

Association of State Floodplain Managers

*Dedicated to reducing flood losses
& protecting floodplain resources*

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NEWS&VIEWS

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Executive Order 13690 and the New Federal Flood Risk Management Standard Explained

President Obama on Jan. 30 issued [Executive Order](#) 13690 that revises Executive Order 11988 and proposes a new Federal Flood Risk Management Standard.

“Since the issuance of Executive Order 11988 38 years ago, we as a nation have learned a lot about floodplain management and flood risk,” [ASFPM](#) Executive Director Chad Berginnis said. “The changing nature of flood risk, including increased risks due to sea level rise, demands competent standards that will withstand the test of time and the forces of nature. And we think the new EO and FFRMS is a great step in the right direction.”

Elements of EO 13690 and the FFRMS

The EO and new standard would apply to federal actions such as federal grants used for repair and redevelopment after a natural disaster. In fact, the definition of federal actions to which the EO would apply is unchanged from EO 11988. The FFRMS gives agencies the flexibility to select one of three approaches for establishing the flood elevation and hazard area they use in siting, design, and construction. They can:

- Use data and methods informed by best-available, actionable climate science;
 - Build two feet above the 100-year (1%-annual-chance) flood elevation for standard projects, and three feet above for critical buildings like hospitals and evacuation centers; or
 - Build to the 500-year (0.2%-annual-chance) flood elevation.
- Other elements of the EO include a directive for agencies to use, where possible, natural systems, ecosystem processes and nature-based approaches when developing alternatives for consideration. Also, the new EO specifies that it is the policy of the United States to improve the resilience of communities and federal assets against the impacts of flooding, and recognizes the risks and losses due to climate change and other threats.

One of the new elements of the FFRMS is the application of the new standard outside of the mapped floodplain, especially where the freeboard approach is used. We also know significant flood losses occur outside of the [FEMA](#)-mapped floodplain. Mother Nature simply does not recognize our flood mapping boundaries, and the FFRMS would require applying the freeboard when determining where the standard applies. At the same time for the floodplain manager, this is nothing new. Floodplain managers, on a daily basis, utilize the base flood elevation to regulate development activity, regardless if the mapped floodplain boundary shows something different.

In addition to the release of the new EO and FFRMS, [draft flood risk management standard implementation guidelines](#) were released. Information about the FFRMS has been incorporated into the guidelines to aid agencies in development of their revised or new procedures and to promote consistency among agencies. The guidelines are also advisory. To the extent permitted by law and consistent with their statutory authority, each agency shall draft or update their own rules and regulations to be consistent with EO 13690. The guidelines call for a 30 day timeframe after the close of the public comment period to develop an implementation [plan](#) for updating their procedures. "After Executive Order 11988 was issued in 1977, the Water Resources Council issued implementing guidelines for agencies to assist with incorporating the standards of the EO into their policies, procedures, and programs. The new guidelines amends that older document, and will be of great assistance to agencies as they incorporate the new FFRMS," Berginnis said.

Process

A federal interagency coordinating group that deal with floodplain management issues– the Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MIT-FLG) – had been working on the new standard for well over a year. This interagency team includes agencies such as the Corps of

*FEMA has set up **Informational Listening Sessions** across the United States. These sessions provide the opportunity to listen, ask questions, and provide feedback on how federal agencies implement the FFRMS.*

*Due to space constraints of the facilities, seating may be limited. To reserve a seat in advance, please provide a request via email at least three days in advance with the contact information of the participant (including name, mailing address, and email address), and the meeting to be attended to FEMA-FFRMS@fema.dhs.gov and include the subject/attention line: **Reservation Request for FFRMS**. For anyone attending the meetings who is hearing or visually impaired, or who requires special assistance or accommodations, please also contact FEMA-FFRMS@fema.dhs.gov.*

Listening Sessions

March 3, 2015
3 – 5:30 p.m. (CT)
Iowa Water Conference Venue
Iowa State University
Scheman Building
Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50011

March 5, 2015
9 a.m. – noon (CT)
Mississippi Recovery Office
220 Popps Ferry Road
Biloxi, Mississippi 39531

March 11, 2015
2 – 5 p.m. (PT)
California Office of Emergency Services
3650 Schriever Ave
Mather, CA 95655

March 11, 2015
9 a.m. – noon (ET)
Old Dominion University
Ted Constant Convocation Center
4320 Hampton Blvd
Norfolk, VA 23529

Engineers, FEMA, NOAA, HUD, Transportation, and the Department of Agriculture (which includes NRCS). Essentially all of the federal departments containing the nation's water resources agencies – such as those that oversee and construct dams and levees – were at the table. These agencies have some of the nation's leading experts and institutes that deal with flooding and water resources. The FFRMS was developed as a consensus standard among these agencies.

