ASFPM District 1 Chapter Director Annual Report

Annual Conference—Grand Rapids, Michigan (2016)

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2015-2016
Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, US Virgin Islands and Vermont

Introduction
The ASFPM state Chapters in district 1 are:

- Connecticut Association of Flood Managers (CAFM)
- New Jersey Association for Floodplain Management (NJAFM)
- New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association (NYSFSMA)
- Rhode Island Flood Mitigation Association (RIFMA)

Key Accomplishments of District 1 Chapters
Each of these state chapters holds an annual conference, publishes a newsletter, maintains a website and sponsors training opportunities. In addition, each chapter promotes professional development by providing floodplain management training and administering the Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) exam.

The number of CFMs continues to increase in New Jersey.

Additional accomplishments in training and outreach include:

- The RIFMA conference included a student poster contest where nine university student posters were presented and the top two were awarded a monetary prize.
- The Connecticut, New Jersey and New York chapters partnered with ASFPM...
to offer the four-day L273 training, Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP. This was very well received.

- The New York and Rhode Island state chapters sponsored Community Rating System (CRS) Users Groups to provide training and networking opportunities.
- Training conducted by CAFM included: West Haven Resiliency Tour, Hartford Levee Boat Tour and a HURRIPLAN course.
- NJAFM co-sponsored training on Floodproofing Non-residential Structures and Retrofitting Residential Buildings.
- RIFMA held two Twilight Seminars on the use of MyCoast and StormTools. StormTools is an online GIS mapping tool that allows municipal officials, business owners, decision makers, design professionals and others to better understand their risk from coastal inundation under varying storm and sea level rise scenarios.
- RIFMA co-sponsored a presentation about “The Rhode Island Coastal Property Guide: 10 Questions about Living along the Shoreline.”
- NJAFM published Quick Guide to Floodplain Management in New Jersey.
- NJAFM worked with several reporters on a multitude of issues, providing background and quotes. Members also conducted a radio interview on the two-year anniversary of Sandy and appeared on NJ Climate Change 101 video production.
- Additional NJAFM outreach activities included presentations about CRS, resiliency, historic building issues in urban floodplains, elevated structures and sustainability.
- There is now a RIFMA page on Facebook so members and others can stay up-to-date on RIFMA happenings.

Some state chapters actively promote improved legislation and policies. Accomplishments include:

- NYSFSMA and the ASFPM Foundation hosted a New York State Flood Risk Symposium at which a diverse group of professionals addressed questions related to future changes in flood hazards, appropriate protection standards for future floodplain development, flood-resilient land use practices, and enhanced collaboration to protect communities from flood risks.
- NJAFM and NYSFSMA passed resolutions and provided support letters on Executive Order 13690 and the new Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS). NJAFM co-signed an Op-Ed on this topic. NYSFSMA submitted comments on FEMA’s Intent to Implement the FFRMS.
- NYSFSMA participated in a committee to develop a new flood risk management standard for New York.
NJAFM promotion of improved flood policies in New Jersey included: supported funding for state water programs; testified and provided written comment on Coastal Zone Management Rule; supported elevation contractor bill; participated in NJ Climate Adaptation Alliance; participated in Urban Water Solutions Group meetings; testified on a bill to integrate hazard mitigation and municipal master planning; provided support letter for Rutgers Coastal Climate Risk and Resilience Traineeship grant application; provided comments on proposed changes to the State Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rule; and attended Resilience Professionals Retreat.

NYSFSMA and the New York CRS Users Group submitted recommendations to the CRS Task Force encouraging simplified means for participation at the Class 9 level.

NYSFSMA submitted comments about a proposal for Establishing a Deductible for FEMA’s Public Assistance Program.

NSFSMA signed letters to congress from the Coalition Supporting the USGS National Water Monitoring Network.

The growing membership of these state chapters speaks to their success. Each has a Board of Directors and committees that undertake the tasks required to run the organization. Administrative and organizational accomplishments of the chapters include:

- Although CAFMA is a new organization that became an ASFPM state chapter in 2015, the membership has grown to 117 members representing 30 NFIP jurisdictions. They are striving for full participation of all towns in the state with mapped floodplains.
- NJAFM hired a part-time administrator for the chapter.
- NJAFM signed a partnership agreement with the New Jersey Society of Professional Land Surveyors for reciprocal treatment for membership attendance exhibit space and promotion of respective conferences.

Challenges for District 1 Chapters

- Chapters struggle to provide appropriate member benefits. What types of training and events are exciting, informative and necessary enough to promote attendance by time-strapped members? What is the best way to market training events? Is it beneficial to co-sponsor with other organizations? Would it be beneficial to offer professional credits for different professions?
- Attracting new members is also a challenge. What membership benefits that would be a great attraction for new members? Are there strategies for
recruiting more students and entry level professionals?

- What is the best way to share information with members (website, email, Facebook)?
- Are there strategies for facilitating effective turnover of board membership?

**Recommend Actions**

District 1 state chapters have provided the following feedback and suggestions to ASFPM.

- There is a critical need for the CFM exam to be modernized so that it is relevant to current standards and practices. The Chapters appreciate ASFPM’s prompt assistance with providing CFM credits for chapter programs.
- ASFPM training programs have been very well received. Additional programs on a variety of topics would be useful, particularly webinars that could be shared with members at no cost. Chapters appreciated the opportunity to host L273 training and would like ASFPM to follow up with field deployment of advanced classes. Training offered within the district should be tailored to the region, rather than a one-size-fits all national script.
- ASFPM Newsletter for Chapters provides good and useful information for chapters to pass on to their members. Additional information and easy-to-share fact sheets would also be beneficial, such as regular updates on changes to the National Flood Insurance Program.
- ASFPM Member Alerts on policy issues have been very helpful. Increased chapter participation in policy issues could be facilitated by additional information about ASFPM lobbying positions, with ample time for feedback from the chapters.
- Chapters that participate in the All Chapter Calls find them to be helpful. It would be beneficial to have additional opportunities for the chapters within District 1 to exchange information and discuss best practices. Increased collaboration on training could improve enrollment by drawing members from neighboring states.
- Smaller chapters would like additional support, such as tools or strategies for increasing membership, suggestions for soliciting partnerships with private businesses and additional guidance on insurance issues.