NOAA Grant Will Bring Resiliency Efforts into Capital Improvement Planning

The Association of State Floodplain Managers and American Planning Association will work together to develop new national planning guidelines for coastal resiliency, thanks to a $1,054,543 Regional Coastal Resilience Grant Award from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Office for Coastal Management.

Trillions of dollars of local infrastructure investments are needed in communities in the next several decades. Planning and constructing capital improvements can be done in such a way that they make coastal communities more resilient from the impacts of climate change – extreme weather events, climate hazards and changing ocean conditions such as sea level rise.

However, very little current capital improvement planning, either a project-by-project basis or multi-year effort, accounts for climate change data or resiliency. This is a very new approach and techniques are currently unknown, or are just starting to develop. This grant will help identify and advance the best techniques for incorporating long-term resiliency efforts into capital improvement planning.
ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis said, “This project will mainstream techniques for building in coastal resiliency. We know there are techniques being tested and used in isolation around this country, but very few are known and widely available to engineers, planners and floodplain managers. So this project will identify, test and present those techniques to the practitioner community.”

“It is a new era for hazard mitigation efforts by combining resiliency efforts into capital improvement planning efforts,” said James C. Schwab, manager of APA’s Hazards Planning Center. “This approach will maximize economic benefits and enhance the safety of the community. It will also push the boundaries for how communities will be able to use available federal data to make informed decisions.”

“Building Coastal Resilience through Capital Improvement Planning: Guidance for Practitioners” is a three-year project. The first phase of the project will explore techniques for incorporating climate change into capital improvement planning efforts. The second phase will test the techniques among the two regional pilot program partners - the city of Toledo and Lucas County, Ohio; and Chatham County and Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission. The regional partners represent two different types of coastal communities. This will ensure the best techniques identified will be applicable to all coastal communities.

APA and ASFPM are long-standing partners of the NOAA Digital Coast program. This grant will further inform professional planners about the coastal data and tools available and enhance use. Other Digital Coast partners will play a role in advising the project.

For more information on the other projects awarded 2015 Coastal Resiliency Grants, visit: https://coast.noaa.gov/resilience-grant/projects/

What sea-level change tool or model should I use?

Trying to decide which sea-level change tool or model to use for your community can be a dizzying decision. That’s why NOAA, The Nature Conservancy and Climate Central came together to develop an online Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Flood Web Tools Comparison Matrix. This matrix was created to provide the planning and coastal management communities with an expandable chart to compare the functions and methods of publicly-available sea-level rise and coastal flood web tools. The information in each column is provided by the web tool owner. Specific questions about the tools can be addressed to the tool owner through the contact information provided in their matrix column.
Policy Matters!

Larry Larson, PE, CFM
Director Emeritus – Senior Policy Advisor, ASFPM

The biggest challenge we often face in convincing people they are at risk of flooding and should do something about it is the disaster relief program. It is the 500-pound gorilla in the room. Why is that, you ask? Two basic reasons: (1) most states do not believe they are at great risk of being flooded, and even if they do, the federal government will bail them out and make them whole again, and (2) they believe flooding is a problem handled by the federal government. After all, it is the FEDERAL Disaster relief program, and it is the FEDERAL National Flood Insurance Program.

All of us know they are wrong on all accounts. Flooding constitutes more than 80 percent of all declared disasters. But the disaster relief program will not make the community whole. The primary level of government responsible for flood risk management is the local community because it is responsible for public safety, and the state that must authorize communities to have tools to reduce flood damage. This will allow the community to have the most effective tools to reduce or prevent flood loses via land use authority and building codes.

Imagine our pleasant surprise last month when FEMA issued a proposed rule to institute a deductible for Public Assistance in a state that applies for disaster relief! The really effective part of the proposal is the incentive where a state can satisfy that deductible by undertaking effective actions that mitigate flood risk and reduce flood damage. In the proposed rule, FEMA is asking for comments on the concept by March 21, and also asks what kind of actions should be credited toward meeting that deductible? FEMA gives examples such as actual mitigation actions like buyouts, elevations, zoning to avoid development in flood hazard areas, statewide modern building codes, etc. States could also build up a rainy day fund or funded self-insurance fund that will pay that deductible when the event occurs. Another example exists in Minnesota, where the state has an annually-funded state mitigation fund. Or, how about giving credit to a state that makes a real investment in its hazard mitigation and floodplain management programs to supplement federal assistance that might be provided through management costs of Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs or Community Assistance Program-State Support Services Element, rather than the entire program being funded from these federal resources? This can be a solid way to build and maintain state capability.

ASFPM supports the concept of a disaster deductible for a couple reasons. First, far too many small disasters are being declared federal disasters, which are only supposed to be declared when a disaster truly exceeds the capacity of the local and state government. A number of them seem small enough and frequent enough that it should be handled by the state and local. Second, even more important, the proposal sets up incentives for states to perform mitigation continuously using its resources in order to build up or pre-pay that deductible before a large disaster occurs.

