



# NEWS&VIEWS

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Dedicated to reducing flood losses  
& protecting floodplain resources

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## Promoting resiliency of our nation's water resources infrastructure

Ricardo S. Pineda, P.E., CFM

ASFPM Chair



Happy New Year and Prospero Año Nuevo ASFPM members. On November 19 of this past year, I had the honor and pleasure of representing ASFPM at a hearing of the House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Water Resources and the Environment Subcommittee.

The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee Hearing focused

on "Concepts for the Next Water Resources Development Act : Promoting Resiliency of Our Nation's Water Resources Infrastructure." WRDA 2020 will focus on civil works projects and planning, including policy, carried out by the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Credit for the development of the written testimony goes to the ASFPM Policy team, including Larry Larson, Chad Berginnis, Meg Galloway, Merrie Inderfurth and David Conrad. Special thanks to David Conrad for his extraordinary effort. The full 22-page testimony is [available here](#).

Below is the text I developed and read for my allocated five minutes of oral testimony. The oral testimony was followed by questions to the panelists. In early December, I received four additional written questions for which I prepared responses. I look forward to further adventures in Washington, meeting with our elected representatives and representatives of other groups advocating sound and sustainable water resources policy. Please note that ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis testified before this same subcommittee on July 10 and before a House of Representatives Climate Crisis Committee on November 20. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [Ricardo.Pineda@water.ca.gov](mailto:Ricardo.Pineda@water.ca.gov).

### Strategic Direction

- ASFPM recommends development of a significantly more robust non-project related technical-assistance role for the Corps at the district level, either through the Floodplain Management Services Program (FPMS) or the Planning Assistance to States Program (PAS) or a new authority.
- ASFPM recommends that the FPMS and PAS programs could serve to substantially expand the Corps' contribution to enhancing water resources resilience and sustainability and should be authorized and funded to at least \$50 million

annually. The Corps Silver Jackets Program is successful, but additional technical assistance, not tied to a specific project is needed at the local level. This is especially needed for disadvantaged and impoverished communities.

- ASFPM recommends that through the Corps Tribal Nations Program, additional technical assistance and expertise should be provided to our Tribal Nations to assist in finding ways to help them improve their water resources infrastructure.
- ASFPM recommends that Congress should set policy on decision making that will result in natural infrastructure being a preferred alternative due to its multi-benefits.
- ASFPM recommends that the Corps should commit to fully supporting the implementation of the Engineering with Nature initiative throughout the agency.
- ASFPM recommends that the Corps supports the ASFPM administered National Flood Barrier Testing and Certification Program (NFBTCP). The Corps nationally recognized Engineering Research and Development Center (ERDC) needs to be modernized to meet the testing needs for a growing number of private sector developed flood barriers. The Corps is reimbursed for their costs of the testing program.
- ASFPM recommends that through the Corps feasibility study planning process, the use of nonstructural flood risk reduction measures need enhanced consideration. The Corps National Nonstructural Floodproofing Committee has done excellent work for many years and needs continued headquarters support to incorporate nonstructural measures into selected plans.
- ASFPM recommends that due to the major flood events of 2011 and three major flood events on the Lower Missouri River System in 2019, the Corps needs authority and funding to study the Missouri River flood management system as an integrated system including reservoir operations, levees and land use.

## Levee & Dam Risk Management

- ASFPM recommends that Congress and the Corps should adopt policies for new levees or the reconstruction of levees that encourage levees be set-back from the water's edge to preserve riparian areas, reduce erosion and scour, reduce flood levels and flooding risks, recharge groundwater, and allow natural floodplain ecosystems to better serve their natural functions.
- ASFPM recommends full implementation of the National Levee Safety Program.
- ASFPM recommends that the Corps activate a new National Levee Safety Committee (NLSC) composed of federal agencies, state and local stakeholders, professional associations, and experts as directed in WRDA 2014, to develop consistent guidance for levee siting, design, construction, and operation and maintenance standards.

## Public Law 84-99

- ASFPM recommends conforming the PL 84-99 program's cost-sharing with other flood-damage reduction programs to reduce federal disaster costs, reduce risks, and support greater use of comprehensive flood-risk management and nonstructural approaches.
- ASFPM recommends that for every project, explicitly require consideration of realigning or setting back levee segments and integrating setback levees to the fullest practicable extent.

## Revision of Water Resources Principles and Guidelines (P&G)

- ASFPM recommends that in developing implementation guidance for the Principles, Requirements and Guidelines (PR&G), agencies must require a full accounting of long-term operations, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation and replacement costs be included in benefit-cost analyses for all structural and nonstructural projects.
- ASFPM recommends that the Corps and other agencies develop and transition federal planning principles to a National Economic Resilience and Sustainability Standard.

## Visit the ASFPM job board

[The ASFPM job postings board](#) is a free resource for members and non-members in the flood management field. Check back often, as career opportunities are updated frequently. Employers are also able to post open positions.

