ASFPM REGION 3
DIRECTOR ANNUAL REPORT

Annual Conference—Grand Rapids, Michigan (2016)

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5/16/2016
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2015-2016
Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia and District of Columbia

Introduction and Regional Overview
States and chapters hold annual conferences and sponsor training opportunities. States in the region are busy assimilating new mapping products and adopting new flood ordinances. Many of the ordinances are incorporating higher regulatory standards as the concept of freeboard is gaining wider acceptance. Many of our states have been beneficiaries of new maps. States are seeking, and in cases, achieving greater cooperation with federal and regional organizations through partnerships like Silver Jackets. States are providing tools to communicate flood risks and mapping products, and are providing training courses to floodplain managers at home. The overall need is continued support and funding from federal sources for new mapping products and tools to plan for climate adaptation.

Region 3 Priorities
Restrictions on the use of Community Assistance Program (CAP) funding for developing education, training and floodplain activities, which involve any web-based content or maps due to interpretation of CAP guidance, hampers outreach efforts. Imminent termination of the FEMA Flood Portal presents immediate challenges to communities desiring to provide residents with detailed flood information during new map adoption period.

- Mapping
  - States in Region 3 have benefitted and are incorporating new maps. These new maps incorporate “model-backed” A zones, which do not provide base flood elevations on the map, but do provide 1 percent annual chance water surface elevations within the model and “limited detail” studies, which present BFEs on the map, but no floodway. Hosting and distributing this data will present a challenge.
  - Maryland is moving forward on Digital FIRM. When completed, all but one county will have DFIRM products. Most will have access to the effective GeoHEC-RAS models. These products are available for download on the state’s outreach website. In addition, floodplain studies have been completed for many of the states’ A zones and this information is available for download. The goal this year is to integrate the models into
local, state and federal permit processes to assist users making decisions about work in the designated floodplain.

- **Higher Standards**
  - Region 3 states have promoted higher standards to communities adopting updated floodplain ordinances, with many communities adopting freeboard standards for first time.

- **Flood Insurance**
  - Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) continues to be underutilized. Buildings that sustained significant (in some cases substantial) flood damage during Hurricane Sandy generally did not receive ICC claims to be brought into compliance. A combination of factors seem to cause this outcome, including lack of information from insurance companies when buildings are paid large claims, confusing reporting of damage costs and repair costs to communities officials leading to uncertainty regarding whether compliance is required by substantial damage ordinance language, inconsistencies between actual claims data and the data reported to communities by FEMA (for example claims data indicates a property meets the SRL or RL criteria but the property is not on RL/SRL lists which FEMA provides to communities for hazard mitigation planning purposes.

- **Climate Change**
  - The effects of climate change and sea level rise in the Mid-Atlantic is present and observable. Delaware has issued Executive Order 41 that requires state projects to be designed to avoid 1 percent annual chance flood elevations plus predicted sea level rise. Flood adaptation maps and implementation guidance has been produced.

**Recommend Actions**

Based on input from the NFIP coordinators within the region, the following goals and recommendations are made for next year:

- ASGPM to promote NFIP reform that will ensure sound floodplain management policies. Private insurance will get benefit of floodplain management programs and should share some of the cost for it.
- Complete mapping for all counties and municipalities in accordance with the ASGPM publication “Flood Mapping for the Nation.”
- Align guidance for use of grant funds with training and outreach goals.
- Develop policies to plan for climate change and sea level rise and promote resiliency within all communities (especially coastal communities).