ASFPM has always supported a sliding cost share for disaster relief. The proposed rule could essentially do that, and does encourage and reward effective state mitigation actions that reduce disaster costs for the federal taxpayer. ASFPM believes more credit should be given for “one off” mitigation actions, such as buyouts that restrict any further development on that land so the taxpayers will never again have to pay for flood damage on that land.
ASFPM will be making comments on the proposed rule and we are seeking input from our committees and members. Read a memo we sent to leadership requesting comments here. Please send your comments to asfpm@floods.org as well as sending your comments to the Federal Register (FEMA-2016-0003-0001) site. In that Federal Register, FEMA lists a set of questions you can comment on. Please select the ones most applicable and submit your comments. This is your opportunity to weigh in on national policy that impacts your state and could open up more mitigation options for your community.


ASFPM’s Mapping and Engineering Standards Committee requesting comments.

This is a brief update on the status of Bulletin 17C, "Guidelines for Determining Flood Flow Frequency." The USGS has released a version of Bulletin 17C that is ready for public comment. This revision to the current Bulletin 17B document was prepared by the Hydrologic Frequency Analysis Work Group (HFAWG), under the Subcommittee on Hydrology (SOH) of the Advisory Committee on Water Information.

The M&ES committee will be compiling comments regarding this document on behalf of ASFPM. If you would like to assist in providing comments, you can find the document at:

http://acwi.gov/hydrology/Frequency/b17c/bulletin17c_draft_for_public_review.pdf

Comments are due to USGS by March 28. M&ES Committee Co-chair David Knipe is requesting comments by March 18, which would allow him some time to compile and submit the committee’s findings. Please send your comments to David Knipe at dknipe@dnr.in.gov.

Tom Hirt with FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute has been threatening to retire for years. Well, he’s finally gone and done it!

Tom, ASFPM congratulates you for your decades of federal service, and we also want to thank you for everything you’ve done for our association, like serving as a facilitator last year as we hammered out updates to our National Flood Programs & Policies in Review.

You have been one of the strongest proponents of floodplain management training, the Certified Floodplain Manager program and elevating the profession of floodplain managers in general. We deeply appreciate your dedication to helping get vital work done by helping ASFPM leadership and using the utmost integrity in moving ideas and programs forward over the years.

One of the greatest pleasures in running a national organization is making good friends throughout the country, and you are a good friend to ASFPM. We will miss you. Thanks for all you have done for the nation, and we wish you the very best in your retirement.
What’s the ASFPM Foundation been up to?

State Symposia Announced

ASFPM Foundation members realized through its last three Gilbert F. White National Flood Policy Forums that states need to focus specifically on their floodplain management issues in order to really make their communities more resilient to flood hazards.

The third flood forum, held in 2010, focused on “Managing Flood Risks and Floodplain Resources.” The action item that arose from this forum reflected the participants’ recommendation that there is a need to capture flood risk indicators at the state, regional and local levels of government to complement the national level indicators.

Subsequently, the fourth forum, “Human Adjustments in Coasts – Adaptive Management of Changing Hazards, Risks and Ecosystems (2013),” challenged attendees to focus on an integrated management approach and philosophy that breaks stove pipes, promotes individual and collective accountability and responsibility, and balances human use, environment and economy into a resilient coastal system.

Additionally, the fifth forum, held in 2015, focused on, “Climate-Informed Sciences and Flood Risk Management - Opportunities, Barriers and Challenges.” Attendees evaluated and proposed recommendations to the Administration on actions necessary to achieve the use of climate-informed science for federally-funded design projects. The goals are to have methodologies that are reasonable and repeatable, and to the extent possible, promote consistency in applications by agencies and practitioners.

So, in response to the forums, the ASFPM Foundation, in cooperation with ASFPM, has annually solicited since 2011 proposals from the 36 state chapters to co-sponsor a State Flood Risk Symposium. The premise for these events is to build upon the efforts of the Gilbert F. White National Flood Policy Forums in a state format, delivered at the state level and focused on state-specific issues and actions.

This year, three state chapters were selected. In April, the New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association will host its state symposium in Poughkeepsie, NY, focusing on issues related to the Community Risk & Resiliency Act. The Texas Floodplain Management Association will host its symposium May 10 in San Antonio, focusing on the theme, “After the Floods – Texas Rising.” The North Carolina Association of Floodplain Managers on May 12 will host their symposium in Raleigh to discuss flood communications.

Last year, the state symposia were held in Arizona and Illinois. Here is the report from the 2015 Illinois Flood Risk Symposium.
And in related news, the foundation is working on producing a report from the fifth flood policy forum. Bruce Bender (ASFPM Insurance Committee Co-chair) and Kamer Davis (FloodSmart) are under contract to produce this report with Doug Plasencia (ASFPM Foundation President), George Riedel (Trustee), Larry Larson (Trustee), Gerry Galloway (Trustee), Dave Canaan, David Ford, Jo Ann Howard (Trustee) and Matt Koch (Trustee) providing direction and review. The goal is to have the report ready for distribution at ASFPM’s annual national conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan this June.

