

## Association of State Floodplain Managers

*Dedicated to reducing flood  
losses & protecting  
floodplain resources*

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# NEWS&VIEWS

Vol. 29, No. 6

December 2016

## ASFPM's Look Back on 2016 and Look Ahead to 2017



2016 was a pretty big year for ASFPM. We celebrated our **40<sup>th</sup> year** as an association and held our **40<sup>th</sup> national conference**. While those were huge accomplishments, we didn't stop there. Below are some of our success stories, and how we plan to improve in 2017.

ASFPM's Science Services Department will be renamed the **Flood Science Center** to better convey the work and projects being done in that department. In the first quarter of 2017, ASFPM will be rebranding and marketing the center.

In 2016, nearly 3,000 people attended **ASFPM webinars**. We held seven ASFPM webinars, with two new offerings (one on structural elevation and another on using Tolerable Risk Guidelines for flood risk). The association also partnered with American Planning Association to host two [Planning Information Exchange](#) webinars, and three webinars with the [Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance](#). Expect more of the same, as well as new offerings in 2017.

We developed several **strong partnerships** in 2016, like with [APA](#) and [Pew Charitable Trusts](#). The partnership with APA also resulted in a **\$1 million grant** (the first in ASFPM's history). In 2017, we will continue this trend by actively pursuing project opportunities with academic, public, foundation and NGO partners that have a shared vision of promoting education, policies and activities that mitigate current and future losses, costs and human suffering caused by flooding.

We celebrated another milestone—10 years of the [Digital Coast Partnership!](#) Digital Coast is a partnership and information management initiative where NOAA leverages the partnership's ideas, resources and feedback to provide relevant and informative data sets, tools, training and other information for use by floodplain managers, planners and decision makers. The freely-available data and tools from Digital Coast can be used by state, regional and local entities in all of their flood loss reduction, ecosystem management and coastal resiliency efforts. ASFPM is a founding digital coast partner. In 2017 we are looking forward to new partnership initiatives with HUD and the [National Association of Realtors](#).

This year ASFPM presented **NAI legal workshops** in [Biloxi, Mississippi](#) and [Tacoma, Washington](#). We're hearing people really appreciate a large, national association like ASFPM taking the time to provide this type of training at the local level. These workshops were FEMA funded, so going forward with more offerings in 2017 will depend on availability of grants.

2016 saw completion of a multi-year [CBOR](#) goal to have new riverine and coastal FIRM maps and questions in the mapping sections of the **CFM exam**, and also new questions based on the recently released Elevation Certificate. Reading and interpreting FIRM panels is an essential part of floodplain management, as well as reviewing and completing ECs, and the new exam, which rolls out Jan. 1, will reflect that.

In 2017 CBOR and the [PDC](#) will be offering a newly developed **Ethics Training Course** specifically designed for floodplain managers based on the program originally developed by the [Texas Floodplain Managers Association](#). Look for an offering at our national conference in Kansas City, Missouri. We look forward to your comments and delivering it nationwide or digitally in the near future.

In 2016, our new event planner pulled off a successful annual national conference in Grand Rapids, and will be put to the test three times in 2017 with our [national conference in Kansas City, MO](#), [Coastal GeoTools in SC](#) and [Nonstructural Floodproofing and Mitigation Workshop in NJ](#). ASFPM's 2018 national conference will also be getting a **facelift with a new logo and name**. And we'll be incorporating more programs that are for all floodplain risk professionals involved in academia, stormwater, insurance, urban planning and more.

For the second year in a row, ASFPM operated in the **black**, and we see no reason this trend will not continue.

We had a great crop of **award nominations** this year, and want to hit an all-time record high in 2017. Learn about the [various ASFPM awards here](#), and then [click here to nominate](#). Because our conference is much earlier than normal, the deadline for nominations is Feb. 1. So don't delay.

For the first time in many years, ASFPM's executive office is fully staffed. Our new hires (**Bill Brown, Jim Dunham, Melissa Haig, Jenny Seffrood and Jake Thickman**), are bringing fresh ideas and new perspectives to the table. We're also in the process of hiring a research scientist for our newly dubbed Flood Science Center.

As far as **national flood policy** goes, in 2016 we did see some improvements and were reminded once again that flooding will continue to impact many areas of the nation.

ASFPM is always on the lookout for **agency rulemaking and other policy proposals** and weigh in on behalf of our members on federal proposals that may impact the way we manage flood risk. This past year we provided formal comments on 13 federal and state proposals, from Bulletin 17C to Oregon's Biological Opinion impacting the NFIP to state Individual Assistance eligibility criteria. ASFPM provided testimony or budget support letters for important programs spanning five federal agencies. ASFPM Chair **Ceil Strauss** testified in June to Congress on flood insurance rate impacts on small businesses. We sent several letters to Congress weighing in on numerous federal legislative proposals and worked to educate Congress on the impacts of further privatizing the NFIP.

Three agencies came out with proposals to meet Executive Order 13690 and implement the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard: FEMA, HUD and the Corps of Engineers. ASFPM provided comments on FEMA and HUD proposals and is developing comments for the Corps. As we move into 2017, we will be focused on convincing

lawmakers and the new administration that the FFRMS is a common sense resilience and public safety standard that will reduce flood losses and protect federal taxpayer investments.

And the **Water Resources Development Act of 2016** passed this month, as always with good and bad policy provisions. Two good ones that ASFPM has been advocating for include a lot of good aspects, like authorizing policy for the Corps to make sure it looks at nonstructural options for projects, and the establishment of a fund to remove or rehabilitate high hazard dams that is tightly connected with ongoing state and local hazard mitigation efforts.

And although it only passed the Senate, the **Digital Coast Act** made it further than it had in years past.

We imagine that for the next four years, ASFPM will be in **defense mode** trying to protect the good laws and policies put into place the last eight years. It will be a struggle, and challenging, but that's what we do. Here's a quick rundown of our **2017 priorities**.

