b52df768-9387-4038-b1ad-39c20f0f6ff3

News of Note - From the ASDSO eNews - September 2011

Federal Focus
National Dam Safety Program Review Underway
The University of Maryland has been awarded a grant by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to conduct a review and evaluation of the National Dam Safety Program's cost, effectiveness and potential for improvement and its relationship to related supporting and supported programs such as the National Inventory of Dams and state dam safety programs. The review began August 1 and will end October 25, 2011. Those interested in providing comments on the NDSP should send their comments to Dr. Gerry Galloway, PE, at the University of Maryland (gegallo@umd.edu) as soon as possible. The review team will be also be meeting with representatives of associations, non-governmental organizations and federal and state agencies. Any questions concerning the review can be sent to Dr. Galloway.

Partnerships
Silver Jackets Flood Risk Workshop Presentations Available
The Silver Jackets program is a partnership of the US Army Corps of Engineers, FEMA, and state agencies that aims to provide a consistent interagency approach to reduce risks associated with flooding and other natural hazards.

In mid-August, ASDSO Project Manager Mark Ogden participated in a panel discussion on "Achieving Environmental Success in Flood Risk Management" at the 2011 USACE Flood Risk Management and Silver Jackets Workshop on Sharing Experience in Driving Down Flood Risk in Nashville. All presentations from the workshop are now posted at http://www.nfrmp.us/frmpw/

Selection of a Silver Jackets Pilot project proposal in early September will have the Corps’ New York District working on inundation mapping for four gage sites in the Passaic River Basin over the next year. The proposal, one of about 35 submitted nationwide, is one of 12 chosen for immediate funding.
Federal Reports

**FEMA Releases First Edition of the National Preparedness Goal**

On October 7, 2011, the Department of Homeland Security announced the release of the country's first-ever National Preparedness Goal. This is the first deliverable called for under Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8: National Preparedness, which was released in April 2011, and the goal was signed by the Secretary of Homeland Security on September 23, 2011. Setting the vision for preparedness nationwide, it identifies the core capabilities and capability targets necessary to achieve that vision across the five mission areas: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Review of the first edition of the National Preparedness Goal is encouraged, and questions may be directed to PPD8-Engagement@fema.dhs.gov.


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This report presents an excellent analysis of selected nonfederal land protection programs, most of which include some aspect of flood risk management among their land acquisition objectives or project evaluation criteria. The goal of this report is to evaluate where land protection planning can incorporate climate change impacts information into programs. The assessment revealed that there are several strategies that might be useful for incorporating climate change information into decision making. As part of a portfolio of adaptation strategies, land protection may become more important for jurisdictions, particularly to ameliorate climate change impacts on watersheds and wildlife. Additionally, this report may be of particular interest to ASFPM members seeking alternative approaches to fund acquisition of lands or development rights, per focusing on programs funded by ballot measures and covering a variety of partnership types and land protection strategies.

For more information, and to download the report, please visit [http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/global/recordisplay.cfm?deid=238091](http://cfpub.epa.gov/ncea/global/recordisplay.cfm?deid=238091).

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**Gulf Coast Task Force Releases Ecosystem Restoration Strategy**

President Obama established the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force (Task Force) on October 5, 2010, to coordinate the long-term conservation and restoration of America’s Gulf Coast. As part of its mandate, the Task Force is charged with developing a *Gulf of Mexico Regional Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (Strategy)* to drive action and guide the long-term collaboration that will be necessary to effectively address and reverse widespread environmental degradation and to ensure a healthy environment and economic future for the Gulf. The restoration framework consists of four overarching goals to guide the collective actions at the local, state and federal level that are necessary to reverse the ongoing decline and restore the Gulf Coast’s ecosystem. The Task Force’s goals for the Gulf Coast restoration effort are the following:

- *Restore and conserve habitat*
- *Restore water quality*
- *Replenish and protect living coastal and marine resources*
- *Enhance community resilience*

As part of the current Public Review and Feedback Period, the Task Force has held a series of public meetings and listening sessions to gather input from local stakeholders for use in developing the *Gulf of Mexico Regional Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (Preliminary)*.