Trustee Changes

David Maurstad, who has been volunteering as the foundation’s Projects Committee Chair since 2011, is returning to FEMA this month where he will be the assistant administrator for flood insurance. “In this role, David no longer is able to participate as a foundation trustee,” said Foundation President Doug Plasencia. “David was instrumental in helping to reshape the vision of the foundation as part of our strategic plan updates and launch our newly-formed Projects Committee. We thank David for his service and wish him well with his new role. Replacing David on the Projects Committee is Brad Anderson with Anderson Consulting in Fort Collins, Colorado. CO. Brad has been an ASFPM Foundation Trustee since 2012.”

Outreach Committee Highlights

Last summer and fall was an exciting time for the Outreach Committee. They coordinated presenters for 18 state chapter conferences from coast to coast. The attendees at these conferences ranged from 45 to 406, so they are really spreading the word about the foundation.

The committee is looking forward continuing this project throughout 2016. If you’d like to schedule a visit from a foundation trustee to attend your state conference, contact Sonja@h2opartnersusa.com.

Did you know that 24 state chapters have donated $120,950 in the past 10 years? See if your chapter has donated. Corporations have also generously donated $834,626 in the past 10 years! And of course, individuals are also a strong component of sustained donations. Help the foundation continue with its great flood risk reduction work by donating today. Financial donations can be made on the “Give Now” page.

The EPA's Green Infrastructure program released a report that summarizes tools, strategies and lessons learned from U.S. green infrastructure projects

The report, Tools, Strategies and Lessons Learned from EPA Green Infrastructure Technical Assistance Projects, summarizes results from EPA's green infrastructure technical assistance program for communities looking for solutions to their unique challenges. This quick reference guide matches problems with real world, tested solutions and offers readers resources for further information. The report also includes a handy guide to technology and a table of benefits that you can share with potential collaborators and stakeholders.
From the Chair
Ceil C. Strauss, CFM &
State Floodplain Manager in St. Paul, Minnesota

Yes, businesses, politicians, regulators and scientists CAN find common ground on climate adaptation!

Last month I had the opportunity to attend the third annual climate adaptation conference sponsored by the University of Minnesota Water Resources Center. I was especially intrigued when I saw the two plenary sessions involved a business panel and a panel of mayors from around the state.

The business panel had representatives from three locally-based global companies: 3M, General Mills and Best Buy. All three gave many examples of their efforts to reduce their carbon footprint by reducing waste and increasing efficiencies, which also meant they were able to cut costs and improve their bottom lines. They also listed several examples of how weather events impacted them, and offered insights on how they managed to be more resilient:

- The 2011 flood in Thailand impacted plants for 3M and Best Buy, causing disruption to their supply chains for many months and great stress for employees, especially those who also had flooded homes. It also made them much more aware of flood risk.
- A tornado, which hit a plant that produced the entire supply of one product, led to the realization they needed some redundancy.
- The repeated impacts of severe weather on their transportation systems led to systems that rely on good weather forecasts to redirect supply trucks to different routes.
- Weather-related closures to stores and plants impacts the bottom line and the safety of their employees and customers. This led to better warning communications and emergency response, as well as more complete crisis management plans.

When asked what advice businesses had regarding policies or laws that are considered to help address climate adaptation, the General Mills representative had a response that summarized their views well. He asked that the laws be: (1) effective, (2) efficient and (3) proportional. While we might get into heated discussions on how to meet those criteria, I believe we can all agree they are the basis for good policy and laws.

At the same conference, the four mayors on the panel all gave excellent presentations. They represented cities that ranged from Bemidji, a northern city that relies largely on timber and tourism, to St Paul, the capital of the state and whose mayor had just returned from the Paris climate talks. Their efforts with sustainability and adaptation took many forms and showed how they had all used creativity and their unique histories and resources. They talked about: sustainability commissions and coordinators, community gardens, programs to encourage rain gardens and tree plantings, a city hall powered mostly by solar power, etc. The mayor of Falcon Heights, a city of about 5,000, noted that when asked how the city can afford to do some of the projects they’ve done to reduce flood risk and be more sustainable, he answered, “How can we afford not to?” And he went on to describe their “Smart Pond” that can lower water levels 2 feet when rain is expected so that they have the storage capacity to reduce flooding risks.

On a closing note, my favorite new analogy related to climate change comes from Paul Douglas, who served as moderator for the business panel discussed above, and is well known in Minnesota as a former long-time local TV weatherman and current president of Aeris Weather. To paraphrase Mr. Douglas, “I have people ask me all the time if the Earth being a few degrees warmer is really a big deal. I ask them, how would YOU feel if you were a few degrees warmer?”
FEMA Announces $289 million in FY16 pre-disaster mitigation funding available!

FEMA announced the availability of $90 million under the Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program and $199 million in the Flood Mitigation Assistance grant program for Fiscal Year 2016. This year’s announcement comes a few months earlier than previous years, which should allow communities more time to prepare their project applications. As always, these programs are administered by your state’s hazard mitigation program or your state’s floodplain management program (in the case of FMA in some states). Each state will set up its own application process and timelines to meet the FEMA timelines for submission. States can provide additional information, training and assistance on your project applications!