The incoming administration has **prioritized infrastructure investment and tax code reform**. ASFPM sees opportunities to work with the administration on both issues emphasizing flood hazard mitigation should be an infrastructure investment priority and flood hazard mitigation should be better incentivized in the tax code.

The **NFIP** expires Sept. 30, 2017, and if it's not **reauthorized**, real estate sales will come to an abrupt halt because home buyers cannot get flood insurance, so banks cannot lend. ASFPM Board of Directors, staff and other leaders have been noodling this for more than a year, but the time crunch is now on. This new Congress has lots on its plate, so we need to be ready to provide the best advice for good public policy. ASFPM has developed a set of principles and priorities for NFIP reform.

**Mapping** all communities in the nation—Key players such as Realtors, local officials, contractors and others realize that to have safe and resilient communities, regulations and development standards must be in place before development occurs and must be based on accurate maps. Only one sixth of U.S. rivers and coasts have maps indicating the Base Flood Elevation, which puts citizens in danger. With all the new technology that exists today, we feel FEMA could map the nation for \$4 billion in the next 10 years. ASFPM is pushing for this in the mapping budget and educating FEMA staff and the **Technical Mapping and Advisory Council** about the importance of this. Members and chapters can also push for this with letter and call campaigns to their local, state and congressional members.

The answer to high flood insurance rates is to **promote flood hazard mitigation strategies** like elevation, buyouts and relocation (and cost/sharing when possible). **Increased Cost of Compliance** (part of the NFIP insurance policy), has shown to be an effective tool, as have programs within HUD such as Community Development Block Grants and the 203K loan program; USACE water resource projects; and Natural Resources Conservation Service's Emergency Watershed Protection Program and floodplain easements. ASFPM has been working with numerous partners, including the [Wharton Risk Center at the University of Penn](#) and [Taxpayers for Common Sense](#) to promote these ideas and change policy and budgets to make it happen. And we will continue on this path in 2017.

ASFPM will also work to help reintroduce the **Digital Coast Act** in the next Congress in hopes that it will pass. It enjoys bipartisan support and passed the Senate in 2016 unanimously.

As is always the case when we have congressional elections and especially when an administration changes, we will be working with new staff and federal agency managers to better understand flooding issues in the nation and help educate them on our policy ideas.



## The Legal Aspects of Floodplain Management—A No Adverse Impact Approach



*Mapping Exercise in Progress at Nov. 30 workshop in Tacoma. Photo by Alan Lulloff.*

Death by a thousand cuts. One small encroachment into the floodplain may not have a measurable impact, however the cumulative impact of similar encroachments can significantly increase flood heights. These encroachments block conveyance and reduce flood storage. The focus of a [\*one-day workshop in Tacoma, Washington Nov. 30\*](#) titled [\*“The Legal Aspects of Floodplain Management—A No Adverse Impact Approach,”\*](#) highlighted the need for communities to address the cumulative impact of encroachments into the floodplain. Not only does this help prevent new development from adversely impact existing communities from flooding, but it ensures that when communities issue a building permit that they are fulfilling their responsibility to ensure the structure permitted will be “reasonably safe from flooding.” It is a public safety issue. Emergency responders are put in risky situations when they have to rescue people in the floodplain.

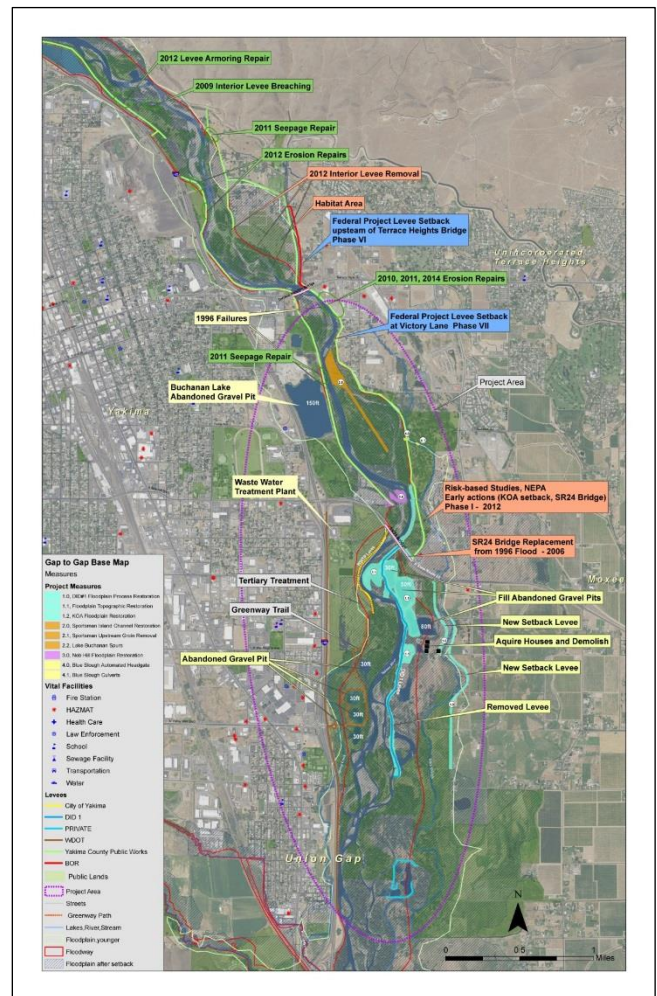
The workshop drew attention to the fact that while property owners have rights, those rights do not include adversely impacting others. ASFPM legal analysis of lawsuits has shown communities are often successfully sued for permitting development that has adverse impacts. Courts have consistently denied legal challenges of community regulations that address public safety.