Concurrent with the development of the standard, the views of elected state and local officials were solicited and considered during the development of the standard. The consensus standard that emerged was very similar to the one recommended by 26 governors, mayors, county officials and tribal leaders in the State, Local and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience report issued this past November.

Now that the EO, FFRMS and guidelines have been issued, a 60-day public comment period on the guidelines has kicked off. Written comments are being solicited until April 6. In addition, four public listening sessions have been scheduled: March 3 – Ames, Iowa; March 5 – Biloxi, Mississippi; March 11 – Mather, California and Norfolk, Virginia. After the public comment period has ended and the revised guidelines are issued, agencies will begin the process of updating their procedures to incorporate the new EO and FFRMS standard. In many cases, this will trigger the need to do rulemaking, which will be subject to another round of public input. Only after the agencies have incorporated the new EO and FFRMS will floodplain management professionals see its implementation on the ground.

At the end of the day, the new FFRMS is good for the country. "The nation cannot afford to continue to pay for larger and larger flood disasters. The proposed Federal Flood Risk Management Standard is a common sense approach that will increase the nation's resiliency and reduce future taxpayer costs for flood response," ASFPM Chair Bill Nechamen said.

ASFPM has created an FFRMS resource page, which you can see [here](#).

Floodplain Manager Voices Need to be Heard

The public has until April 6 to comment on the draft guidelines to implement President Obama's new Executive Order 13690 and proposed Federal Flood Risk Management Standard. The Association of State Floodplain Managers leadership are asking you to formally weigh in on those guidelines.

ASFPM is asking its membership to read through the Revised Guidelines for Implementing Executive Order 11988, and make note of language you support, and if you have questions or concerns, note them along with a suggestion of what you think might be a practical solution. To comment, go to the [Federal Register](#) and search for FEMA-2015-0006, and click on the blue "Comment Now!" button.

ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis indicated what a unique opportunity commenting on this new standard is to floodplain managers. "Most of us have never in our careers been able to comment on an all-agency implementation guidelines."

He said, "If you simply agree with the new standard, you still need to comment. The federal government needs to hear the voice of floodplain managers loudly!"



From the Chair

William S. “Bill” Nechamen, CFM

What a whirlwind month it has been! No, I’m not talking about the four “storms of the century” that have hit the East Coast in the past month. I’m talking about major changes proposed for federal flood policy and budgets. You’ve probably already heard about the President’s Executive Order 13690, which updates the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard. Details about the new proposal are covered in this issue of News & Views, including Executive Director Chad Berginnis’ report above.

The Administration is also putting proposed federal budget dollars where its mouth is. The President’s proposed 2016 budget contains good news for flood mapping and mitigation. This welcome change in budget priorities must be credited at least in part to the hard work that ASFPM and its members have done over the years.

Recently budgets were drastically cut for new flood mapping, resulting in maps that remain hopelessly out-of-date, and even new maps that in many places do not contain updated data. In order to provide a detailed analysis of the need to continue investing in updating flood maps, ASFPM in 2013 published [“Flood Mapping for the Nation: A Cost Analysis for the Nation’s Flood Map Inventory.”](#) The report concluded that a minimum of \$400 million per year over 10 years is needed to complete updating the nation’s flood maps, with \$116 million to \$275 million per year required after that to maintain the maps. ASFPM provided the report to key federal officials and congressional staff. Yet, until this year, the administration has been unwilling to request increased mapping budgets, in spite of the establishment of a National Flood Mapping Program with an authorization of \$400 million a year from fiscal years 2013 through 2017.

An authorization is not an allocation. However, it does make it easier to argue for a full allocation. This year, the administration heard the recommendations for increased mapping funding, and has requested \$400 million in next year’s budget. This is great news, but it isn’t the full story. Flood insurance fees raise about \$121 million that goes for mapping operating costs, including review of Letters of Map Change. The \$400 million includes those operating costs, so it is really about a \$279 million request for new mapping. Still, it is a great leap in the right direction, and ASFPM members and staff who advocated for this deserve much of the credit.