What can be funded under these programs? A whole range of flood hazard mitigation solutions including: acquisition/demolition, acquisition, relocation, elevation, dry floodproofing, mitigation-reconstruction (also known as demolish/rebuild), localized flood risk reduction projects and hazard mitigation planning. Under the PDM program and new for 2016 is the eligibility of climate resilient mitigation activities that include green infrastructure actions. For a complete list of eligible items please refer to the program guidance document (Note: The program guidance document that is being used this year is dated Feb. 27, 2015 - there is not a revised guidance document for 2016). The funds being made available this year are significantly higher than past several years, so this might be an excellent opportunity to get your flood hazard mitigation project funded.

If you are interested, please contact your state floodplain manager or state hazard mitigation officer for more information.

Attention Employers!

You know how important it is for employees to have a rich understanding of flood risk challenges and solutions, but would hate to see them leave for a couple years to pursue a master’s degree to gain that knowledge.

That is why the University of Washington developed a largely online master’s degree program called the "Master of Infrastructure Planning and Management with a Floodplain Management Degree Option."

The UW curriculum provides the needed professional knowledge, skills and abilities you probably require. Coursework presents a broad view of water management and associated risks. Water-related courses address stream and coastal mechanics, water management, law and current issues within the larger profession of floodplain management. Core courses present key concepts about infrastructure, systems thinking, infrastructure finance and the fundamental aspects of strategic and contingency planning, emergency management and policy analysis. In addition, students explore the impacts and management required of changing climate.

Employees would only have to take off two weeks in two summer semesters, allowing them to continue working for you, while garnering much needed education in the floodplain management field.

This is the first program of its kind in the United States, but the only way UW can do this is with students. Bob Freitag, a UW professor and ASFPM Higher Education Committee Co-chair, is encouraging you to share this flyer with your employees and colleagues. The deadline is tight, March 31. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Bob at bfreitag@uw.edu.
What’s happening around the world?

A collection of the most viewed stories on our Facebook page

South Carolina

Interesting development in Columbia, South Carolina: Open government advocates joined Sen. Lindsey Graham in calling for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to release records of a dam that failed on Fort Jackson during a major storm last fall. Read, “Outcry to provide records of failed dam grows in South Carolina,” by The State.

United Kingdom

"Homes and businesses should continue to be built on flood plains across the UK despite the increasing risks, according to government advisers on climate change. Climate change experts say construction should go ahead – but households should be made aware of possible threats." Read The Guardian’s article here.

A new report by the European Environment Agency provides an overview of significant floods in Europe and looks at the role of floodplains in flood protection, water management and nature conservation. Read the report, “Floodplain management: reducing flood risks and restoring healthy ecosystems.”

Montana

“That risk has always been there — it’s just that the maps are now showing it,” said Brian Heaston, an engineer with the city of Bozeman, Montana. “With that risk comes the regulatory requirements. I was a bit surprised to see the extent of the floodplain downtown,” he added. Read, “FEMA study says more of Bozeman at flood risk.”

United States

The National Institute of Standards and Technology recently released a special publication, "Community Resilience Planning Guide for Buildings and Infrastructure Systems." The guide outlines a six-step planning process to help communities establish affordable priorities and allocate resources to improve their resilience.

How cool is THIS? National Stormwater Calculator—Climate Assessment Tool: This desktop application provides estimates for the amount of rainwater and frequency of runoff anywhere in the United States. The primary use of the tool is to inform site developers on how well they can meet a desired stormwater retention target with and without the use of green infrastructure.

New Orleans

New Orleans Is Done Fighting Water: The city is using a big federal grant to filter and retain the stormwater it once banished. Read about how New Orleans will radically alter the landscape of its Gentilly neighborhood to filter and retain stormwater here.
Registration for the year’s most comprehensive floodplain management training and networking opportunity is now online! Register to attend “Great Lakes—Grand Partners” at the DeVos Place Convention Center. The preliminary draft program is also available for review, though some changes are expected in the coming months. Need a hotel room? This year we have room blocks at three hotels, all within easy walking distance to DeVos Place. You can reserve your room now from this link on our conference page. Visit www.asfpmconference.org for more information.

You can also order conference memorabilia from the Virtual Store. Two things to remember: one, the order deadline is May 22 (orders will NOT be accepted after that deadline), and two, merchandise will NOT be available for purchase onsite like it has in past years. You will be picking up your items onsite though.

If your firm or organization is interested in high-level exposure at this conference, be sure to check out our sponsor and exhibitor opportunities. The ASFPM annual national conference is THE place to engage your stakeholders and clients. Contact Jenny Seffrood at jenny@floods.org for more information. We look forward to welcoming you to Grand Rapids!

Time to Start Thinking about ASFPM’s Silent and Live Auctions at our Upcoming National Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan

Silent and live auctions are held annually at the ASFPM national conference. Each year attendees at the conference have the opportunity to bid on valuable goods and services donated by local businesses, ASFPM chapters, corporate sponsors and individuals. All proceeds from the auctions go to the ASFPM Foundation, created in 1996, to support research and education that promote wise and sustainable floodplain management.