This is the basis of ASFPM’s No Adverse Impact concept. Examples of regulations in place from around the country were provided that show how communities have adopted regulations that close loopholes in the federal minimum standards. Examples include:

- Using the equal degree of encroachment concept when evaluating proposals addresses cumulative impacts. A historic FEMA guidance document provides excellent guidance on implementing this concept.
- Requiring an impact analysis for encroachment proposals in the entire floodplain (not just the federally mapped floodway). (San Marcos, TX)
- Requiring encroachment proposals to show they do not increase flood velocities in addition to showing they don’t cause a flood elevation increase. (Brevard, NC – No Adverse Impact Certificate)
- Requiring any buildings in the floodplain to have dry land access. (Wisconsin)

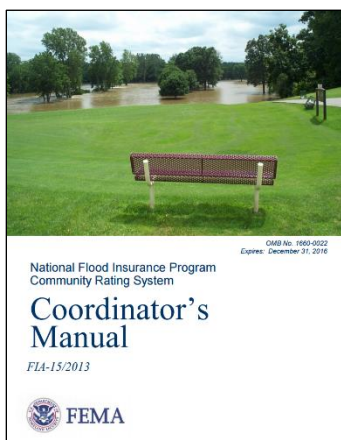
**Hans Hunger**, Pierce County Washington Capital Improvements manager and Northwest Regional Floodplain Management Association chair welcomed the group and highlighted NORFMA's efforts to provide training to local communities. **Alan Lulloff** ASFPM Science Services program director, presented on the "[\*Legal Aspects of Floodplain Management and No Adverse Impact.\*](#)" **David Radabaugh**, Washington's National Flood Insurance Program coordinator, presented on Washington Floodplain Rules, Frequently Flooded Areas Guidance and Floodplain by Design Program. **French Wetmore**, author of ASFPM No Adverse Impact Regulations How-to Guide and former ASFPM chair, presented on core NAI strategies and tools. **Dave Carlton**, ASFPM regional director, provided local knowledge of community efforts to address measures to prevent loss of salmon habitat.

In the afternoon, **Terry Keenan**, Yakima County Water Resource manager, led an exercise where participants were provided a set of maps and asked to address resource and flooding problems on a stream in Yakima County in which, "Contiguous levees and infrastructure built to reduce flood risk have caused channel and ecosystem degradation." Goals identified were to use nonstructural approaches to: 1) Reduce risk to existing developed lands, 2) increase availability of active floodplain to provide ecosystem restoration, 3) and increase the amount of protected developable land.



*Mapping Exercise Solutions*

Participants of past ASFPM NAI workshops have indicated that NAI is indeed a good concept, but what they need is specific guidance on how to implement it. The guidance documents, example ordinance language and interactive exercise that were [\*provided at this workshop\*](#), were developed to go beyond NAI concepts. They were specifically developed to provide communities with the tools to implement NAI regulations.

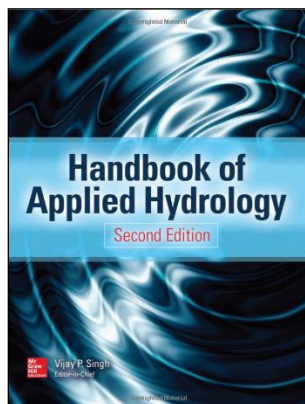


## 2017 CRS Coordinator's Manual Slightly Delayed

The 2017 Community Rating System Coordinator's Manual was to be approved and available Jan. 1. However, according to a press release, the new manual will not be available until later in the month. The upcoming Coordinator's Manual includes no major changes. Numerous improvements, clarifications and minor corrections are being made, along with a few important, but not disruptive, changes. [\*Continue to use the 2013 edition.\*](#) If you have any questions, please let your ISO/CRS specialist know.



## 1964 *Handbook of Applied Hydrology* gets an Update



In celebration of the **Ven Te Chow's** 1964 *Handbook of Applied Hydrology*, a second edition was undertaken by editor **Vijay P. Singh**, a Texas A & M University professor. The new "handbook," weighing in at a mere six pounds, contains 156 chapters with contributors from around the world, and covers all aspects of the hydrology field. Chapter 133, "Flood Proofing and Infrastructure Development," was written by ASFPM's long-time member **Wallace "Wally" Wilson**, our first chair of the Floodproofing/Retrofitting Committee and an ASFPM Foundation Fellow. Wilson, who retired from the Michigan DNR in 1997 and then started a consulting business until 2012, said, "It was indeed quite an honor to be requested to write the chapter. I purchased the original Chow edition for my graduate advanced

hydrology class at Colorado State for \$30. The new 2<sup>nd</sup> edition is available from Amazon for \$165."

Singh was a personal friend of Chow's, which motivated him to undertake the monumental task of updating the *Handbook*. The Foreword states in part, "There have been exponential scientific and technological developments in all water-related area, especially during the post-1980 period. Thus, advances in knowledge had made the (original) *Handbook* obsolete by the early 1980s. It is indeed a tribute to Chow's genius that the book had remained useful for such a long period." In the Preface, Singh said, "It is hoped that the *Handbook* will become useful to college faculty, graduate students and researchers as well as practitioners in hydrology, water science and engineering (as well as the many other related fields)."



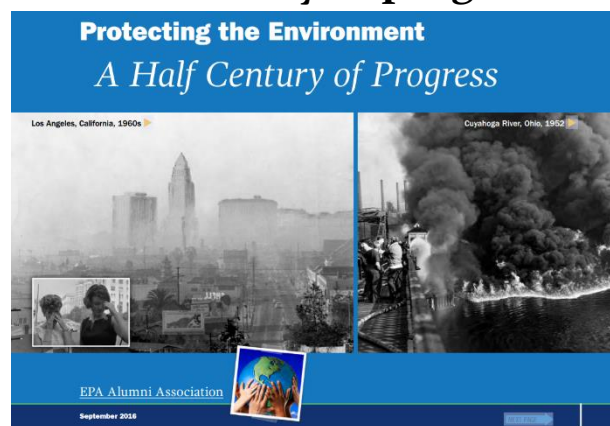
*Long-time ASFPM member Wallace "Wally" Wilson, wrote Chapter 133 in the second edition of Handbook of Applied Hydrology.*

The image is a screenshot of a digital interactive story from The Economist Intelligence Unit. The main title is 'Flood mitigation investment returns positive benefits'. Below the title, there is a paragraph of text explaining the benefits of flood mitigation. The page is divided into three main sections: 'Flood mitigation takeaways', 'Community case studies', and 'The US takes action'. Each section has a brief description and a 'Read more' button. The background of the page features a photograph of a town at night, with lights reflecting on a river.