# Policy Matters!

Larry Larson, P.E., CFM

Director Emeritus – Senior Policy Advisor, ASFPM

Whenever I think about the nation's progress in "buyouts" as one of the most useful mitigation options, I am reminded of what Charlie Brown (Peanuts comic strip) said: "How can we lose so many ball games when we are so sincere?"

Acquisition/relocation was not considered a viable option for post flood disaster mitigation prior to 1993. It had only been used in a few instances by the Corps of Engineers (Soldiers Grove and Prairie du Chien) and by TVA to relocate small towns that would be flooded out by the flowage of dams they were building.

FEMA was doing some elevations and floodproofing before 1993, but the federal family did not consider buyouts a viable option because they did not believe anyone would sell their home and relocate.

That changed in the Great Midwest flood of 1993, when James Lee Witt, the head of FEMA at that time, decided they would make buyouts the mitigation priority for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Witt also received some critical underlying support from Midwest governors (especially Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan) who were driven by concerns about repetitive flooding along the region's rivers.

To make the program work, two major changes were made. The first was Congress changed the cost share from 50/50 to 75/25 federal/nonfederal. The second was to offer pre-flood value for the home rather than the post-flood value, which was often little or nothing.

These changes proved that buyouts were a viable option, since the number of buyouts went from 30 in the previous year to about 9,000 and 2,000 in the two years following the 1993 floods. Buyouts were shown to be a cost-saving measure for the taxpayers because the damages avoided resulted in cost savings on both flood insurance and disaster relief. While buyouts are voluntary for the property owner, FEMA added a condition that the land bought out where the building was bought out must be deed restricted as open space use in

perpetuity. This would protect the taxpayer investment so they would never again have to pay for flood losses on that property.



One other thing that contributed to the success of buyouts during this period of time was that the property was acquired usually in a short period of time, about 12 to 18 months. Unfortunately, research from NRDC shows that buyouts now take five years on the average to be completed. As a result, many homeowners lose interest, fix their house up enough to live in and get on with their lives. A number of times the home may flood again and taxpayers may help rebuild it again.

The reasons for the long time period seem to be mostly due to lengthy procedures and the time period it takes some FEMA regions to review and approve the buyout application after the state has already reviewed it for compliance. Not that all the blame lies with FEMA since states and local communities also have a role in the buyouts. At any rate, the process must be streamlined if buyouts are to be as useful as they could be.

I should add that the long time frame also has a social equity element. People with more money may be able to weather the time frame, whereas people with little disposable income have few options. This issue is now critical since many bills passed or in Congress will/would raise the amount of funding for mitigation, including buyouts. ASFPM is following these bills and programs and is interested in your experience in buyouts and other flood mitigation options. You can send me your experience via email to [larry@floods.org](mailto:larry@floods.org).



# House approves coastal protection bill



House Natural Resources Chairman Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.) during a floor debate on December 10.

The House of Representatives passed the Digital Coast Act as part of a 10-bill legislative package on December 10 to authorize more money to protect coasts from the impacts of climate change. The bill aims to aid coastal ecosystems and economies, and offers coastal managers tools to protect communities most vulnerable to climate impacts.

"This was a big victory for ASFPM in the House," ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis said. "The Digital Coast Act has been a legislative priority for ASFPM the past few years. In fact, ASFPM is one of the founding members of the Digital Coast partnership."

The bill establishes NOAA's Digital Coast Program, a web-based collection of tools, training resources, and data that inform coastal managers making climate-related decisions.

Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-Ariz.), chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, said climate change is a "a clear and present danger to the 39 million Americans who live near our coasts" and that passage of the bill marks "a necessary step in reversing the impacts."

Moving forward, the House Digital Coast Act bill number has been folded into H.R. 729. While the Senate has passed the bill twice in previous Congressional sessions, this is the farthest the bill has progressed in the House.

## Vermont Natural Resources Council claims water quality victory in state Supreme Court ruling

In November, the Vermont Supreme Court overturned the Environmental Court's decision that economic considerations trump environmental factors in setting conditions for Morrisville Water and Light's (MWL) application for a Water Quality Certificate (WQC) pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC) and Vermont Trout Unlimited (TU) challenged the Environmental Court decision that, according to VNRC Policy and Water Program Director Jon Groveman, "radically departed from how the Vermont Water Quality Standards have been applied in Vermont and across the country and if allowed to stand would result in significant harm to Vermont's waters."

The decision in question ensued after the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) issued a Water Quality Certificate (WQC) to MWL that set new conditions for the operation of its dams on the

Lamoille and Green Rivers to ensure compliance with Vermont Water Quality Standards (VWQS). MWL appealed the WQC, arguing that the conditions were too stringent. VNRC also appealed the WQC, arguing that certain conditions were not stringent enough to meet the VWQS.

Following a two-week trial in April 2018, the Environmental Court issued a decision rejecting most of the conditions ANR had imposed. In doing so, the VNRC said in a statement, the Environmental Court made the unprecedented ruling that the VWQS protect hydroelectric facilities' right to operate above the impact that these facilities have on Vermont's waters.