To access the report, please visit [http://www.epa.gov/gulfcoasttaskforce/pdfs/gcertfenlishver.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/gulfcoasttaskforce/pdfs/gcertfenlishver.pdf). Comments may be submitted through October 26, 2011. Details for submitting are available at [http://www.epa.gov/gulfcoasttaskforce/](http://www.epa.gov/gulfcoasttaskforce/).
NOAA Releases Coastal Sea-Level Change Needs Assessment Report

The NOAA Coastal Services Center recently released the “Coastal Sea-Level Change Societal Challenge Needs Assessment Report,” which focuses on the resilience of coasts to the impacts of sea-level change, and on the needs of the coastal managers, planners and decision-makers facing existing or emerging climate issues related to coastal sea-level change. The term sea-level change is intended to acknowledge that while global sea levels are rising, relative sea levels in certain places may be rising or falling. While sea-level change impacts are of concern to many, this report seeks to focus on a more discrete subset of decision makers with significant influence in the coastal communities they manage, specifically 1) tribal, state, and local planners; 2) coastal managers; 3) regional and local professional organizations; 4) port authorities and operators; 5) federal and state natural resource and habitat conservation, restoration, and protection managers; and 6) practitioners and land-acquisition partners. Information included in this release represents a snapshot of gaps in data, information, and services as captured in 55 documents, presentations, and publications and results of the review highlight the need for resources that can assist coastal decision makers in making informed decisions about the risks and impacts of sea-level change. The report is intended to provide NOAA with current information on the needs of coastal decision makers in order to guide its development of trainings, engagement efforts, decision-support tools, and applications.

This report is available through the the ASFPM website via the following link:

USACE Institute for Water Resources Releases Multi-lateral Report No: 2011-R-08

Flooding knows no borders, affecting some 520 million people annually, claiming the lives of about 25,000 worldwide and causing global economic losses between $50 and $60 billion. In 2009, the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), the Dutch Rijkswaterstaat, the United Kingdom Environment Agency, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers agreed to develop a document to explore risk-informed approaches as being practiced and developed primarily in those four countries. Although very different in frequency and scale of flooding, as well as cultural and governmental characteristics, each country had significant efforts underway to better orient its practices to flood risk realities, including those induced by altered land use and by climate change and variability. The document is organized around a conceptual framework developed to encompass flood risk drivers, risk assessment, and the source-path-receptor concept; the flood risk management cycle with its overarching policies and supporting players and mechanisms; and the adaptive management cycle of maintenance, monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment over time. Differences in scale are addressed through consideration of national and regional/local levels. The document highlights the approaches in each country, the drivers for those approaches, and practices that are working or hold particular promise. Specific examples illustrate various approaches without trying to fully reflect the entirety of any one country’s effort or to include an example from each country for any particular aspect. One purpose of risk assessment on the national level is to help prioritize measures on a national scale, particularly when available funding is limited. Because the implementation of strategies and the related infrastructure works often involves decades, it is important to consider the potential effects of climate and land use change.

See page 90 for reference to ASFPM and our Certified Floodplain Managers program, listed as a non-governmental example of respected continuing education and professional development intended to enhance the knowledge and performance of local, state, federal, and private-sector floodplain managers.

Flood Risk Management Approaches:
As Being Practiced in Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and United States
To read further, please visit www.iwr.usace.army.mil/docs/iwrreports/2011-R-08.pdf
Publications, Software, the Web

**Restore America's Estuaries Releases Landmark Coastal Jobs Report: Coastal Restoration Creates Jobs, Boosts Local Economies**

WASHINGTON-- On September 14, 2011, Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) released a landmark report showing that coasts and estuaries are not only essential to the nation's economy, but that investments in coastal habitat restoration produce jobs in a cash-strapped, job-starved economy at a higher rate than many other sectors, including oil and gas, road-infrastructure, and green building projects.

The report, "Jobs & Dollars: Big Returns from Coastal Habitat Restoration," lays out a powerful case for government and private investment in the nation's coasts and estuaries, drawing on national and regional studies of coastal and estuarine restoration projects and setting out its findings in restoration case studies. For more information, visit [http://www.estuaries.org/reports/](http://www.estuaries.org/reports/)

**EPA Releases Climate Ready Water Utilities Toolbox**

The EPA recently updated its Climate Ready Water Utilities Toolbox, providing access to more than 500 resources that support climate adaptation planning. The toolbox is organized into two sections: one provides a selection of resources, along with a map to help users select resources by geographic region; and a second with a search function that helps users to select resources based on location, the size and type of utility, and resources of interest.