When, where and how you can bid and buy? The next auctions will be held at our national conference in Grand Rapids, June 19-24.

Want to donate an item to the silent auction? Here’s how: Provide the following information to Luci Sherwood, our silent auction coordinator:

- Description of item (and number of each unit donated if applicable),
- Fair market value (minimum value $25 and include any shipping costs separately),
- Company or affiliation,
- Your phone, email and address,
- When and how the item will available for table placement,
- Name and address for acknowledgement letter if applicable.

We will announce the shipping and delivery information for silent auction items in April.
Navigating the Crazy Social Media World, Tip No. 8

By Michele Mihalovich, ASFPM’s public information officer

Listen to the crickets.
You don’t need google analytics to know when you are not providing your followers relevant information on twitter, or any other social media platform. They are not liking your posts. They are not retweeting your posts. They are not commenting on or replying to your posts. No one is following you or adding you to their lists. The silence is deafening—the crickets have spoken. Now, what are you going to do about it?

I do applaud folks who seek out new avenues to try on social media to get noticed. But you can see after three tries of this “new trick” when no one is biting, and yet you continue to do it.

Here are two classic examples of “tricks” that need to be put out of their misery.

“My week on twitter...How’s your audience growing?” or “Most popular link among people I follow.”

Why would anyone be interested in either of those subjects? Answer: They wouldn’t, which is why they are not liking, retweeting, commenting, replying, etc. So, if you are tweeting such subject matter, please stop and try something new. It takes a while and much experimenting to understand your followers. It’s worth the trial and error. And once you find that sweet spot, sorry, you’ll have to keep trying new things. But for the love of all that is holy and retweetable, if you try something three times and you hear nothing but crickets, pull the plug!

Here’s a great blog by Christopher Isak, founder of TechAcute.com, which highlights six other bad twitter practices that you really must take a look at—and stop doing.

In the meantime, do you have a specific question for me so that I can help you navigate the crazy world of social media? Email me at michele@floods.org.

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Job Corner

FEMA is hiring a Hazard Mitigation Insurance Specialist. The Congressional Research Service is looking for an Analyst in Flood Insurance and Emergency Management. And the state of North Carolina is hiring an engineer for its floodplain mapping program. Check out these jobs and all the others listings on ASFPM’s Job Corner. Or post your own job opening. It’s completely free!

The 2016 Science to Action Fellowship is now taking applications.

The USGS National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center and Michigan State University’s Department of Fisheries and Wildlife announced the 2016 Science to Action Fellowship is now accepting applications.

WHAT: $10,000 fellowship for up to two students to interact with NCCWSC scientists and develop a policy-relevant product related to the impacts of climate change on fish and/or wildlife resources.

WHEN: Applications are due March 15, 2016 at 11:59 p.m. mountain time. Note: applicants must establish contact with a NCCWSC mentor prior to completing the application process.

WHERE: Two months in residence at NCCWSC located at USGS Headquarters just outside of Washington, D.C. in Reston, Virginia.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY: Graduate students in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at MSU or one of the Department of Interior Climate Science Center Consortium Institutions. Applicants must be students for the entire fellowship year (Spring 2016-Spring 2017). TO APPLY: http://go.usa.gov/cn76P
From the Director’s Desk
Chad Berginnis, CFM
Executive Director, ASFPM

How Do We Better Manage Flood Risk?

As I am writing this month’s column, I am also busily preparing for the ASFPM board retreat. As part of that preparation, we look back over the past six months and see how well we are progressing on meeting our annual goals and the mission of ASFPM. You see – we are a mission-driven, professional organization that exists to not only reduce flood losses, but to equip all of the floodplain managers in the field to better do their jobs. It is from that perspective I wanted to talk a little bit about our Science Services program. If I could really describe what Science Services does, it is to continually ask and answer the question, “How do we better manage flood risk?”

ASFPM’s Science Services program is really our projects arm. We do applied and policy research, as well as develop tools and other job aids for practicing floodplain managers. And Science Services has sure been busy! We are excited to be bringing a long-time ASFPM volunteer leader, Bill Brown, on as a senior project manager. His experience as a local floodplain manager, local stormwater manager and flood risk mitigator will be a huge asset to the executive office staff. Beyond that, we are in the middle of several exciting projects as we move into 2016:

- Community floodplain management capability survey. With more than 22,000 communities in the NIFP, there are a wide variety of community floodplain managers, and community capability ranges widely. Much like we have been doing since the 1980s with state floodplain management programs, we want to begin to baseline community floodplain management capability and track it over time. As a result, this March we will be sending out a survey to 3,000 local floodplain managers across the country to gather this important data. I ask that if you are one of those officials who receives an invitation to participate in the survey, you will do so. You are helping your profession! And while individual responses will remain anonymous, we will be making the results widely and freely available.