The Vermont Supreme Court reversed the Environmental Court's decision, ruling that "the Clean Water Act and Vermont Water Quality Standards do not allow promoting or protecting a use that degrades water quality."

# Virginia governor announces strong flood protections for state-owned property

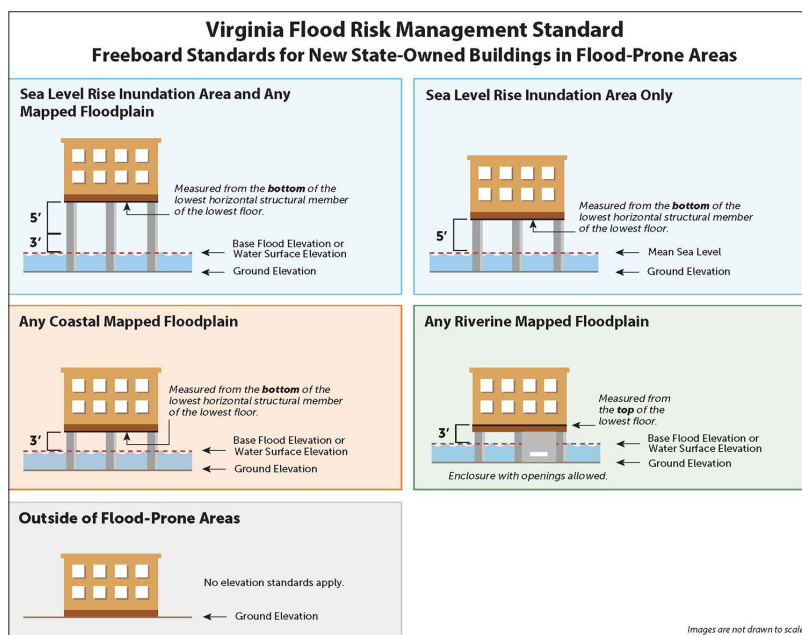
Virginia is taking new steps to address climate change, launching one the country's strongest flood protections for state-owned property under executive order 45 that Governor Ralph Northam signed in November 2019

The executive order creates the Virginia Flood Risk Management Standard to improve flood protection in flood prone areas across the state, further encouraging smart and resilient construction of state buildings. It establishes a "freeboard" standard that increases protection of state-owned buildings in coastal and riverine floodplains.

A first of its kind for any state, the standard incorporates science-based sea level rise projections that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has developed and adopted. The standard requires that state-owned buildings are built to certain elevation standards to protect them from flooding. The new standards will apply to all state-owned buildings authorized for construction after January 1, 2021.

"It is simply common sense to protect against the risk of flooding, because climate change is driving sea levels higher and making storms more intense," Governor Northam said. "Flooding remains the most common and costliest natural disaster in Virginia and in the United States, and our state government is getting prepared. These standards will protect taxpayers by establishing critical protections for new state-owned property."

The new Virginia Flood Risk Management Standard applies to flood prone areas throughout



The above graphic shows elevation standards for new state-owned buildings in flood-prone areas. Flood-prone areas include sea level rise inundation areas as well 100- and 500-year floodplains as mapped by FEMA.

the state and continues an existing prohibition against developing state-owned buildings in flood-prone areas without a variance.

When a variance is granted, buildings will need to build to the new Virginia Flood Risk Management Standard to prepare for future sea level rise conditions. The new standard projects "sea level rise inundation areas," in addition to the "flood hazard areas" that are currently identified and mapped. The order directs that state development in these areas must be elevated to a point that minimizes flood risk from tidal flooding, whether it is caused by sea level rise, rain, or both.

## Austin City Council approves code change to expand floodplain

Mary Huber reports in the Austin American-Statesman that "the Austin City Council approved changes to the land development code that will put more homes and businesses in the 100-year floodplain." The council approved a measure updating the city's 500-year floodplain as the new 100-year floodplain, ultimately impacting building regulations.

"Existing homes and businesses in the new flood zones, of which there are an additional 3,200,

will also have to meet these requirements if they choose to significantly remodel or redevelop their properties," Huber reports.

"The changes come after the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration released new rainfall data last year, known as Atlas 14, which showed that much of Texas, including Austin, was experiencing more major rain events than previously believed."

[Read the full report here.](#)



# 2020 ASFPM annual conference heads to Ft. Worth

Registration opens February 1



The 44th ASFPM annual conference will be held June 7-June 11, 2020 at the Fort Worth Convention Center in Texas.

Flood-risk professionals from all over the world representing local, state, regional, tribal and federal officials, industry leaders, consultants and a wide variety of subject matter experts will present on the conference theme: “Resiliency Where the West Begins.”

ASFPM has contracted with the Omni Fort Worth, Sheraton Fort Worth Downtown, and the Hilton Fort Worth. All three hotels are located within walking distance of the Fort Worth Convention Center. Fort Worth is the 13th-largest city in the United States and is a major tourist destination in Texas, welcoming more than 9.4 million visitors annually. The city is comprised of 11 primary entertainment districts, each offering distinct dining, shopping, entertainment, and cultural amenities.