Another piece of very positive news in the President’s budget is a request for \$200 million for Pre-Disaster Mitigation. PDM funds have historically been available for cost-effective mitigation projects and hazard mitigation planning grants, without the need for a disaster declaration. This has been essential to states that, unlike my own, do not receive frequent disaster declarations. In recent years, the administration has attempted to eliminate the PDM line item. Pressure from ASFPM members has helped keep the budget line in Congress’s final budgets, though at a minimum level of funding. Once a program goes away due to zero funding, it usually does not come back. By keeping even a minimum level of funding, it remained possible to increase funding for the program.

FEMA’s concept was to fold PDM into a National Preparedness Grant Program that would have consolidated 16 FEMA grants into one. While it’s often a good thing to streamline government programs, in this case it would be a disaster for natural hazards grants. As then Executive Director Larry Larson testified in 2012: “Ultimately the National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP) and National Preparedness Goal are aimed at readiness, not mitigation. While mitigation is a component of readiness (as it is a component of response and recovery) readiness is not a substitute for mitigation.” Essentially, natural hazard mitigation would have to compete with terrorism preparedness for funding.

The administration now understands that natural hazard planning and mitigation must be recognized and supported on its own. As such, on behalf of the ASFPM Board of Directors, I welcome the budget proposal, as well as the proposal for \$175 million for Flood Mitigation Assistance grants.

I don't believe that these positive developments would have happened without ASFPM continuing, over several years, to provide reasoned and thoughtful analysis on these issues.

ASFPM subcommittee needs your help gathering examples of state and local efforts to regulate/map/manage riverine erosion hazards

In the last News & Views, we made an announcement about a subcommittee formed to write a discussion paper regarding flood-related riverine erosion hazards. Currently, a lead writing team has been formed to update the 2010 Arid Regions Committee Discussion Paper about riverine erosion hazards. The group wants to be sure that information on any and all local, state or academic efforts to map, plan for, or regulate riverine erosion hazards is included. If there is a state, local or academic effort you are aware of, please share it with the group! We plan to include a link and contact person for each program/effort, so if there are any that you know of, please contact Rebecca Pfeiffer, co-chair of the Natural and Beneficial Floodplain Functions Committee, at rebecca.pfeiffer@state.vt.us.

Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries now offering base flood elevation determination services

While FEMA publishes base flood elevations for special flood hazard areas mapped using detailed methods, BFEs have not been determined for areas such as Zone A, according to the [Flood Hazards website](#) of Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI).

DOGAMI is recognized by FEMA as an authoritative source of BFE determinations. Its BFE determination services include:

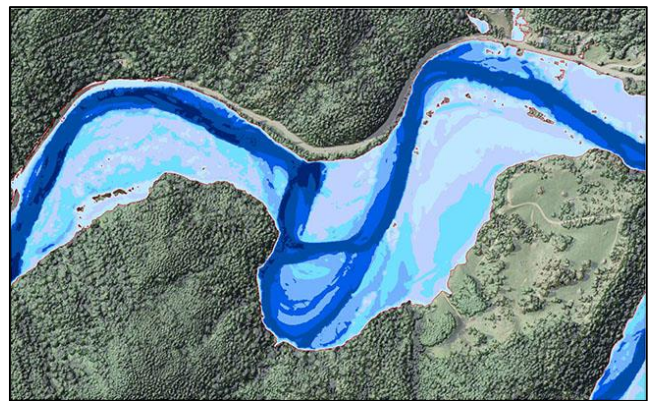
BFE Determinations

Local officials, professional land surveyors, or professional engineers can request evaluation of whether a BFE can be determined. If DOGAMI can determine a BFE, the service is provided for a minimum fee of \$2,000 for up to three stream miles, with a fee of \$500 per additional stream mile. Within 60 days of signing a service agreement, DOGAMI will provide a study map, summary report, BFE determination letter(s), and an data analysis package (in GIS format) to the requester.

BFE Determination Letters

If DOGAMI has already developed new Zone A mapping, BFE determination letters are available for a fee of \$50. The map below shows the locations streams, rivers, and lakes where BFEs have been developed for Zone A. Note that local officials often have the BFE information in these areas, and may provide a BFE determination letter free of charge.

You can also check out DOGAMI's fact sheet on its BFE determination service [here](#).



