Resolution on Floodplain Management Policy Statement

INTRODUCTION

Average annual flood losses in the United States have increased steadily throughout this century. In the 1960's and 1970's, with the recognition of this trend, a more sensible approach to the development of the nation's floodplains began to emerge. This approach was founded on the need to wisely manage as-yet undeveloped areas that are subject to flood hazards as well as to mitigate damage to existing development. A comprehensive approach to flood problems, combining nonstructural measures with engineered protective projects, is essential for maximum effectiveness and broad public acceptance. To their credit, the federal government and many states and communities have adopted goals and established policies to provide for the wise use of floodplains and related resources.

STATEMENT OF POSITION

The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) supports comprehensive nonstructural and structural management of the nation's watersheds and floodplains and their related land and water resources. This approach aims to reduce flood hazards and the consequent property damage and loss of human life. To reach this goal the public and private sectors must:

1. Prevent new development and redevelopment within a watershed from creating or aggravating flood losses.

2. Reduce damages to existing development with mitigation measures that do not aggravate flooding elsewhere.

3. Preserve and protect the natural and cultural values of the floodplain.

4. Use multiple, coordinated techniques.

STATEMENT OF STRATEGY

The ASFPM will promote comprehensive nonstructural and structural floodplain management through the following activities.

1. Obtaining Adequate Maps

   Maps and related data are basic to the effective administration of local floodplain management ordinances. The ASFPM will work to ensure that flood hazard data and mapping are adequate by promoting improvements in the quality and accuracy of the maps, in the maintenance of up-to-date maps and data, in the identification and mapping of special problem areas, and in the computerization of map data.

2. Sharing Information
The ASFPM will share and disseminate information about successful flood loss reduction techniques and lessons learned from projects, methods, and procedures used or implemented elsewhere. To do this, the ASFPM will use its newsletter and its annual and special conferences, and also will develop a resource center.

3. Improving State Programs

Although the focus and primary responsibility for floodplain management must necessarily be at the local level, communities need information and assistance that often can best be provided by the state. The ASFPM will work to upgrade state capabilities in floodplain management, hazard mitigation, and other flood loss reduction activities by providing encouragement, sharing experience and knowledge, developing training programs for state personnel, and promoting coordination and cooperation among all state programs with responsibility for nonstructural and/or structural activities.

4. Research

Knowledge of the role and importance of floodplains and wetlands is far from complete. The ASFPM will seek new methods to prevent and reduce flood damage and to safeguard the many irreplaceable resources and natural processes that occur in flood plains. The ASFPM will do this by identifying needed research, evaluating the practical effectiveness of proposed research, and supporting implementation of worthwhile projects.

5. Improving Local Programs

Land use authority and responsibility rests with local government, which must carefully monitor activities within its jurisdiction to prevent unwise development and minimize potential damage to existing development. While the onsite perspective can only exist at the local level, outside encouragement and support are essential. The ASFPM will support local needs and interests by providing technical assistance on federal floodplain management and hazard mitigation programs, developing training programs for local officials, and promoting and supporting federal and state financial assistance for local flood loss reduction activities.

6. Educating the Public

Although it has increased considerably in recent years, the level of public understanding of and concern about flood problems is not yet adequate. The ASFPM will work to educate the public about the hazards of unwise floodplain development and the measures that can be taken to prevent and reduce flood damages. The ASFPM will cooperate with all levels of government and the private sector to inform people about ways to reduce flood damage, advocate the wise use of valuable floodplain land and related water resources, and promote and foster activities to increase public awareness of problems associated with flooding.

7. Improving Federal Programs

The ASFPM will provide suggestions and feedback to federal agencies on how their programs can better prevent and reduce flood damages. The ASFPM will work with federal agencies and Congressional committees to coordinate related programs, will promote the benefits of floodplain management, and will encourage expansion of those programs that will result in the greatest reduction in flood losses and the best utilization of floodplains and wetlands.

8. Cooperating with other Organizations
The ASFPM will coordinate its work with that of other organizations and agencies involved in resource protection, planning, and emergency management.

9. Promoting Private Sector Involvement

The ASFPM will promote the involvement of the private sector in flood damage reduction by earnestly soliciting its cooperation, coordination, and assistance; by supporting government programs that involve the private sector; and by encouraging the private sector's direct participation in ASFPM activities.