The toolbox is available at: [www.epa.gov/safewater/watersecurity/climate/toolbox.html](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/watersecurity/climate/toolbox.html).

**Framework for Considering Climate Change in Transportation and Land Use Planning**

Based on lessons learned from an interagency pilot project on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, the U.S. Department of Transportation's John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center has developed a guidebook for integrating climate change into transportation and land-use scenario planning. Through a process of data collection and scenario development, the pilot project resulted in a multi-agency transportation and land use development scenario for Cape Cod, with a focus on reducing future greenhouse gas emissions and considering the potential impacts of sea-level rise on the region. The guidebook is intended to serve as a resource for organizations that may be interested in, or stand to benefit from, incorporating climate change considerations into transportation and land use planning.


**ASWM Publishes New CWA Section 404 Program Assumption Handbook for States, Tribes**

The Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) and the Environmental Council of States (ECOS) have released a handbook for States and Tribes on the Clean Water Act Section 404 Program. The handbook was prepared under a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and was published as the result of a national workgroup on the Section 404 Program.

The handbook “is intended to provide concise information to states and tribes interested in 404 program assumption about how a state or tribal 404 program operates, the basic legal requirements for program assumption, and the process of applying, including submitting a complete application to EPA for program approval”. To download a copy of the handbook, CWA Section 404 Program Assumption: A Handbook for States and Tribes, visit [http://aswm.org/wetland-programs/s-404-assumption](http://aswm.org/wetland-programs/s-404-assumption)
Looking for a little more light reading? Consider checking out http://www.disasterbookstore.com/store/
To specifically access the Public Entity Risk Institute’s wide-ranging collection, recently lost during the reorganization, try http://www.disasterbookstore.com/store/category/BOOKS-sponsored-by-PERI/1

Grant and Project Opportunities

Free Technical Assistance from Smart Growth America
Deadline: October 26, 2011 at 5:00 PM EDT

Through a grant from the U.S. EPA’s Office of Sustainable Communities’ Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program, Smart Growth America is pleased to offer free technical assistance to help communities implement smart growth strategies to build stronger economies while protecting human health and the environment. Any unit or subdivision of local, tribal or regional government is eligible to apply. Communities interested in applying for this assistance may choose from twelve tools outlined below. If selected, communities will receive a one- or two-day workshop on the tool of their choice. The twelve technical assistance tools are (click on the tool for a more detailed description):

- Implementing smart growth 101
- Planning for economic and fiscal health
- Regional planning for small communities
- Sustainable land use code audit
- Smart growth zoning codes for small cities
- Complete streets
- Walkability workshop/audit
- Transportation performance measurement
- Parking audit
- Implementing transit-oriented development 101
- Cool planning: local strategies to slow climate change
- Using LEED-ND to accelerate the development of sustainable communities

While hazard mitigation is not a workshop of its own, the topic is addressed in a number of the workshops. For more information, visit http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/sc-tech-assistance

EPA Seeks Letters of Interest for the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Program
Deadline: October 28, 2011

EPA’s Smart Growth Implementation Assistance program is an annual, competitive solicitation open to state, local, regional, and tribal governments, along with non-profits that have partnered with a governmental entity that want to incorporate smart growth techniques into their future development. Once selected, communities receive direct technical assistance from a team of national experts in one of two areas: 1) policy analysis, such as reviewing state and local codes, school siting guidelines, transportation policies, etc., or 2) public participatory processes, such as visioning, design workshops, alternative analysis, build-out analysis, etc. The assistance is tailored to the community’s unique situation and priorities. EPA provides the assistance through a contractor team rather than a grant. Through a multiple-day site visit and a detailed final report, the multidisciplinary team provides information to help the community achieve its goal of encouraging growth that fosters economic progress and environmental protection.
For more information, visit: http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sgia.htm
Funds for Health Projects in Disaster Regions in the East, Midwest, and South
AmeriCares U.S. Disaster Recovery Initiative
Deadline: October 31, 2011
The AmeriCares U.S. Disaster Recovery Initiative is dedicated to supporting nonprofit organizations that are working to aid survivors of Hurricane Irene and other recent storms affecting the East Coast, the Midwest, and the South. This initiative supports nonprofit organizations responding to the recent hurricane, along with organizations continuing to rebuild and aid the recovery in the wake of the tornadoes, Mississippi and Missouri river flooding, and other major emergencies since February 1, 2011. Grants ranging from $10,000 to $100,000 will be provided for projects in the health sector, with an emphasis on medical and dental care for the uninsured, mental health and psychosocial support services, as well as preparedness for future disasters. Grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis through October 31, 2011. Visit the AmeriCares website to learn more about the funding priorities and the application process.