Conference registration opens February 1 at [asfpmconference.org](https://asfpmconference.org), where you can also learn more about the conference program, hotel options, and the Ft. Worth area. Be sure to also follow #ASFPM2020 on social for up to date conference details.

Conference sponsor opportunities are still available! Increase your company's visibility and reach the flood management professionals attending the conference. Visit [asfpmconference.org/sponsors-and-exhibitors](https://asfpmconference.org/sponsors-and-exhibitors) or email ASFPM Event Coordinator Sarah Waller at [sarah@floods.org](mailto:sarah@floods.org) to learn more.



# Enrollment open for 2020 FEMA CTP Program Spring Special Topics Course

The FEMA Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) spring training course will be held at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, MD, Monday, April 20–Thursday, April 23, 2020. The course will provide training on communications and outreach strategies related to the Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning Program (Risk MAP). To apply, you must work for an organization that is currently a CTP. If your organization is interested in becoming a CTP, contact your Regional FEMA office.

The deadline for registration for the spring course is Friday, February 21, 2020. Admission spots are limited and available on a first-come-first-serve basis, so candidates are encouraged to apply for a pre-approval letter at your earliest convenience. To do so, follow these steps:

1. Complete the eligibility questions using [this link](#) to qualify for a pre-approval letter.
2. If approved, you will receive a pre-approval letter and you must apply directly to EMI by Friday, February 21, 2020 and attach your pre-approval letter to your online application.

During the training, participants will:

- Learn the CTP grants management process, including grant compliance and the grant life-cycle;
- Identify how best to engage communities throughout the Risk MAP process in order to encourage better disaster-related human behavior;
- Learn best practices for communications and outreach using Flood Risk Products and Story Maps;
- Engage with experts with extensive knowledge on their topics;
- Meet experienced CTPs and build your professional network;
- Learn about CTP opportunities.

For more information about the 2020 CTP Spring Special Topics course, email [CTPAdmin@riskmapCDS.com](mailto:CTPAdmin@riskmapCDS.com) or Laura Algeo, National CTP Program Coordinator, at [Laura.Algeo@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Laura.Algeo@fema.dhs.gov).

## FEMA issues update to Flood Risk Analysis, Mapping Guidance

FEMA maintains guidelines and standards to support the Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning (Risk MAP) Program. These guidelines and standards define the specific implementation of the statutory and regulatory requirements for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). They also outline the performance of Flood Risk Projects, processing of Letters of Map Change (LOMCs), and related Risk MAP activities. More information

is available at [www.fema.gov/guidelines-and-standards-flood-risk-analysis-and-mapping](http://www.fema.gov/guidelines-and-standards-flood-risk-analysis-and-mapping).

FEMA maintains the Risk MAP guidelines and standards and issues updates on an annual basis each November. As part of this policy update cycle, FEMA performed routine maintenance and smaller updates driven by specific requests or issues identified.

## FEMA continues its Reinsurance Program to manage flood risk

Continuing its risk management practice against future catastrophic flood losses, FEMA announced its 2020 traditional reinsurance placement for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Reinsurance is a financial risk management tool used by private insurance companies and public entities to protect themselves from large financial losses. If a qualifying catastrophic flood event

occurs, the reinsurance companies cover a portion of the NFIP's losses, contributing to FEMA's ability to pay claims before it needs to borrow from the U.S. Treasury. FEMA transferred an additional \$1.33 billion of the NFIP's financial risk to the private reinsurance market. This annual Reinsurance Agreement is effective from Jan. 1, 2020 to Jan. 1, 2021, with 27 private reinsurance companies.

# What's the ASFPM Foundation been up to?

Thank you to all of our generous donors who helped to make #GivingTuesday a huge success. With the help of our matching gift donors and all of you, we raised a record \$10,125 for the Future Leaders Scholarship fund. That's enough to fund a little over one half of the first year of the next scholarship. Thank you!

Do you know a university student currently enrolled in flood risk management related courses? Please encourage them to enter ASFPM Foundation's **10th annual Collegiate Student Paper Competition**.

Finalists receive a stipend to help with travel expenses to present their papers at the 2020 ASFPM annual national conference June 7-June 11, 2020 in Fort Worth, Texas, with prizes of up to a \$1,000.

Any student, or team of students, currently enrolled at any college or university is eligible to submit an abstract on subjects relating to floodplain or stormwater management. Some related fields include engineering, geology, geography, planning and public administration. A list of suggested topics is [available here](#).

## **Abstracts of 500 words or less must be submitted by Jan. 10, 2020.**

Abstracts will be reviewed by an ASFPM Foundation panel. Three finalists will be invited to submit a full paper due on April 17, 2020. Finalists will be invited to present their papers at a special session at the ASFPM annual national conference June 9, 2020.

Papers and student presentations will be judged by a panel of floodplain managers and winners will be announced at the conference awards luncheon on June 10, 2020. Learn more about the competition requirements and past finalists on the foundation [website](#).