*The Economist's* Intelligence Unit published this incredible interactive story called, "[Flood mitigation investment returns positive benefits](#)." The benefits of flood mitigation go beyond dollars and cents. *The Economist* found that investment to make homes and infrastructure more flood-proof returns positive economic, environmental and social benefits for communities. The article is divided into three sub-stories: [Flood mitigation takeaways](#); [Community case studies](#); and [The U.S. takes action](#).

## EPA's Protecting the Environment: A half century of progress

ASFP's Director Emeritus **Larry Larson** said of the [report](#), "There are not many of us who remember the health and other challenges from environmental crisis in the 1950s and 60s, but they were dramatic. This overview doc is well done summarizing where we were and what we have done. Air and water quality are an unrecognized benefit of living in America. It doesn't just happen, it takes lots of hard decisions and hard work. And if we think the work is done, read the last page on looking forward. Humans have the ability to create environmental and health problems almost overnight."



## USDA Announces New Conservation Opportunities to Improve Water Quality and Restore Wildlife Habitat

DES MOINES, Iowa, Dec. 7, 2016 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture will offer farmers and ranchers more opportunities to participate in the Conservation Reserve Program. The announcement includes new CRP practices to protect water quality and adds an additional 1.1 million acres targeted to benefit wildlife, pollinators and wetlands.

"The Conservation Reserve Program is an extremely popular voluntary program that offers producers and landowners a wide variety of opportunities to prevent erosion, protect wildlife habitat and reduce nutrient runoff," said Vilsack. "With the program close to the legal enrollment limit of 24 million acres, USDA has been working to use all of the tools at our disposal to maximize benefits by combining multiple soil, water and wildlife objectives in the areas where it is needed most."

Vilsack unveiled a new conservation initiative known as Clean Lakes, Estuaries and Rivers (CLEAR), which will add new tools to CRP that can help to improve water quality. CLEAR will assist landowners with the cost of building bioreactors and saturated buffers that filter nitrates and other nutrients from tile-drained cropland.

Early estimates indicate that CLEAR could help to reduce nitrate runoff by as much as 40 percent over traditional conservation methods. CLEAR may cover up to 90 percent of the cost to install these new practices through incentives and cost-share. These new methods are especially important in areas where traditional buffers have not been enough to prevent nutrients from reaching bodies of water.



USDA will also add an additional 1.1 million acres to a number of key CRP practices that are critically important to wildlife and conservation. These include 700,000 acres for State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) efforts, which restore high-priority wildlife habitat tailored to a specific state's needs. In addition to SAFE, 300,000 acres will be added to target wetlands restoration that are nature's water filters and 100,000 acres for pollinator habitat that support 30 percent of agricultural production. [Read full press release here.](#)

# Policy Matters!

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



## 2016: A Year in Review

The end of another year brings another look at whether we made any progress managing U.S. flood risk in 2016. Let's start by reviewing agency implementation of the updated Federal Flood Risk Management Standard. The focus of the upgrade was really to make sure federal taxpayer funding used for federal actions, either building, funding or providing technical assistance, would be done in a manner to reduce the need for future federal funding.

This need was based on the reality that taxpayers were paying time and again to build the same bridge, culvert, building, water treatment facility, hospital, etc. Especially in light of increasing storm intensity, sea level rise and increased watershed development, this is critically important. Most taxpayer funding following disasters goes to rebuild public infrastructure. Doing it once is costly for the taxpayer, but doing it again and again is folly. ASFPM is supportive of the update order and is providing comments to the agencies (FEMA and HUD so far) as they update their program rules, regulations and policy to reflect that new direction. The Corps of Engineers has just issued its proposed rule and comments are due Jan. 30—[see our past comments to agencies and upcoming actions](#).

The ASFPM Foundation saw a need for discussion of how agencies would determine flood elevations and floodplains under the updated Executive Order, which directed agencies to use climate-informed science to determine future flood levels when federal funding or support is involved. The foundation's Gilbert F. White Flood Policy Forum gathered 100 experts to explore this issue, and [issued this report](#). The foundation continues to help states and chapters [conduct symposia](#) to identify policy changes that will help manage flood risk in their states. It also held a [Speaker Series](#) event at the University of Maryland where the guest lecturer, Dr. Don Boesch reviewed the impacts of future climate change.

On a national/global scale, the efforts on climate change are aimed at actions that not only impact our physical health, but our long-term economic health. The U.S. has made incremental but important progress on this issue over the past five years, but it is uncertain we can hold on to those gains, let alone advance the issue in the coming four years.

The flood mapping [Technical Mapping Advisory Council](#) set up by the 2012 NFIP reform has issued its most recent report. The 2016 annual report will be completed soon and we'll let you know as soon as it's released. While the [first reports have many recommendations](#), it also appears to have missed some issues that will hopefully be picked up as the TMAC moves into its 2017 work plan and beyond. We are making recommendations that TMAC focus on coastal mapping standards, especially those related to eroding areas and areas with some sand dune protections that may disappear in storms like Hurricane Matthew.



While the authorization of the NFIP expires Sept. 30 2017, congressional committees and offices have spent a lot of time discussing the issues and preparing for a reauthorization bill because they know a lapse in authorization results in an almost complete halt to real estate sales (and everyone wants to avoid that). Flood insurance premiums are significantly increasing due to NFIP changes in 2012 and 2014 that direct a movement toward actuarial rated flood insurance policies. While there are 700,000 subsidized flood insurance policies out of 5.1 million policies, almost all of the policy premiums go up. While people will now see how much their full flood risk costs, more people are dropping their policies (400,000 less) because of the higher cost. Actuarial rates also have invigorated the private insurance and re-insurance industry to further explore getting into the flood insurance business. How to ensure a level playing field between the NFIP and private flood insurance is a concern



for ASFPM. The ASFPM Board of Directors and its committees have developed [\*suggested principles and priorities for the 2017 NFIP reauthorization\*](#).