- CRS Green Guide. Interest in FEMA’s Community Rating System is higher than ever. As flood insurance rates increase, states and communities are looking at ways to help keep premiums low. That is where the CRS program comes in. By earning flood insurance premium discounts for actions that reduce flood risks, communities can help make flood insurance more affordable. So what if you could save a few bucks and do something good for the floodplain ecosystem too? This project is going to research those activities that score points and improve the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains, and research how the best communities in the nation are doing them!

- NAI How-to Guides. In partnership with the ASFPM Foundation, we are working on the final three How-to Guides. The guides are based on the seven building blocks found in the NAI toolkit –things that most communities do or have the ability to do: hazard identification and floodplain mapping, education and outreach, planning, regulations and development standards, mitigation, infrastructure and emergency services. Each guide will identify up to five different actions a community can do to contribute to a “No Adverse Impact” condition.

- Subdivision Standards for Flood Hazard Areas. In partnership with the American Planning Association, we are developing a companion to the one existing, authoritative guide for subdivisions in flood hazard areas - Planners Advisory Service Report 473, which was published in 1997. The research has identified a number of very effective standards that, if your communities considers and adopts, are guaranteed to reduce future flood risk!

- Planners Information Exchange webinars. In another APA partnership, we are hosting eight webinars on topics broadly related to hazard mitigation and resiliency planning. The webinars have been very successful to date with an average attendance of more than 700 for each. And (hint, hint) they are a free way to earn Certified Floodplain Manager and AICP CECs.
These are but a few of the many projects ASFPM is working on. Some projects are funded with existing resources to answer important policy questions. For example, “What does it cost to complete the flood mapping in the United States?” Other projects also allow ASFPM to partner with other organizations, such as the National Wildlife Federation and The Nature Conservancy, which are also working to reduce flood losses.

Which brings me to a final point. It is your membership in ASFPM that makes all of this work possible. Whether you are an individual member, corporate or agency partner, exhibitor or sponsor at our national conference, or donor to the ASFPM Foundation (which funds several ASFPM projects each year), these are the important revenue sources that give ASFPM a critical mass to undertake this kind of research! So members and donors – thank you for your investment in ASFPM. For those of you who are reading this, but don’t know much about ASFPM – give us a try! Finally, if you have an idea for a project or research you think might make your job easier, or that is the next surefire idea to reduce flood losses, please drop me a line at cberginnis@floods.org

Your partner in loss reduction,

Chad

Why I love being an ASFPM member...

“Since I became a floodplain manager in 2005, it has been my pleasure to meet and work with the wonderful members of ASFPM, whether locally, at conferences, or attending class at EMI.

“I have learned so much from attending the state and one national conferences that I have been able to attend. I consult with our FEMA Region IV representatives and with the Florida DEM folks quite a bit. They are probably tired of my questions by now but they would never let me know.

“As the person most likely to be asked floodplain and flood zone questions for our county, I rely quite heavily on the training and information I receive at the conferences and from the lasting friendships I have acquired.

“Although I have been a CFM since 2005, the only national conference I have been able to attend was in Florida in 2009 as it was our state conference. I am thrilled I was able to attend this year in Atlanta.

“Talking flood is what I enjoy the most about my job and what a better place to join the discussion than the national ASFPM conference? I look forward to seeing you all in Grand Rapids,” said Chip Hague, a CFM from Charlotte County, Florida.

“I love my ASFPM membership! It allows me to share my passion for floodplain management and mitigation with 1,000 of my closest friends,” said Alisa Sauvageot, a CFM with Michael Baker International and ASFPM’s No Adverse Impact Committee Co-chair.

Want to join or need to renew your membership?
Awards Nominations sought for ASFPM 2016 Conference

Deadline is March 1

Help ASFPM showcase the many floodplain management successes across the country! Simply go to ASFPM’s awards nomination page and submit the information online. Make sure you get it in by the March 1 deadline. It is highly recommended that you provide applicable letters of support for your nomination. Send those to Michele Mihalovich at michele@floods.org. She can also answer your questions about the process or categories by calling (608) 828-6328. Winners will be notified in April to allow time for travel arrangements.

- Tom Lee State Award for Excellence in FPM
- James Lee Witt Local Award for Excellence in FPM
- Larry R. Johnston Local Floodplain Manager of the Year
- John Sheaffer Award for Excellence in Floodproofing
- Outreach/Media Award
- John Ivey Award for Superior Efforts in Certification
- Meritorious Lifetime Achievement in FPM Award
- Louthain Award for Distinguished Service (Nomination must be submitted to the Board of Directors. Contact your regional director to make a nomination).
- Goddard-White Award (Nomination must be submitted to the Board of Directors. Contact your regional director to make a nomination).
- Outstanding Chapter Award (Chapter nominations are submitted at this link).

Nick Winter Memorial Scholarship Fund for College Students

Deadline: April 1, 2016

The ASFPM Foundation will grant a $2,500 scholarship for the 2016-17 academic year to a full-time college junior or senior currently enrolled in an undergraduate program related to floodplain/ stormwater management, or a student enrolled in a graduate program in a field related to floodplain/ stormwater management. Eligible applicants include current undergraduates in a four-year college program, applicants to a graduate program, or current graduate students. Applicants must be enrolled in an accredited university or college in the U.S. and be a U.S. citizen. Eligible fields of discipline include civil or environmental engineering, planning, emergency management, environmental sciences, or other disciplines with a demonstrable link to floodplain and stormwater management.