Please help us get the word out that the next application round for the [ASFPM Foundation Future Leaders Scholarship](#) is open with **applications and all supporting documentation due by January 31, 2020.**

This is a two-year scholarship for a rising junior in a four-year undergraduate program, or someone entering the last two years of a five-year dual degree undergraduate program related to flood risk management.

The scholarship is envisioned as an additional means for the ASFPM Foundation to advance flood risk management research and practice. It will be awarded to a deserving college student who plans to work after graduation in a profession that directly, or indirectly, supports the field of flood risk management.

The selected scholar will receive direct financial assistance of up to \$20,000 per year for tuition, books and/or living expenses, as well as mentoring and support finding a paid summer internship in a relevant professional setting.

More details are below.



In 1996, ASFPM established a non-profit, tax-exempt foundation, which serves as an advocate for the profession and as a voice for you, the practitioner, supplier or service provider.

The foundation seeks and directs funds to help ASFPM meet its goals and support floodplain management activities that originate outside of ASFPM.

Foundation donations have supported development of the CFM program, No Adverse Impact publications, college student paper competitions, higher education opportunities in FPM, and specialty think tank meetings, including the Gilbert F. White National Flood Policy Forums and Larry Larson Speakers Series.

The ASFPM Foundation promotes public policy through strategic initiatives and serves as an incubator for long-term policy development that promotes sustainable floodplain and watershed management.

Learn more or donate [here](#).



# Call for Abstracts: ASFPM Foundation Student Paper Competition

## Eligibility:

Any student currently enrolled at any college or university in a floodplain management related field is eligible to submit. The related fields include, but are not limited to, engineering, geology, geography, planning and public administration (see below for list of suggested topics).

Papers may be written by a team of students, but only one scholarship will be awarded to each of the top three teams, and only one person from each team will be invited to attend the conference as our guest to present the paper.

The intent of this scholarship is to assist current student, and as such we require they be enrolled during the key dates of this competition (i.e. abstract submission deadline and full paper submission deadline).

## Submission Process and Timeline:

- **Abstracts must be submitted by Jan. 10, 2020 as a PDF file via email to ASFPM Chapters and Foundation Coordinator Gigi Trebatoski.** ([See abstract criteria.](#)) Students must also submit an enrollment certificate or unofficial transcript which most universities provide free of charge to demonstrate active enrollment status.
- Abstracts will be reviewed by an ASFPM Foundation panel and three finalists will be invited to submit a full paper. Students will be notified by Feb. 17, 2020 whether they have been selected.
- Finalists' full papers will be due by April 17, 2020 along with an updated enrollment certificate



*A floodplain management student competes in the Student Paper Competition at the 2019 ASFPM conference in Cleveland.*

or unofficial transcript.

- The three finalists will receive free registration at the ASFPM annual national conference, free lodging at the conference hotel, domestic air travel and up to \$200 reimbursement of meal and other travel expenses to make their presentations at a special student session during the conference on Tuesday, June 9, 2020.
- Papers and student presentations will be judged by an eminent panel of floodplain managers. Winners will be announced at the awards luncheon on Thursday, June 10, 2020.

## Prizes:

First Place: \$1,000 scholarship; Second Place: \$500 scholarship; Third Place: \$250 scholarship.

**\*\*All prizes also include a complimentary one-year student ASFPM membership.**

Abstracts must be submitted by Jan. 10, 2020

[Learn more about suggested topics, abstract criteria and past competition winners.](#)

# ASFPM Foundation Future Leaders Scholarship

Applications are now being accepted for the Fall 2020 to Spring 2022 Future Leaders Scholarship. Applications and all required attachments **must be received by the ASFPM Foundation by midnight Eastern Time on Friday, January 31, 2020.**

## Purpose of the ASFPM Foundation Future Leaders Scholarship:

ASFPM Foundation's vision for this scholarship is to create an additional means to advance flood risk management research and practice by helping to support the education of future flood risk management professionals.

Each scholarship will be awarded to a deserving college student who plans to work after graduation in a profession that directly, or indirectly, supports the field of flood risk management. The selected scholar will receive direct financial assistance, mentoring and support finding a paid summer internship in a relevant professional setting.

## Duration of Scholarship:

This scholarship is awarded for up to a two-year duration and to a student entering their junior year in a four-year undergraduate degree program or entering the last two years of a five-year or dual degree undergraduate program.

## Amount of Scholarship and What It Covers:

The scholarship will be in the amount of up to \$20,000 per year for two years. The funds will pay the recipient's college or university directly for any tuition costs which exceed any existing financial aid or scholarships up to \$20,000 per year.

Funds remaining after tuition payment may be used for other educational expenses, room and board in a college dormitory, or an equivalent stipend if living off campus. The precise amount of the stipend will be negotiated by the Foundation with the scholar prior to the beginning of the academic year.