This map view shows relative depth of the 1 percent annual chance flood event for a stream in Curry County. Depth and elevation information is generated for all BFE determinations.

Greetings from Region 2

Written by Jacob Tysz, ASFPM's Region 2 Director



Photo by Josh Liba, Flickr

There are several topics of interest in ASFPM Region 2. Last September, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed the [“Community Risk and Resiliency Act.”](#) In New Jersey, the past ten years have seen 11 Presidential Disasters related to flooding and a decade of work by the state’s floodplain managers’ association.

Climate change, in the form of more frequent, sudden, and severe extreme weather events and more subtle long term changes to what “normal” is, are becoming more common. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, March 2014 marked the 349th consecutive month with above-average temperatures. This means that people 28 years old or younger have never lived through a month that was colder than average.

In New York, the Community Risk and Resiliency Act is a groundbreaking acknowledgment of the impact that climate change and sea level rise is having on the Empire State, and not just the coastal areas on and near the Atlantic Ocean, but statewide.

As noted in the Act, New York has experienced an increase in the number and severity of extreme weather events and that “the Northeast [United States] has experienced a greater increase in extreme precipitation over the past few decades than any other region in the United States. Since 1958, the Northeast has seen a 74 percent increase in the amount of precipitation falling in very heavy events.” To address this threat, the Act requires that communities “shall consider future physical climate risk due to sea level rise and/or storm surges and/or flooding based on available data predicting the likelihood of future extreme water events, including hazard risk analysis data.”

What does this mean to the state? The Act requires state agencies to consider the potential damages due to future sea level rise, flooding, and other risks due to climate change. The legislation touches many aspects of state funding, including those activities within the purview of the Departments of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), State, Agriculture and Markets, and Public Health on projects involving drinking water quality, hazardous waste transportation, storage and disposal facilities, design and construction regulations for petroleum and chemical bulk storage facilities, oil and gas drilling permits, and properties listed in the state’s Open Space Plan.

In addition, the Act directs the NYSDEC to develop and continually update projections for sea level rise for local communities in the state

The Act is intended to help to ensure that public investment monies are spent wisely and with an eye to future conditions. The Act also bookends nicely with the President's recent proposed amendment of Executive Order 11988, which would apply similar investment protections to federal actions, such as federal grants used for repair and redevelopment after a natural disaster. The proposed rule adds a freeboard option of two feet to most projects and three feet to critical facilities. Not only will this new standard provide additional protection from flooding events, it also anticipates the need to account for future sea level rise over the next century.

In New Jersey, the state has faced a punishing decade of flooding and the pain and destruction that accompanies high water. In the process, the Garden State has become the second largest recipient of National Flood Insurance Program payments. It is important to note that this trend pre-dates the arrival of Hurricane Sandy in October 2012. Even prior to Sandy, claims in New Jersey had continuously placed the state in the top five for pay-outs, and as of late 2014, the state now ranks No. 2 in total all time payments (1/1/1978 - 11/30/2014). The NFIP additionally reports that the state also ranks high in total number of policies (No. 4), total premium costs (No. 4), insurance policy value (No. 5), and Repetitive Loss Properties (No. 2).

In response, the state government has worked to increase the ability of New Jersey's Hazard Mitigation Unit to oversee hazard mitigation plans and mitigation grants, and to increase the state's outreach to communities across the Garden State. In addition, the New Jersey Building Code has slowly evolved to more fully match the goals of the NFIP. On the local level, several communities have successfully implemented buyout programs, especially for those areas of risk in riverine corridors such as in the Passaic and Raritan River Basins.

New Jersey leads all the states in the northeast in Community Rating System membership, with about 87 communities in the program as of October 2014. This translates to approximately 16 percent of all New Jersey municipalities. Furthermore, more than 50 percent of all New Jersey Atlantic coastline communities are now in the CRS!

In spite of the state's leadership in CRS, due to the large number of local governments in New Jersey (approximately 560) and the northeast (there are no "unincorporated county" areas), coordination and consistency between local governments and over large areas can be a barrier to greater resilience.

Stepping in to assist the state, local governments, and residents is the New Jersey Association for Floodplain Management. Among the most valuable assets the state has, the NJAFM has been a leader in the effort to make the state more flood resilient.