One positive outcome of true risk rate flood insurance premiums is that property owners can see the return on investment for undertaking mitigation. In many cases the reduction in flood insurance premiums will more than cover the mitigation cost in a few years. However, there is a problem if the property owner cannot afford, or get a loan, for the mitigation action (elevation, relocation, etc.). As such, ASFPM is working with many of our partners and members in asking Congress to develop a means tested program to support mitigation instead of subsidizing flood insurance premiums. Mitigation is the key to flood insurance affordability.

In the recent lame duck session, Congress passed a Water Resources Development Act. While it authorized a boat load of USACE water resources projects around the nation, it also included a “Rehabilitation or Removal” grant program for small dams. Money will need to be appropriated for FEMA to implement it.

**WRDA2016** The federal budgets for FY17 have been done by Congress with a couple short-term Continuing Resolutions. ASFPM will continue to get information on these programs to our members and communities. Under these CRs, most agencies get last year’s funding for this year, but only until April 28. Congress will then have to decide on spending levels until the end of federal FY17 (Sept. 30 2017). At the same time, Congress will be working on FY18 funding, so we will be providing suggestions on the need to increase funding for flood mapping and mitigation. It is uncertain how the new administration will view these programs.

Finally, let me close with a few of the many actions taken and underway by ASFPM and our hundreds of volunteers. In 2016 our board and committees provided comments on a number of proposed policy actions and met with many of the federal agency partners to improve flood risk management in America.

We look forward to implementing many of the items mentioned above in 2017, and working with our members, committees, board and other decision makers to see if we can move key issues in the coming year and maintain progress we have already made.



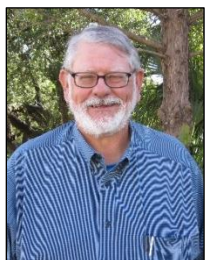
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## Member News

ASFPM member **Brian Batten**, Ph.D., CFM, was promoted to Dewberry’s Richmond Virginia office. Batten is a senior coastal scientist and project manager with Dewberry’s resilience solutions group and leads the firm’s sea level rise practice. He has more than 20 years of experience in coastal marine sciences and is an expert in coastal hazards, including coastal flooding, coastal erosion and SLR. Recently, Batten served as project manager for the development of future coastal flood hazard information for New York, which resulted in an interactive website tool developed to allow municipalities to use scientific data for resilience planning for future storms and flooding.



RPS Klotz Associates added ASFPM member **Tom Mountz**, PE, D.WRE, CFM, to its Austin office as a senior project manager. Mountz brings more than 40 years’ engineering experience in water resources management, master planning, floodplain and dam breach modeling, design, stormwater management and more, according to [\*this press release\*](#). He is also a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, Texas Society of Professional Engineers, Environmental & Water Resources Institute, Texas Floodplain Management Association and American Academy of Water Resources Engineers, where he is a Diplomat (D.WRE).



## Let this be the year to make your life easier. Join ASFPM today.

Flood after flood after flood occurred in 2016, and based on ample research and reports, we don't anticipate future years will be any less busy or costly. As a floodplain manager, often wearing many hats, you don't have time to read up on all the latest law changes, mitigation practices and tools that you and your community or clients need. This is where [ASFPM](#) comes in. We keep up, read up and summarize, curate and advocate for what matters to you. And for the low cost of an annual membership you get all this at your fingertips, along with a community of more than 17,000 other member/peers across the country sharing their success stories. Let this be the year to make your life easier. [Join ASFPM today.](#)

ASFPM membership also means we can help you:

- Stay on top of industry trends,
- Earn professional credibility through our [Certified Floodplain Manager](#) program at a discounted price,
- Be the first to hear about ASFPM created tools and resources, like the [No Adverse Impact How-to Guides](#), [Flood Mapping for the Nation](#) report, legal research/guidance and technical papers,
- Get your voice heard on The Hill, especially with national policies that could impact your community,
- Receive email blasts explaining complicated issues, like [EO 13690 and Federal Flood Risk Management Standard](#),
- Attend webinars to aid in your day-to-day activities at a discounted rate,
- Get the members-only newsletter, "The Insider," packed with information you need to be an effective floodplain manager,
- Contribute your perspective through our 14 policy committees, and
- Receive discounted rates to [ASFPM's annual national conference](#) and specialty workshops.

[New members can join now.](#) Existing members can renew by logging into their [member account here](#). Be sure to renew your membership by Dec. 31.

If you have any questions about membership, please email [memberhelp@floods.org](mailto:memberhelp@floods.org).





## ASFPM's 41<sup>st</sup> Annual National Conference

### Kansas City, MO

### April 30-May 5, 2017

Getting excited about ASFPM's 2017 conference [Managing Flood Risk in the Heartland](#) in Kansas City, Missouri? While conference registration doesn't open until February, one thing you can do is [book your hotel room](#). Right now the standard rate is \$164 per night, and government rate is \$117. The hotel is located just blocks from the Power & Light District, giving you easy access to the area's upscale shopping, popular restaurants and vibrant nightlife.

And FYI. We are putting the final touches on the preliminary program and workshops. If you submitted a presentation for consideration, be on the lookout for a notification email in January!

Need more convincing about attending this conference? [Check out this page](#) to learn about Kansas City ([the city of fountains](#)), its attractions, entertainment options and local breweries (we know how much FPMers love their beer)!

ASFPM's [conference website](#) is constantly being updated, so check it often!

**[Mark Your Calendars for our Upcoming National Conferences.](#)**

Kansas City, Missouri, April 30-May 5, 2017

Phoenix, Arizona, June 17-22, 2018

## Coastal GeoTools is set for Feb. 6-9, 2017 in North Charleston, South Carolina

[Coastal GeoTools 2017](#) is set for Feb. 6-9, 2017, so make sure you don't miss out on sharing your geospatial expertise and experiencing the opportunity to learn from your peers. We'll be convening in North Charleston, South Carolina. So start planning now.

Registration is \$425 and on-site registration is \$500.