NOAA Webinar - FREE! November 2, 2:00-3:00 PM Eastern Time
Mapping and Visualizing Sea level Rise and Coastal Flooding Impacts
It is one thing to have a discussion or write about a one- or two-foot rise in the ocean surface and the potential impacts to a local community, and it is another to show someone a map, highlighting the areas that will potentially be impacted. The ability to visualize the potential height and inland extent of water gives us a better understanding of the corresponding impacts and consequences. Over the past several years, the lessons learned from investigating pilot sea level change mapping applications have led to the development of a next generation sea level rise and coastal flooding viewer. This presentation will provide a brief history of previous sea level change visualization pilots and a detailed discussion of new methods, featuring a demonstration of the Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flooding Impacts Viewer. In this webinar, participants will learn about:
- The benefits of providing interactive maps online for visualizing inundation risks and potential impacts
- New mapping techniques that incorporate high-resolution data sources
- The methods used to develop the Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flooding Impacts Viewer, its current status, and plans for expanding the tool to the rest of the coastal U.S.

EPA FY 2012 National Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program – $10 million
Application Due: November 4, 2011
Eligible Entities: State and local governments, U.S. territories, federally recognized tribes, others
EPA, states, tribes, and territories are working together to implement the Exchange Network, a secure, Internet- and standards-based way to support electronic data reporting, sharing, and integration of both regulatory and non-regulatory environmental data. The Exchange Network Grant Program provides funding to states, tribes, inter-tribal consortia, and territories to develop and implement the information technology and information management capabilities they need to actively participate in the Exchange Network. This grant program supports the exchange of environmental data and collaborative work within the Exchange Network. Grantees may also use grant funds for the standardization, exchange and integration of geospatial information to support work to preserve and improve the environment, natural resources, and human health. In FY 2012, EPA expects to award about $10,000,000 for 40 to 50 grants of up to $350,000. The exact number of grants will depend on the final amount of EPA’s appropriation for the grant program, the number of applications submitted to EPA by the application deadline, the amounts of proposed budgets, and the outcome of application reviews. For more information, visit http://www.epa.gov/exchangenetwork/grants/index.html

NOAA Webinar - FREE! November 10, 12:00-1:00 PM Eastern Time
Understanding Changes in Extreme Precipitation Projections in a High-Resolution Modeling Framework
One of the challenges inherent to understanding the effect of global climate change on precipitation extremes is the mismatch of scale. Climate models simulate large-scale patterns of long-term change, while weather models generally diagnose small-scale weather phenomena such as extreme rainfall. Linking changes in the atmosphere to changes in surface hydrology (e.g., flash flooding and stream behavior) adds an additional layer of complexity to this challenge. Therefore, understanding the potential effects of global-scale changes on local-scale weather and hydrology requires new research approaches to connect questions and processes across all of these scales.
AmeriCorps State and National Planning Projects Funded
Letter of Intent Due: December 15, 2011
Application Due: January 18, 2012
The AmeriCorps State and National Planning Grants provide support for the development of AmeriCorps programs that will engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based interventions to solve community problems. Proposed national service program plans will address the following areas of focus: improve academic outcomes for children, youth, and young adults; serve veterans and military families or engage veterans in service; and increase community resiliency through disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation. For more information, please visit Corporation for National and Community Service.