Beyond the day-to-day expertise that NJAFM's member's offer, one of the most important initiatives that it has pursued is to instigate, cultivate, and maintain a dialog with several non-governmental organizations. By engaging organizations such as NJ Future, Sustainable Jersey, New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance and others, technical and practical support has been made more available to the state's communities and residents.

In the field, the NJAFM has been instrumental in increasing the number of Certified Floodplain Managers from less than 10 in 2004 to 250 at the beginning of 2015. The association has taken great pride in providing dozens of scholarships to attend our annual conference and the ASFPM national conference, and free CFM training to local officials. The chapter is a force with respect to informing public policy.

For all these reasons and more, the NJAFM won the ASFPM Outstanding Chapter Award in 2013.

ASFPM's Nonstructural Floodproofing Committee Requesting Comments on US Army Corps of Engineers Potential Policy Changes for PL 84-99 Program

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued an [advance notice of proposed rulemaking](#) to request public comment on potential revisions to 33 CFR Part 203. USACE is specifically requesting input on potential changes to policies related to disaster preparedness; eligibility criteria for rehabilitation assistance for flood control works; options to address complex natural resource challenges while mitigating impacts to threatened or endangered species; and non-structural alternative projects. You can read a fact sheet on PL 84-99 [here](#).

ASFPM Nonstructural/Floodproofing Committee has been asked to review and provide comments to ASFPM Executive Office. Comments need to be back to ASFPM by April 1, 2015, and in order to meet this deadline, any comments from the committee (or any other interested members) must be submitted to committee co-chairs [Larry Buss](#) or [George Riedel](#), by the COB March 16.



FEMA News you can use...

FEMA Implements National Flood Insurance Program Revisions

Know the Changes ~ Help your Community

Recent legislative changes to the National Flood Insurance Program created new requirements and options you need to understand when speaking with community members about their flood risk and flood insurance needs. The changes are designed to create a more financially stable NFIP, and some policyholders will face rate changes given the new map updates detailed below.

Rate Changes for Map Updates

As a floodplain manager, you likely are most concerned about the impact of map changes and whether grandfathering will still be an option. The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 repealed a provision in the Biggert Waters Flood Insurance Act of 2012 that called for a five-year phase-in of the new full-risk rate when maps changed. As a result, **grandfathering remains a viable rating option** when new flood maps become effective and the risk is found to be higher (e.g., mapped from Zone A to Zone V, higher Base Flood Elevation).

Also added by HFIAA is a revision of a rating option for properties newly mapped into an SFHA (e.g., Zone X to Zones A or V). Starting April 1, the Preferred Risk Policy Eligibility Extension will be replaced by the Newly Mapped procedure. Eligible properties newly mapped as an SFHA can be rated with the lower-cost PRP rates for the first 12 months after the new flood map becomes effective, as long as the policy is purchased within 12 months of the map change. For each subsequent renewal, rates will increase by no more than 18 percent.

Staying Up-to-Date

Materials for you and your community—including information on other aspects of the new legislation, such as rate increases, surcharges, and reserve fund assessments—can be found [here](#). For assistance in talking about flood risk, flood insurance, impacts of new maps, and other tools and resources, click [here](#).

To view the Flood Insurance Manual revisions that will be effective April 1, click [here](#).

Key slots filled at FIMA's Risk Analysis Division

Doug Bellomo, Risk Analysis Division director, announced in February the following filled positions (listed alphabetically) in FEMA's Federal Insurance & Mitigation Administration's RAD.

Kelly Bronowicz will be chief of the Data and Dissemination Management Branch. She has been a program specialist within RAD for 10 years, and for the last several years has taken on the role of the outreach and communications lead supporting various elements of the Risk MAP program.

Along with supporting the division, Bronowicz is a graduate of the FEMA Future Leaders Program, and she served in two detail opportunities outside the Risk Analysis Division. One in support of FEMASat, an initiative led out of the Office of Program and Policy Analysis, and the second in support of FIMA's Regional and Disaster Support Office as the acting branch director. Bronowicz holds a BS in civil engineering from University of Maryland, College Park.

Paul Huang will be the risk analysis deputy division director. Huang most recently served as the branch chief of the Data and Dissemination Management Branch within FIMA. He helped RAD in the successful delivery of the Flood Map Modernization Program and was one of the architects behind the Risk MAP Program strategy. Huang also led NFIP reform efforts, a multi-phase participatory process designed to review, rethink, and reform the NFIP – something particularly useful as we approach NFIP reauthorization in 2017.