While registering, consider also signing up for one or two of the [Special Interest Meetings](#) on Feb. 6. There is no charge to attend a SIM if you are also attending the conference, but you must register in advance as space is limited.

Have questions? Contact us at [info@coastalgeotools.org](mailto:info@coastalgeotools.org).



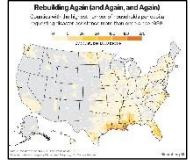


# What's happening around the world?

*A collection of the most viewed stories on our [Facebook](#) page*

## The Nation

Good story...minus the lead paragraph. Focus is on which parts of the U.S. will climate change depopulate first? New FEMA data offers some early hints. Read the [article by Christopher Flavelle from Bloomberg](#) [View here](#).



"So you want to buy a home in a global warming zone. Wait, you weren't thinking of it that way? You didn't even realize it or think to check? Well, it's time to adjust your outlook." Read [The New York Times article here](#).

FEMA's outgoing director tells it like it is. "FEMA is the euphemism for you, the taxpayer, holding the bag. That's what people don't understand: You the taxpayer hold the bag when we make bad investment decisions on where and how we're going to build in a changing environment." Read the [Bloomberg piece here](#).



We need to "show" climate change, and not just "tell" about it. Read ["Have we been talking about climate change all wrong?"](#) from ThinkProgress.org.



With little more than a month left in office, the Barack Obama administration is quietly trying to accomplish one last big thing on climate change: creating a policy for relocating entire towns threatened by extreme weather and rising seas. Read the [Bloomberg article here](#).

## The World

Such a great way to explain to the public and local officials about smarter river management...a 3.5 minute video! [Watch this video](#) that was created by the Rhone Mediterranean Corsica Water Agency.

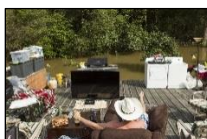


## Texas



Wowzers! Dallas will turn dangerous floodplains into the nation's biggest urban park — 10,000 acres of nature! Read the [ZME Science article here](#).

"Climate change will bring more frequent and fierce rainstorms to cities like Houston. But unchecked development remains a priority in the famously un-zoned city, creating short-term economic gains for some while increasing flood risks for everyone." New @ProPublica/@TexasTribune [interactive story shows exactly how Houston's "once in a lifetime" floods keep happening](#).



Jamie Holden Jr. sits in a chair March 16 on the roof of his father's home that is surrounded by floodwaters from the Sabine River in Deweyville, Texas. Holden moved his belongings onto his roof before floodwater got inside the house. This photo is [part](#) of a [USA Today compilation of 2016 photos](#).



# What's the ASFPM Foundation been up to?

## Student Paper Competition

Do you have university connections or know a student in programs related to floodplain management (such as natural sciences, engineering, planning, public policy or atmospheric science)? If so, we need your help to spread the word about the **ASFPM Foundation's annual Student Paper Competition**. Abstracts (500 words or less) are due Jan. 31. Three semi-finalists receive travel stipends to attend the 2017 ASFPM national conference, and will compete for cash prizes of up to \$1,000. Detailed information, including examples of papers previously presented, can be found on the [foundation's website](#).

Encouraging student entries is an investment in the future of flood risk management. If you've ever sat in on the paper competition at the conference, you've seen how exciting it is to see students actively engaged in the science of floodplain management by learning firsthand from all the conference has to offer, and building professional connections for a solid future. Encourage a student to enter today, and/or get your university connections involved. We are interested in growing our university connections and investment in the students who are the future of our profession, so please pass on any contact information with faculty to Diane Brown at [diane@floods.org](mailto:diane@floods.org).

## Thank You to our Donors!

The ASFPM Foundation Board extends a sincere thank you to all who donated on **#GivingTuesday** this year. The foundation raised more than \$2,000! Our donors make all of our work possible. Remember that [state chapters and individuals can donate any day of the year](#).

We also thank ALL our 2016 state chapter and individual donors. Your continued support makes it possible for us to invest in the future by encouraging students, researching important topics such as coastal resiliency and climate impacts, to grow the body of knowledge and provide information to policy makers, raising awareness through activities like the [Larry Larson Speaker Series](#), and acting as a catalyst for projects undertaken by ASFPM to advance the floodplain management profession.

## Larry A. Larson Speaker Series-Video now Available!

A video of **Dr. Donald Boesch's** presentation at the May 6, 2016 Larry A. Larson Speaker Series is now available. "[Effective Coastal Adaption Requires Getting a Fix on Sea Level Rise](#)," provides an opportunity to learn how a deeper understanding of sea level rise is critical for effective coastal adaptation and the dire consequences we face unless nations change practices of transportation, supply and depletion of soil organic matter.

## WHAT IS THE ASFPM FOUNDATION?

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](#).

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](#).

## From the Chair

Ceil C. Strauss, CFM &  
State Floodplain Manager in St. Paul, Minnesota



### What are the benefits of being a national ASFPM member?

Many of us are members of both the national ASFPM and our state or local chapter. I hear questions occasionally about the benefits of being a member at both levels.

Why did I become a national member?

Admittedly, as was the case for many of us, I first became a national ASFPM member solely to save money when I registered to take the CFM exam. I continued as a national member to save money on my CFM renewals and registration when I began to have the opportunity to attend ASFPM's annual conferences. But I now know a LOT more about what ASFPM and its members do, and the many benefits I was not aware of during my earlier years as a member.

Top reasons to be a national ASFPM member:

**Save money** on the CFM exam, CFM renewals and the annual ASFPM conference registration.

**Get *The Insider* newsletter**—in addition to *News&Views*—with lots of great updates and information every two months, and see timely member alerts about national happenings. The Insider includes two of our most popular features: the *Washington Legislative Update*, which is a comprehensive analysis of all that is going on in Washington DC, and the *Floodplain Manager's Notebook*, which provides useful and practical advice on implementing local floodplain management programs.

Use your member discount to make the already very affordable **educational webinars** even cheaper. The one- to two-hour webinars have been added in the last few years, and receive excellent feedback. Let us know if you have suggestions for additional topics.