Applicants must complete a Scholarship Application Form. Selection preference will be given to those applicants who demonstrate a history of civic or volunteer service, as well as a financial need (i.e. full-time students responsible for their own tuition), in addition to meeting the basic qualifications. In order to be considered, the Scholarship Review Committee must receive the application form and a separate reference letter by April 1, 2016. Scholarship funds will be paid directly to the recipient’s university.

Applications and reference letter should be sent electronically to diane@floods.org. For additional questions, contact Diane Brown at (608) 828-6324.

ASFPM Foundation information is available on the website: http://www.asfpmfoundation.org/
New Year’s Resolution: Finally meet with my policymakers on Capitol Hill

If you’ve never visited DC to specifically meet with the folks on Capitol Hill, you might be asking yourself, “How the heck do I do this? What do I say? What should I bring? Who should I see?” Print out this handy flyer from the National Journal Research, “5 Things to Know about Engagement in DC.” We also wanted to share what a typical three-day trip looks like when ASFPM Chair Ceil Strauss and Executive Director Chad Berginnis visit DC.

### 5 Things to Know About Engagement in DC

1. **Consistently Matter Most**
   Policymakers across Washington, D.C., meet about how a policy will affect their constituents. Organize events in their terms and connect policymakers to authentic constituency voices—whether in person or through produced content. Make the greatest impact.

   “If you bring people up from the districts or states to show us, ‘This is how this legislation affects me, this is why you’re good or bad,’ and show real stories, that matters. That’s more effective than networking people.” —Chair of Staff, Capitol Hill

2. **Everyone Overlooks Opportunities**
   Even the most active organizations overlook key policymakers in their engagement, whether by applying too high, opening entire offices, or staying within a too-narrowly defined industry space. Organizations can most effectively identify relevant policymakers—and determine how best to reach them—by engaging in influencer mapping exercises.

   “I found a report through news alerts and gathering news clips, but it would have been really nice if the appropriate representative from my company had said, ‘We just put out this report, we’d love to have your input.”’ —Chief of Staff, Capitol Hill

3. **Balance is Essential**
   Policymakers value information that acknowledges the opposing perspective. If an organization fails to provide this information, policymakers will simply seek it out elsewhere (and will regard the organization as unreliable and credible than organizations that do provide a balanced perspective).

   “As someone who has a broad view of the policy environment, you should understand how what you’re lobbying for affects the bigger picture. You need to be able to tell me the pitfalls, the rejections and negatives. What do your opponents say?” —Chief of Staff, Capitol Hill

4. **Proactive Trumps Reactive**
   Policymakers desire and favor proactive engagement from organizations, on both an interpersonal and policy level. This translates into building relationships, rather than coming in only with sales, and helping to shape policy, rather than merely reacting to it.

   “Most organizations think about approaching us when they have a problem that they want fixed...most don’t understand the need with which we can approach a federal agency and become an ongoing partner with that agency in the work that they’re doing.” —Director, Federal Agency

5. **One Strike and You’re Out**
   An organization will qualify—and eventually lose a policymaker’s trust by providing unreliable information or delivering strong-on-tactics one-on-one. In the wake of these incidents, policymakers respond best when an organization acknowledges its mistakes, and rebuilds trust from there.

   “There were some members who felt that the company’s approach was heavy-handed. After that happened, Members would say, ‘Yes, I’m not meeting with you,’ but because they didn’t like how the company handled that situation.” —Chief, Capitol Hill

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**DC Meetings**

**Wednesday, Feb. 3**
9:15 Chad arrives at D.C.
11:00 NEMA Alexa Noruk and Rachel Mouser
1:00 Ryan Sager and Mike Brain, House T & I Democrats staff
4:00 WRDA 2016
3:00 Lynsey Johnson, HUD
4:00 Jesse Walls, Legis. Dir., Rep. Steve Stivers (R-OH)
6:00 or so Dinner with David Currid

**Thursday, Feb. 4**
9:30 National Assn. of Realtors Austin Perez, Maria Wells (Chair, Insurance Ctte)
12:00 Carol Wyman, Legis. Dir. Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN)
2:00 Pam Williams, House T & I Emergency Mgt. Subcommittee
3:00 Lisa Peto, House Financial Services Ctte – Democrats staff
4:00 Geoff Brown, House T & I Ctte
5:00 hold in case Lisa Peto has to shift 3:00 meeting
5:45 Sam Medlock (Chad only)

**Friday, Feb. 5**
9:00-10 Roy Wright and Tony Hake FEMA/FIMA Crystal City
10:15-10:45 Mike Grimm Starbucks, Crystal City
11:15 Angela Gladwell, Deputy Ass’t FIMA Administrator for Risk Assessment
1:30 Dave Stearrett, Flood Insurance Advocate
3:00 possible EPA meeting – Lynn Stabenfeldt??
4:00 Rachel Sears, FEMA

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*Left photo: (L to R) ASFPM’s long-time Washington insider, Merrie Inderfurth, ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis, Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.), ASFPM Chair Ceil Strauss. Right photo: (L to R) Rachel Sears, Senior Policy Advisor with Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration at FEMA, ASFPM Chair Ceil Strauss, and ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis.*
ASFPM history: Ya gotta hear it to believe it!