## Minimum Eligibility Requirements:

The applicant must:

- be a U.S. citizen or have U.S. permanent resident alien status;
- have graduated from high school prior to August 2018;
- have completed a minimum of one year of

studies at a college or university by January 2020;

- be entering their junior year or entering their fourth year of a five-year dual degree program in Fall 2020;
- have a cumulative, minimum GPA of 2.5 (or equivalent) at the completion of the Fall Semester 2019;
- be attending an accredited public or private college or university in the United States or its territories; and
- be pursuing a course of study related to the missions of the Association of State Floodplain Managers and ASFPM Foundation, which entail flood risk management or any of its related components.

Because mentorship and working in a field related to flood risk management are important components of being an ASFPM Foundation Future Leaders scholar, the scholarship recipient will be strongly encouraged to complete a paid summer internship between the first and second year with an ASFPM corporate, government or NGO partner. ASFPM and ASFPM Foundation will assist the scholar in securing a suitable paid internship.

## Additional Selection Criteria:

- Cumulative GPA at the completion of the fall college semester prior to application.
- Employment history, including paid and unpaid internships.
- Awards, achievements and honors.
- Relevant volunteer activities and hobbies.
- Cumulative GPA at the completion of the fall college semester prior to application.
- Evaluation of two required essays.
- Evaluation of reference letters.
- Demonstrated oral and written communication skills.
- Demonstrated financial need.
- Desire and willingness to participate in ASFPM activities at the state and national levels, e.g., attend annual conferences and participate in relevant professional committees within ASFPM.

## Application and Selection Process:

- Applicants must complete an [online application](#) and all required attachments for the ASFPM Foundation Future Leaders Scholarship must be received by the application deadline of January 31, 2020.
- The highest-ranking candidates, as determined by the selection committee, will be interviewed in person, by telephone, or via video in March 2020.
- The selected ASFPM Foundation Future Leader Scholar will be announced by the end of April in the application year, with concurrent notifications to non-selected applicants.

## Required Attachments:

The following attachments are required with the online application. They may be uploaded and attached to the application or emailed separately to [asfpmfoundation@floods.org](mailto:asfpmfoundation@floods.org):

- Proof of U.S. Citizenship or Permanent Residency Status
- Transcript of cumulative GPA from the 2019 Fall Semester or its equivalent trimester (2.5 or above)
- Copy of your most recent FAFSA
- Resume listing employment history, as well as awards, achievements, and/or honors
- Two essays (as described below)\*
- Letter of Reference\*\* - Academic/Professional (from a professor or past/current employer)
- Letter of Reference\*\* - Character (from a non-academic/professional reference who is

not a family member and can attest to the good character of the applicant)

\* Applicants are to provide two original essays (max. 750 words each):

1. Describe your personal background, including how or why you became interested in the field of flood risk management (for example, from personal experience or course work), and how completed and planned coursework and work experience will prepare you for a career in the flood risk management. Please include in this essay any statement of financial need.
2. What do you see as the challenges in flood risk management today and how do you believe you can contribute/make a difference in the flood risk management in the United States and its territories in the future?

\*\* If your references would prefer to send their letters directly to ASFPM Foundation, please ask them to submit the letter directly via email to [asfpmfoundation@floods.org](mailto:asfpmfoundation@floods.org) or via mail to the following address: ASFPM Foundation, Attn: Gigi Trebatoski, 8301 Excelsior Drive, Madison, WI 53717. All supporting documents must be received by January 31, 2020 for an application to be considered complete.

## For More Information:

Questions on the [ASFPM Foundation Future Leaders Scholarship](#) may be directed to [asfpmfoundation@floods.org](mailto:asfpmfoundation@floods.org) and will usually be answered within 48 hours.



*Jesus Mulgado, L, the 2018-2020 Future Leaders Scholarship recipient, with Jerry Sparks, Sr., ASFPM Foundation Board Events Chair.*



# Disaster Justice for All: The Need for a More Equitable and Just Recovery Lens

Alessandra Jerolleman, PhD, MPA, CFM

*Reprinted with permission*



As disasters become more frequent and severe, it is more important than ever to determine what can be done to promote more just and equitable disaster recovery.

The outcomes of major disasters are nearly

always inequitable, which increases the vulnerability of those who struggled before the disaster and often displaces large portions of communities. The tremendous burdens that disaster recovery imposes result in some individuals—such as renters, those working in low-paying jobs, and undocumented people—finding it nearly impossible to recover after disaster.

Recovery efforts will continue to replicate these patterns unless we take into consideration the systemic injustices that have shaped the landscape of risk, such as concentrating the poor and minorities into high-risk areas or refusing insurance to those considered a poor financial risk

Families who are unable to afford flood insurance or adequately maintain their homes will find it more difficult to access disaster aid, which is based on the value and condition of their home. Alternatively, the added burdens of meeting higher standards—even those for that reduce risk—can drive the gentrification of neighborhoods and displace those who cannot afford to pay such “safety premiums.”