**Provide input and guidance** on proposed national laws and policies related to floodplain management. ASFPM is well-respected for our knowledge related to floodplain management and risk reduction. We are a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing members with expertise spanning from the local to state to federal level. We have members working in zoning, planning, risk identification, mitigation and more. ASFPM staff and volunteer leadership monitor issues and policies at the national (and sometimes state) level, offer formal and informal comments on proposed rules and policies, give input and discuss issues with congressional staff, and partner agencies and organizations involved in floodplain management, insurance, mitigation and related areas. We've seen our input and recommendations incorporated in laws and policies—sometimes right away, while at other times those ideas take years to reach fruition. Read Larry Larson's Policy Matters column to get a feel for the spectrum of issues that we've contributed input on just this past year.

**Engage with and benefit from the work of our 14 policy committees**—[\*No Adverse Impact\*](#), [\*Mapping & Engineering Standards\*](#), [\*Floodplain Regulations\*](#), [\*Flood Insurance\*](#), [\*Training & Outreach\*](#), [\*International\*](#) and more. Each policy committee is like a think tank. They share information and act on concerns brought forward by their committee members. They raise awareness of issues seen by the practitioners, make recommendations, write discussion or white papers and produce other outreach materials. The work of the committees contributes to the



effectiveness of input and discussions with national decision-makers. See links to the committee pages at [www.floods.org](http://www.floods.org) to learn more and possibly become involved yourself.

Support the ability of **ASFPM's Flood Science Center** (formerly known as Science Services Department) to work on research, publications, pilot projects and surveys that benefit floodplain professionals around the country. While much of these efforts are funded with grants, if there was no ASFPM, there would be no Flood Science Center! [See more details on the current projects and ongoing programs.](#)

Provide input on concerns and issues to the ASFPM board members or policy committee co-chairs. **Take the opportunity to be an active member** of a policy committee or step into a leadership role as a policy committee co-chair or board member.

Speak with members from around the country and get **new ideas and perspectives**. And you have the added benefit that most ASFPM members will be happy to talk about “flood geek” topics and will actually be engaged (in contrast with family members who try to “get it,” but just don’t)!

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## ASFPM Requests Member Comments on USACE Draft FFRMS Implementation Guidance

The U.S. Corps of Engineers has issued a draft that outlines how it will implement the new Federal Flood Risk Management Standard to protect federal taxpayer investments in federal actions. The Corps will do this not with rules in the Federal Register, but by amending internal guidance they have used for years to implement the old EO 11988. They have put the [draft Engineering Circular out for comments, which are due to USACE on or before Jan. 30, 2017](#).

ASFPM is asking all of you who wish to provide feedback for consideration into ASFPM’s comments to please submit to either Executive Director Chad Berginnis ([cberginnis@floods.org](mailto:cberginnis@floods.org)) or Director Emeritus Larry Larson ([Larry@floods.org](mailto:Larry@floods.org)) by Jan. 25. If you can, we urge you to submit your own comments to the Corps as well. The more the better!

[Here's the link with summary and other data on Engineering Circular process.](#)

Unlike FEMA and HUD, which have opted to use the freeboard approach to establish the elevation and horizontal extent of the FFRMS, USACE indicates on page 8 of the draft Engineering Circular, “All Corps actions subject to the FFRMS will utilize the [Climate-Informed Science Approach], unless compelling justification for using one of the other approaches is developed and documented”. It goes on to say that decision must be approved up the line.

The draft indicates [CISA will be calculated using Appendix H of the guidelines issued Oct. 8, 2015](#) for use by all federal agencies. The guidelines discuss use of sea level rise estimates in coastal areas, and the need to determine new hydrology in riverine areas taking into account projected increases in rainfall and land use changes. It acknowledges FEMA is not yet mapping future conditions, including coastal erosion as required by BW-12, and it provides links to a variety of resources to assist agencies in making CISA determinations and promotes determining local conditions (or use of local information where appropriate). Appendix H starts on page 57 and goes to end of doc. It’s good on coastal, but weaker on the process to use to determine CISA in riverine areas.

We will update our website with the Corps draft information. Learn more [here on ASFPM's FFRMS page](#).

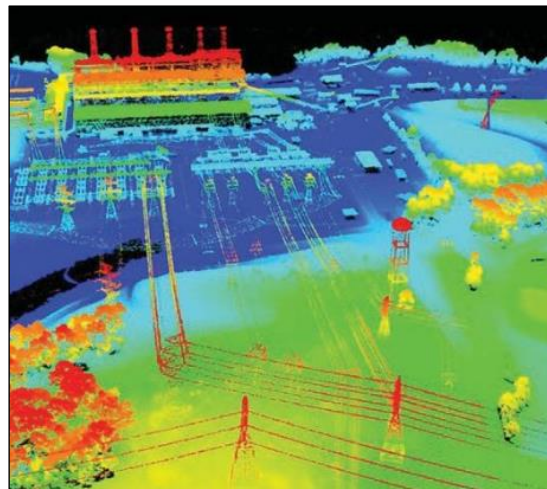


## FEMA News You Can Use

### FEMA Issues Latest Update to Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping Standards

FEMA's Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration updated the Guidance and Standards that it uses in its flood mapping and risk analysis efforts. There are six revised standards, three new standards and one rescinded standard in this maintenance cycle in addition to a number of updated guidance and technical reference documents.

Several of these updates to Risk MAP guidance and technical references begin implementing recommendations from the Technical Mapping Advisory Council's 2015 recommendations. TMAC-related updates include requirements for reporting the accuracy of elevation data used, and guidance on selecting engineering models. FEMA also enhanced the standards and guidance development process and updated FEMA Policy #FP 204-078-1 to address the TMAC recommendation to consider the cost of implementation for new requirements and address the costs consistently.



The updated standards address requirements for emergency operation plans for levee accreditation, clarify requirements for incorporating Letters Of Map Revisions into map updates, update requirements for processing Physical Map Revisions update Notice to Users requirements, update requirements for flood risk product automation, update distribution requirements for Flood Insurance Study reports, and formalize several standards for removal of the special flood hazard area designation by letter consistent with current practice.