Larry Larson, one of ASFPM founders (left) introduces Professor Wolfgang von Schlosser (Frank “Chick” Derringer) at the association’s 1982 conference in Madison, Wisconsin.

Probably one of the best pranks ever perpetrated by Larry Larson, one of the founders of the Association of State Floodplain Managers, was during the 1982 national conference in Madison, Wisconsin.

Larson introduced the luncheon speaker Professor Wolfgang von Schlosser, a man who in a very thick German accent, poked fun at America’s reliance on the 100-year-flood as a useful measuring stick and how fixed FEMA and the Corps of Engineers were in support of it. The professor also spoke of a hilarious “lesson learned” example of early floodplain management practices in Liechtenstein. But it wasn't until von Schlosser said that Hitler lost the war mostly due to his lack of knowledge of floodplain management principles, that the audience began to figure out that they'd been tricked.

Larson had cajoled Frank "Chick" Derringer, a co-worker of his at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, to play the part of the opinionated German professor.

“I looked out into the audience and could just see the lightbulbs going on as people started to figure it out,” recounted Larson. He also laughed at the memory of French Wetmore, also one of ASFPM’s founding members. Larson said Wetmore was frantically taking notes of everything von Schlosser was saying at the luncheon. “After a couple pages of notes, French finally figured it out and slammed his pencil on the table.”

Somebody had the good sense to record von Schlosser’s speech that day. We’ve converted that tape cassette, and uploaded a slideshow with audio on YouTube so that everyone can have a listen to the great von Schlosser prank of 1982. Enjoy!

"Professor" Wolfgang von Schlosser speaks at ASFPM's 1982 national conference.

ASFPM Riverine Erosion Working Group Unveils White Paper

The main purpose of the ASFPM Riverine Erosion Hazards White Paper is to encourage state and local governments to begin mapping riverine erosion hazard areas in their communities. The mapping should be carried out using methodologies that they feel are appropriate for their specific conditions and at a level of detail that meets their specific requirements. This white paper looks into the successes and challenges of this approach, and offers 11 recommendations.
ASFPM Board of Directors retreat concludes without polar vortex or snowstorm incidents.

This year’s board retreat was held at a different venue than in past years—at The Edgewater in Madison, Wisconsin. But the packed agenda remained the same. From Feb. 23-25, our board tackled general housekeeping items such as approving minutes, hearing financial reports and committee highlights, and evaluating progress on their goals and objectives. But they also listened to briefings on floodplain management legislation and policy, Technical Mapping Advisory Council draft report, NFIP 2017 reform, CFM prep, Bulletin 17C, the FEMA disaster deductible, ASFPM’s National Flood Programs and Policies in Review update process, CBOR considerations, Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, Increased Cost of Compliance coverage and USACE’s PL84-99 and Levee Safety Program, just to name a few. The board also had to make a decision on whether to approve a Riverine Erosion Hazards Discussion Paper. Well, they liked the paper so much, it was approved as a white paper. View the paper, created by the ASFPM Riverine Erosion Hazards Working Group, here.
**ASFPM Editorial Guidelines:** ASFPM accepts and welcomes articles from our members and partners. “The Insider” and “News & Views” have a style format, and if necessary, we reserve the right to edit submitted articles for space, grammar, punctuation, spelling, potential libel and clarity. If we make substantive changes, we will email the article back to you for your approval before using. We encourage you to include art with your article in the form of photos, illustrations, charts and graphs. Please include a description of the art, along with the full name of who created the art. If the art is not yours originally, you must include expressed, written consent granting ASFPM permission to use the art in our publications. Copyright © Association of State Floodplain Managers, Inc. Information and opinions contained herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the ASFPM Board of Directors. Reproduction, with credit, permitted for individual ASFPM-authored articles. Please contact Michele Mihalovich at editor@floods.org.

**ASSOCIATION OF STATE FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS OFFICERS**

**CHAIR**
Ceil Strauss, CFM  
MN Dept. Natural Resources  
St. Paul, MN  
(619) 259-5713  
ceil.strauss@state.mn.us

**VICE CHAIR**
Maria Cox Lamm, CFM  
SC Department of Natural Resources  
Columbia, SC  
(803) 734-3672  
coxm@dnr.sc.gov

**SECRETARY**
Leslie Durham, P.E.  
AL Water Resources  
Montgomery, AL  
(334) 242-5506  
leslie.durham@adeca.alabama.gov

**TREASURER**
Karen McHugh, CFM  
MO Emergency Mgmt. Agency  
Jefferson City, MO  
(573) 526-9129  
karen.mchugh@sema.dps.mo.gov