Resolution on Coastal Erosion

WHEREAS,

- The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) has published a report entitled “Managing Coastal Erosion”, which discusses the issues of erosion-zone management strategies, supporting data needs, and applicable methodologies to administer these strategies through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP); and

- This study indicates the need to designate erosion-hazard areas for all oceanfront and Great Lakes locations for the purpose of establishing construction setbacks; and

- Significant problems are associated with the determination of these erosion-hazard areas, due to the dynamic nature of shorelines, the presence of shore protection structures, human-induced shoreline changes, extreme storm events, cyclic erosion/accretion patterns, and other variables; and

- There is a need to establish identifiable benchmarks from which the erosion-hazard areas can be measured; and

- The NAS report has recommended that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) delineate erosion zones, at a significant cost; and

- Passage of P.L. 100-247, the Upton-Jones amendment of the NFIP, commits federal funds to the removal of homes threatened by eroding shorelines;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) hereby adopts the following position on these recommendations related to the development of an erosion-hazard management program:

1. A comprehensive erosion-hazard area management program should be incorporated into the NFIP. Erosion hazard areas should be delineated on maps to be used in management efforts, in an attempt to guide development away from eroding shorelines, and to prevent erosion-related damage and claims.

2. Since erosion rates have been calculated for several coastal states using numerous techniques, FEMA should evaluate current methodologies and erosion-rate data to develop the erosion-hazard management program under the NFIP. This program should utilize existing data whenever possible.

3. The standard methodology (or methodologies, depending on the shoreline type) developed by FEMA should allow for the calculation of long-term rates of erosion, which could then be used to establish erosion hazard-zones, and guidelines must be flexible so as to address the variability in shoreline conditions.
throughout the country. Standards and guidelines governing the methodology should allow utilization of all reliable data.

4. Any proposed methodology for calculating, compiling, and mapping of historical shoreline change data should be formatted for use with various Geographic Information Systems. The methodology should be based on a common geographic referencing coordinate system that can be readily transferred to other systems.

5. Due to the dynamic nature of shorelines, the expense involved in frequent map updates, and the reliance placed on graphic depiction of hazard areas, the delineation of erosion-hazard areas should not include a landward boundary. Rather, mapping should define the along-shore extent of the erosion-hazard area, and the erosion rate calculated for that area. The baseline or reference point from which the setback area is measured should be defined to allow for site specific evaluations of individual development proposals.

6. The development and application of a standard erosion-rate methodology should allow for the consideration of the effect of the existing, functioning shore protection structure, including seawalls, bulkheads, and revetments.

    Adopted by the Board of Directors of ASFPM on December 17, 1990