FEMA conducted a public review of the draft standards earlier this year, and regularly updates these guidance and technical reference documents to ensure ongoing improvements in its flood mapping and risk analysis efforts. The actual standards and related guidance are 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). The posting of guidance documents and technical references to the FEMA.gov site will take a few more weeks until all the publishing reviews are completed.

### Public Notice of the FEMA Intended Procurement for NFIP

With the impacts of several large flood disasters over the past years, the [National Flood Insurance Program](#) experienced situations where the cost of policy claims far exceeded the amount of premiums and accumulated surplus. This resulted in the NFIP incurring a debt to the U.S. Treasury of \$23 billion. Through the [Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 \(BW-12\)](#) and [Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014](#), FEMA received the authority to secure reinsurance from the private reinsurance and capital markets in an effort to lower future borrowing needs. In response, FEMA created the NFIP Reinsurance Program with the primary objective to diversify the tools it uses to manage the financial consequences of the government's catastrophic flood risk.

The NFIP Reinsurance Initiative Team took a measured step to execute a small, reinsurance placement in September 2016 to identify and resolve any barriers or issues in advance of a larger implementation. In early January, FEMA plans to implement a larger reinsurance program at the federal level. On Dec. 1, 2016 FEMA published a notice of its intended reinsurance procurement for the NFIP. The official notice can be found [here](#). This notice includes all the procurement, contact information and details on how to submit a request for participation.

# From the Director's Desk

Chad Berginnis, CFM  
Executive Director, ASFPM



## So what will 2017 bring?

Last night, I just finished up writing out all of the Christmas Cards that needed to be mailed about two weeks ago. Ah well, that is the busyness and joy of the holiday season! Of course all of those cards, as well as those we received, have something about wishing for a happy, healthy, joyous, peaceful, prosperous (and any other positive adjective you can think of insert here) 2017. With that in mind, I thought it would be a good theme for my column this month.

So what will 2017 bring? Being the week before Christmas, I am going to focus on opportunities that have potential to be downright great. These are in no particular order and I suppose next year at this time we will see if I was right or if we should have been looking for lumps of coal.

- 1) **Tax Reform:** The new administration has identified tax reform as a near-term priority. What we don't quite know yet is how extensive it will be. However, there has been appetite building for doing something pretty extensive and now we have an incoming President that will help move such an effort along. In talking to partner organizations, this might be the best time we have had in decades to get something done in terms of the tax code. From ASFPM's point of view, there are at least five reforms that could be done to better incentivize mitigation and reduce flood losses: Eliminate federal taxation of flood hazard mitigation activities, especially those that are state or locally funded; reform the casualty loss deduction to better target the deduction as well as incentivize those who have mitigated; develop a hazard mitigation tax credit much like the energy efficiency tax credits given to property owners; revise the historic rehabilitation tax credit to authorize hazard mitigation and extend it to private homes; and support the concept of a disaster savings account.
- 2) **Infrastructure Investment:** For the better part of 15 years, states and communities have developed and revised hazard mitigation plans that have specific actions to reduce flood risk. Some of those have been translated into nearly "shovel ready" projects that just need funding and are submitted via FEMA's PDM/FMA competition or through the USACE as a project. If the President really wants to invest up to \$1 trillion in infrastructure, why not flood hazard mitigation projects? Property owners, communities, states and even the federal government need to make significant investments in flood hazard mitigation to deal with increasing flood risks due to climate change and other conditions. ASFPM will be working with partner organizations and the administration to champion such an idea.
- 3) **NFIP Reform:** While we always have to be on guard to explain why certain bad policies shouldn't be in NFIP reform and reauthorization bills, ASFPM has a pretty good track record of continuous improvement of the program. I like what I am seeing as 2017 shapes up. Yes, we need to be cautious that any reforms related to private sector involvement do not undo the fabric of the NFIP nor cannibalize it. There is widespread consensus among groups that will be active in 2017 to support flood hazard mitigation and flood mapping. In fact, ASFPM Director Emeritus **Larry Larson** said that the conversation around mapping seems to have changed from focusing on the quality of the maps (many of the maps being produced today are quite good) to the need for mapping and more detailed floodplain information. ASFPM has produced a short one-page [Principles](#) document and a two-page [Priorities](#) document concerning NFIP reform.
- 4) **The day-to-day work of you, the floodplain manager!** I am being serious. In 2017 there will be thousands of floodplain development permits that have to be issued; hundreds of variances to be considered; scores of hydrologic and hydraulic analyses done; and tens of thousands of miles of streams, rivers and coastlines to be mapped. Researchers and scientists will be working to make advances in 2D modeling, flood forecasting, future conditions and climate change impacts, and quantifying flood losses and those avoided by risk



reduction measures. Federal and state officials will be working to fashion policies that reduce flood risk and develop tools/data/services that help. And partner organizations will be removing obsolete dams, acquiring and managing sensitive flood-prone lands, and partnering with ASFPM to push meaningful policy changes.

While the previous three are policy focused and may or may not occur (the NFIP could simply be extended), the fourth opportunity—to build on your day-to-day work as a floodplain manager—will most certainly occur and will have the most lasting impact on flood risk reduction. Like we have always done, whether through tools development like model regulations for communities (see our most recent joint publication with APA on [Subdivision Design and Flood Hazard Areas](#)), [NAI How-to Guides](#), mentoring program for states, or training for floodplain managers from all walks of life, ASFPM will continue to work along-side of you to help make that a reality.

Wishing all of you and your families the very best this holiday season and in 2017.

Your partner in loss reduction,

*Chad*

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## Job Corner

Missouri SEMA is hiring a floodplain management officer; a planning division administrator is needed in Cascade County, Montana; and Milone and MacBroom in New York is looking for a water resource engineer. Check out these jobs and others on [ASFPM's Job Corner](#). Are you an employer? Post your own job opening. It's completely free!

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**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](mailto:editor@floods.org).



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