NOAA Webinar - FREE! December 7, 2:00-3:00 PM Eastern Time
Marshes on the Move: Understanding and Using Model Results that Show Future Sea Level Rise Impacts on Coastal Wetlands
The scientific community is in agreement that global sea level is rising and coastal marshes are changing as a result. Understanding where and how coastal environments will change in response to sea level rise, however, is a complex modeling challenge. This webinar will help participants understand key considerations and questions to ask when presented with models and maps estimating the future condition and location of coastal wetlands in response to rising sea level. In this webinar, participants will learn about:
- Gain a basic understanding of some key parameters and uncertainties associated with these models
- Interact with technical specialists regarding real world implications of model results
- Learn how modeling results can be incorporated into management initiatives

HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program Advance Notice – $67m
Deadline: TBD
HUD has released advance notice of funding for the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. This program supports metropolitan and multijurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of: (1) economic competitiveness and revitalization; (2) social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; (3) energy use and climate change; and (4) public health and environmental impact. HUD is not yet receiving pre-applications or applications. Specific questions regarding program requirements should be through www.hud.gov/sustainability or directed to sustainablecommunities@hud.gov. To download the advance notice of requirements, visit http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=ascrp01nofa.pdf

Dissertation Fellowships in Hazards, Risk, and Disasters
National PERISHIP Awards
Deadline: February 1, 2012
Despite recent changes at the Public Entity Risk Institute, the PERISHIP Dissertation Fellowship Program is alive and well, and accepting applications. The fellowships support work in natural and human-made hazards, risk, and disasters in all disciplines. Up to six grants will be awarded in 2012 to support doctoral student dissertation work. Grants can be used for data collection, travel, software purchase, data entry assistance, statistical analysis services, or similar purposes. Eligible candidates must be “all but dissertation” and have an approved dissertation proposal at a U.S. educational institution by the application deadline. Non-U.S. citizens may apply if their degree will be granted by a U.S. institution. For complete information and application instructions, visit the PERISHIP Web site.
Please join us in welcoming Bob Geenen and Katrien Werner to the ASFPM staff!

Robert “Bob” Geenen joined ASFPM in the position of Financial Accounts Manager, the position formerly held by Debbie Pond. Bob has previous experience with all aspects of the non-profit accounting cycle, including preparation and analysis of financial statements, budgeting, documenting, accounts payable and receivable, internal controls, payroll and human resources, auditing, and grant fiscal management. As Financial Accounts Manager, Bob will be responsible for the overall fiscal management of ASFPM, including operations, member services, science services and the foundation. Bob can be reached at bob@floods.org.

Katrien Werner joined ASFPM as our new Publications Specialist / Technical Editor. Katrien has lived on four continents and an island and is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin with a degree in International Agricultural and Natural Resources. Her duties will include producing ASFPM’s newsletters, developing outreach materials, editing technical and project publications, assisting with project proposals and assisting with developing and updating content for ASFPM’s website. Contact Katrien at katrien@floods.org.

Both Bob and Katrien started at ASFPM on September 16th.

JOB LISTING: ASFPM Member Services Coordinator - Open Until Filled

As the “face” of the ASFPM, this position requires a friendly, confident personality, as well as the demonstrated ability to communicate professionally, and research and communicate ASFPM policies and information to membership in a clear and efficient manner, both by phone and electronically. Demonstrated writing and editing abilities, as well as experience in an office environment are required. This position also supports overall Administrative support to the Association's Executive Office, as well as travel planning for Executive staff and Board.

Responsibilities

High level skills required in Microsoft Office Suite, including Outlook, Word and Excel, as well as internet posting and updates, as most of our membership and staff communicates electronically.

Member Services support including:
1. Communicates directly with the membership on a wide variety of issues;
2. Processes annual membership renewals and new memberships.
3. Keeps the membership database up-to-date and performs basic reports and data queries.

Administrative support including:
1. Prepares correspondence and other materials for mailing, distributes publications and information through mail, e-mail, iContact, online, or other electronic distribution mechanisms;
2. Maintains master contact directories;
3. Schedules conference calls and travel for staff and ASFPM leadership;
4. Answers telephones, and answers basic questions about the ASFPM;
5. Maintains inventory of office supplies, orders supplies as needed; and
6. Other general office administration/reception support as needed.

The successful candidate for the position must possess/demonstrate:
- High level skills with MS Word, Excel and database management and queries. Applicant MUST demonstrate proficiency in using and setting up basic spreadsheets, word processing and using databases.
- High School diploma or equivalent. College degree preferred.
- A minimum of 3-5 years of general office experience.

