ASFPM Chair
Annual Report

Annual Conference—Grand Rapids, Michigan (2016)

Ceil Strauss, CFM, ASFPM Chair
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2015-2016 Annual Report

We’ve had another busy year for our volunteer leadership, active members and staff. There has been a constant stream of new guidance, policies and laws to review and consider for comment. And many areas of the country had major flooding, some directly affecting many of our leaders.

How is ASFPM able to be active on so many fronts? On the board we have regional directors representing members in each of the 10 FEMA regions and five chapter directors who are liaisons with our local chapters, in addition to the officers. We have 14 policy committees, and each of those is headed by co-chairs. Those committees coordinate with four pod facilitators who serve as liaisons with the board of directors. And our staff continue to do a great job.

Two important documents give guidance to the board and the policy committees. The longer term document is the National Flood Policies and Programs in Review. The current document was approved by the board in 2015 to replace the previous 2007 version. It is available on our website, and with current technology we intend to have it be more of a living document than in the past. A goal in the next year is to have this overall guidance document be more searchable on our website and easier to find!

The other shorter term guidance document is our annual Goals and Objectives, which focuses on the top priorities for the year. The goals and objectives are grouped into three main areas: identifying emerging issues, refining existing issues and improving ASFPM operations. With so many potential areas for our involvement, this document gives important direction to our staff and leadership on where to focus our efforts.

A few of the areas our staff and committees have emphasized in our formal comments and discussions with partner agencies included:

- Disaster Deductible Concept (comments on Advanced Notice of Rule Making)
- Individual Assistance (IA) guidelines (comments on proposed rulemaking)
- FEMA’s Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) framework (comments)
- Comments on FEMA form updates (i.e., Elevation Certificate)
- Comments on technical guidelines such as Bulletin 17C and Risk Map related
- 2017 National Flood Insurance Program reform – both the issues of concern to the ASFPM and reviewing the impacts (and unintended consequences) of changes being suggested by others

One area the board and policy committees felt our members should know more about are the projects our science services staff are working on. At the most recent board and policy committee
co-chair retreats we heard about some of those projects, and been surprised how much they are doing. We will be trying to let our members know more about the fascinating and important work Science Services is doing on our behalf via the newsletters, website, chapter update presentations, etc.

I’d like to say a special thanks to our policy committee co-chairs who have stepped down over the past year: Diane Calhoun (Professional Development Committee), Heidi Carlin (Training & Outreach Committee), Bill Brown (Stormwater Committee) and Kimberly Berginnis (Natural Beneficial Functions Committee). We are indebted to all of these long-time leaders for the effort and knowledge they brought to these committees and ASFPM in general. And welcome to the new co-chairs Louie Greenwell (Professional Development Committee) and Jessica Ludy (Training and Outreach Committee) who have now been actively involved in these positions for the better part of the year. And Eileen Shader is stepping in as the new NBF co-chair just in time for the conference.

A special thanks also goes out to our Region 4 Director Terri Turner, who is terming out as a board member. Terri has brought much energy and passion to the board and it seems to have been contagious! I know I’ve seen a transition over the past five years I’ve been on the board. Our members have become more active and have challenged each other to find better ways to look at what is best for our members and good floodplain management, and to thoughtfully look at challenges we see coming in the future.

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