Emergency managers and policymakers could address these systemic injustices through the adoption of an intentional equity and justice lens. Policymakers, practitioners, academics, and community leaders can often clearly identify unjust outcomes resulting from disaster policies that unevenly distribute resources and do not meet basic needs. What’s less clear is how to create and implement programs that result in better outcomes while still meeting legal and programmatic requirements.

In response to this challenge, advocates have created guidance to help disaster-stricken communities promote more equitable recovery.

For example, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) toolkit, titled *In the Eye of the Storm: A People’s Guide to Transforming Crisis and Advancing Equity in the Disaster Continuum*, provides practical guidance for community leaders and emergency managers. There are also examples of local governments that attempt to promote justice and equity by incorporating value statements explicitly into plans and policies.

## The Four Principles for Just Recovery

It’s still difficult to clearly articulate exactly what is meant by “just recovery,” though, and harder to put it into action. But if we can’t clarify what is meant by justice, it will be difficult to hold ourselves accountable. I have proposed a four-principle framework that can provide a starting point for the conversation about what a more just recovery might entail. These four principles provide a lens through which policymakers and practitioners can view proposed disaster recovery practices.

The principles listed below are excerpted from my book, “Disaster Recovery through the Lens of Justice.”

**Just recovery requires the ability to exercise agency.** All community members—regardless of their socio-economic status, race, gender, sexual identification, land tenure, or other factors—must have the ability to fully exercise their agency and make free and informed choices that support of their personal well-being. This is not possible if there is direct or indirect coercion, exclusion from public policies, or other barriers to participation. Furthermore, agency cannot be fully exercised if all options are not understood and made available in a timely manner and through accessible means.

**Just recovery begins with equality.** The principle of *prima facie* political equality, which establishes that only equality is inherently defensible—different or unequal treatment must be justified by the discriminator. Bureaucratic processes that force disaster-affected individuals or communities to prove their deservedness puts the onus to justify the need for equal treatment on the victims, and so fails this test.

### **Just recovery harnesses community capacity.**

Capturing the transformative and adaptive capacity of communities and honoring their definitions of resilience can reduce future risks. Holistic disaster risk reduction is not possible without acknowledging existing patterns of unequal risk distribution. It is not sufficient to mitigate against current risk when rebuilding; instead underlying social structures and patterns must be questioned. Colorblind and ahistoric recovery that does not consider context is not just.

**Just recovery requires equal access.** Without equal access to resources and programs—including full participation in decision-making processes that govern resource allocation, future development, and other functions—it is not possible for communities to effectively participate in their recovery.

This framework is by no means easy to implement

and many of its components will require significant structural and programmatic changes to the ways that disaster recovery is managed and resourced. Incremental changes are possible, however, and awareness is the crucial first step towards those changes. Explicitly designing programs to not only consider the elements of this framework, but also be evaluated for those elements, is another critical step. It is important to remember that what cannot be immediately changed, can be brought to light—and casting such a light on injustice in clear and descriptive terms is a necessary precursor to change.

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*Alessandra Jerolleman is an assistant professor in Jacksonville State University Emergency Management Department as well as a community resilience specialist and applied researcher at the Lowlander Center. Jerolleman is a subject matter expert in climate adaptation, justice in disaster recovery, hazard mitigation, disaster recovery, and resilience with a long history of working in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.*

## Welcome to our new ASFPM members



William R. Wilhelm, P.E., CPESC, CFM  
Mohammed Al Arag, CFM  
Patrick L. McMahon, CFM  
Daniel P. Curcio  
Denis F. Keenan, P.E.  
Charles R. Withers  
Philip Andrew Hilton, EIT  
Kenneth V. Wilson, Jr., P.E.  
Chancellor R. Strange, E.I.T.  
Taylor L. Buie, EIT  
Mitchell J. Plummer  
Miguel Betancur  
Michael A. Moya, P.E., CFM  
Jason M. Dell, P.E., CPESC, CPSWQ  
Steven A. Homburg

Kelli S. Moore  
Amanda C. Herren  
Destiny D. Aman  
Matthew P Brosman, P.E., CFM  
Erica L. York  
Katherine J. Kerstiens, EI, CFM  
Brandon Claborn, P.E., CFM  
Montana Marshall, P.E.  
Lilibet Muniz  
Christian R. Kamrath, CFM  
Tessa McKay  
Daniel W. Hornett, QCSI  
Anthony M. Guzman  
D. Lynn Fisher  
Kate Stein

## The benefits of ASFPM membership

ASFPM individual members, corporate partners, agency partners, and chapters represent all 10 FEMA regions, 50 states, US territories, local, state, tribal and federal government, private industry, nonprofit, and academia. Member benefits include monthly newsletters, access to the ASFPM member and partner directories, discounts on ASFPM conference and webinar fees, and more. [Join or renew today.](#)

"ASFPM membership enables me to partner with folks nationwide as passionate about floodplain leadership as I am. Together we serve better!" Del Schwalls, P.E., CFM, Orlando, FL

## Director's Desk

Chad Berginnis, CFM  
Executive Director, ASFPM



### Policy Really Does Matter!

I hope that all of you had a blessed and peaceful holiday season. As we look forward to the new year and all of its promise, I spent some time reflecting on 2019 and thinking about where opportunities exist in 2020. Specifically, I want to focus on ASFPM's policy function

this month since it is the one topic that I have been frequently asked to discuss when I have been invited to present at ASFPM chapter meetings.