To Apply:
Please email the following to employment@floods.org: Cover letter outlining your specific credentials and why you are the appropriate person for this job, and Resume detailing your experience and qualifications. For more information, see ASFPM JOB POSTINGS. No phone calls please.
Calendar

FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute (EMI)
2011 - 2012 Continuing Education Opportunities
There are seats available for floodplain management courses at EMI that have been pre-approved for Continuing Education Credits (CECs) for CFMs. EMI courses are offered at the Emmitsburg, MD campus and are FREE for local and state government employees. FEMA reimburses travel expenses and provides housing for state and local government employees attending EMI courses. Attendees or their employers pay for the campus meal ticket (about $100 per week). You can find the EMI Course Schedule and application materials on the EMI website.

E273 Managing Floodplain Development thru NFIP Oct. 31 - Nov. 3, 2011 (12 Core CECs)
E273 Managing Floodplain Development thru NFIP Mar. 19-22, 2012 (12 Core CECs)
E273 Managing Floodplain Development thru NFIP Apr. 23-26, 2012 (12 Core CECs)
E273 Managing Floodplain Development thru NFIP June 11-14, 2012 (12 Core CECs)
E284 Adv. Floodplain Management Concepts III July 9-12, 2012 (12 Core CECs)
E273 Managing Floodplain Development thru NFIP Sept. 24-27, 2012 (12 Core CECs)

Building Safe, Healthy & Livable Communities
11th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth will take place in February 2012 in San Diego. See more at http://www.newpartners.org/cfsp/.

Hydroinformatics Conference
The next Hydroinformatics Conference will be held in Hamburg, Germany, July 14-18, 2012. Topics on the agenda will include disaster mitigation, hydrological modeling, hydraulic modeling, climate change impacts, developments of flood and drought early warning systems, socio-economic aspects of hydroinformatics realising active stakeholder participation, and more. Abstracts can be submitted until August 1, 2011. For more information go to http://www.hic2012.org/.

Arid LID 2012: Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development in Arid Environments
The format of the conference will be two and a half days, primarily in a single-room setting (up to 200 attendees), with breakout sessions and a morning of field trips. Sessions will be targeted to stormwater, planning, and design professionals; researchers in water resources and urban sustainability; as well as activists and educators interested in implementing these features through grassroots, community-driven models. Participation is especially encouraged from those working in GI/LID in arid regions of the southwestern U.S. (southern California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, west Texas) and northwest Mexico.

Call for Abstracts:
AridLID.org is now soliciting proposals for speakers and posters. To submit a proposal: visit AridLID.org, download the Call for Abstracts on the 2012 conference page, and follow the instructions on that document. Abstracts must be submitted by October 31, 2011.
Questions? Contact James MacAdam, Green Streets Program Manager, Watershed Management Group, james@watershedmg.org or 520-396-3266 x0.
ASFPM Calendar

The events listed below are only the highlights of events of interest to floodplain managers. A complete list of flood-related training, conferences, and other meetings, including ALL the workshops and conferences of State Chapters and associations is always posted at http://www.floods.org/n_calendar/calendar.asp

November 28–December 1, 2011: NATIONAL FLOODPROOFING CONFERENCE V, Sacramento, California. Contact (608) 274-0123 or see http://www.floods.org


June 1–6, 2014: 38TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF STATE FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS, Seattle, Washington. Contact (608) 274-0123 or see http://www.floods.org

May 31–June 5, 2015: 39TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF STATE FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS, Atlanta, Georgia. Contact (608) 274-0123 or see http://www.floods.org

Are you looking for training opportunities to earn CECs for your CFM? If so, be sure to check out our web calendar, which already has LOTS of training opportunities listed for 2011! You can search the calendar by state using the directions below. Or you can use the category drop down menu to search by category. http://www.floods.org/n-calendar/calendar.asp

➤ Go to the calendar and click on the search feature icon at the top of the calendar. Type your state’s initials in parenthesis (for example “(WI)”) into the search field and it will pull all the events (training, conferences, etc.) that are currently listed on the calendar for your state. What a great way to find upcoming training for CECs! The only events without a state listed in the event title are EMI courses which are all held in Emmitsburg, MD.
Items for publication and other editorial matters should be directed to:
ASFPM
2809 Fish Hatchery Rd., Ste. 204
Madison, WI 53713
(608) 274-0123 (phone) -0696 (fax)
Katrien@floods.org

Deadline is the 18th day of odd-numbered months.
For address changes and member services, contact the ASFPM Executive Office
at the address in the box above.