In Washington DC, ASFPM is your voice in the debate over public policies dealing with flooding, disasters and floodplain management. In 2019 we lent our voice on several crucial issues including Disaster Recovery Reform Act implementation, proposed program to replace the PDM program (also known as BRIC) implementation, FEMA's transition to the PIVOT system (and its reporting tool PART), implementation of the High Hazard Dam Rehabilitation program, and CAP-SSSE Transformation (program that helps build state floodplain management capability). We were asked to testify in Congress on NFIP reform, to propose new ideas for the next Water Resources Development Act, and to propose bold ideas before the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis.

Lawmakers in DC have found ASFPM a trusted source for sound public policy ideas on these issues, and while we did not achieve NFIP reform in 2019 (the program has now been extended until September 30, 2020), reform bills that are pending in Congress have over a dozen ideas that are priorities for our members including, for the first time, the authorization and doubling of the budget for the CAP-SSSE program.

For the first time we saw passage of the Digital Coast Act in the House and now our efforts move to the Senate. Funding for programs floodplain managers care about remains robust and we rallied our members, chapters, agency and corporate partners to reverse a proposed \$100+ million cut to the flood mapping budget. It makes me smile to think about how many more flood mapping projects can get accomplished in communities

throughout the nation with the restored funds.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the ASFPM Foundation's Gilbert F. White National Flood Policy Forum, which was focused on the topic of increasing our resiliency to urban flooding brought in thought leaders from around the country together to discuss this increasing problem.

Internally our policy committees continue to do great policy work! To give you a flavor of some of the ongoing work that was done in 2019 and will continue into 2020: ASFPM's Insurance Committee representatives meet with FEMA and Insurance Industry leaders several times each year as part of the Flood Insurance Producers National Council and IBHS flood committee; the ASFPM Mapping and Engineering Standards Committee in partnership with one of our national partners, NAFMSA, convenes the Operating Partners meeting three times each year to discuss mapping program implementation issues. In 2019, ASFPM's Mitigation Committee has restarted bimonthly calls with FEMA headquarters to discuss floodplain management and mitigation grants implementation issues, and ASFPM's Coastal Committee, as well as several other ASFPM staffers and leaders, participate in the Digital Coast Partnership. Finally, ASFPM's NAI Committee continues to hold lunch and learn webinars on different ways to implement a NAI approach in a community.

Two special initiatives I wanted to highlight. The ASFPM Regulations Policy Committee has begun the process to update the model higher standards guide which can be used by communities to enact better local floodplain management policies. The current guide [can be found here](#). Finally, the ASFPM Non-Structural Floodproofing Committee participated in the update of the FM Approvals/ANSI 2510 standard for flood barrier products.

Finally, because we have added Meg Galloway to our policy team, we now have added capacity to assist on state policy issues in addition to those in Washington DC. In 2019, we assisted several states, whether it was related to developing new legislation, executive orders, or building state floodplain management capacity through our mentoring program.



## So what is ahead for 2020?

First, we will continue to engage Congress on NFIP reform. Just because it has been extended until September 30, doesn't mean we can't continue to engage on important issues and build support for those that we think will result in meaningful loss reduction. Also, I am hopeful we will see the passage of the Digital Coast Act in the Senate, Congress will likely be working on putting together a WRDA, and of course there is the FY 2020 federal budget.

We have several products coming out that will contribute to the ongoing policy dialog at all levels of government. In the January-February time frame, ASFPM will be releasing its updated Elected Officials Guide and updated Flood Mapping for the Nation report (both with generous support from the ASFPM Foundation). Speaking of the ASFPM Foundation, the Urban Flooding Form Report will be coming out as well. In the March-April time frame, ASFPM will be developing/

releasing a subdivision design higher standards workshop that can be used by ASFPM chapters. We will also be developing and implementing our strategy to build local capability through our chapters to better enable the conducting of substantial damage determinations through existing mutual aid systems

In closing, there are several exciting opportunities to improve floodplain management and flood loss reduction policies at all levels of government.

I am proud of the work our policy team, our volunteer leaders and our staff have accomplished in 2019 on behalf of all floodplain managers working in the field and in dedication to our mission of reducing flood losses in the nation and to recognize the natural functions of floodplains. Now lets move forward with a successful 2020!

Your partner in loss reduction,  
Chad



*Above, a 2019 technical assistance meeting in progress in South Hutchinson, Kansas. A flood map contractor and mapping engineers met with the community to discuss projects that would reduce flood risk for the community. The engineers can create a work plan that shows the effects of the proposed project as part of the mapping effort. Photo by Steve Samuelson, CFM*

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