He is a Department of Homeland Security level III program manager, recently completed the Harvard National Preparedness Leadership Initiative Program, and holds a BS in management science and information systems, as well as a Master's in business administration. He spent several years in the private sector as an information technology consultant and has been working in the field of flood hazard mapping and mitigation for more than 15 years.

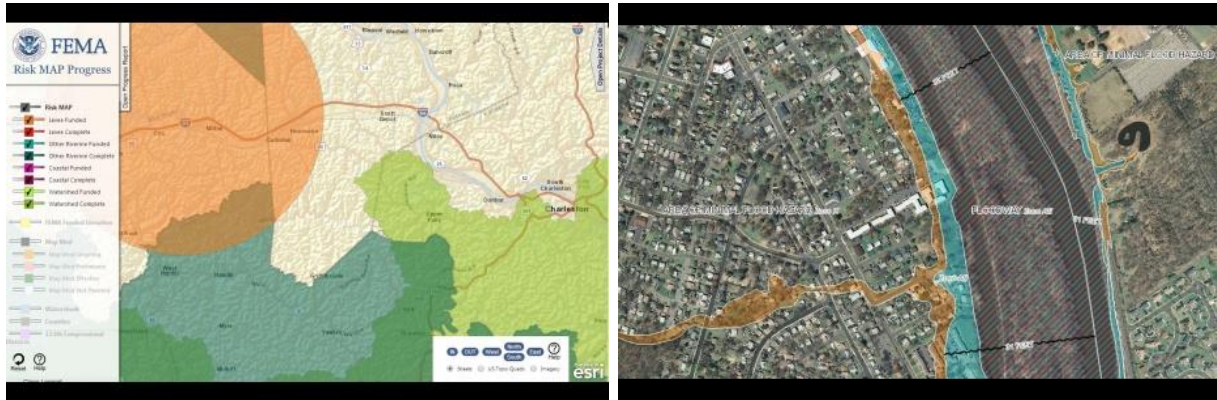
Kathy Smith will be chief of the Assessment and Planning Branch. Smith joined FEMA in 2001 as a Presidential Management Fellow, and spent her first few years in FEMA's Mitigation Directorate as a program specialist for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs. In 2008, Smith assumed the role of national team lead for FEMA's Mitigation Planning program, and since then she has been providing leadership, policy and guidance to FEMA HQ and regional program staff, as well as states, local communities and Tribal entities on how to develop mitigation plans that effectively reduce risk and increase disaster resilience.

Prior to joining FEMA, Smith provided planning services for local communities throughout Kansas and Missouri as a city planner and private consultant, and later she worked for North Carolina's Division of Emergency Management as a mitigation planner to communities impacted by Hurricanes Fran and Floyd. Smith has a Bachelor's degree in community and regional planning from Iowa State University and a Master's in urban planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and she has been certified under the American Institute for Certified Planners since 1999.



Looks like it's unanimous. Connecticut is ASFPM's newest chapter. Our board on Feb. 25 at their annual retreat in Madison approved the Connecticut Association of Flood Managers as the 36th ASFPM Chapter. Welcome!!!

Flood Risk Mapping Guidelines and Standards: Spring 2015 update



FEMA maintains guidelines and standards to support the Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning (MAP) program. These guidelines and standards define the specific implementation of the statutory and regulatory requirements (NFIP flood risk analysis and mapping, and address the performance of flood risk projects, processing of letters of map change and related Risk MAP activities).

In 2011, FEMA undertook a multi-year project to improve the way guidelines and standards are published, maintained and used. The final product of the initial phase of work was the Policy for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping, published in August 2013, which comprises the standards for practitioners of the Risk MAP program. This policy outlines FEMA's requirements to produce better overall consistency and more efficient operation of mapping activities.

FEMA established a maintenance plan for the Risk MAP Guidelines and Standards and plans to issue updates on a semi-annual basis. As part of the Spring 2015 update, a [public review announcement](#) is made to provide an opportunity for comment prior to incorporation into the policy. This announcement lists proposed updates to existing standards and drafts of new standards. FEMA intends to publish these standards as a part of the Policy for Flood Risk Analysis and Mapping. Comments may be provided via email to FEMA.GS@riskmapcds.com. Comments received prior to **March 1, 2015**, will be reviewed and addressed as appropriate before the standards are finalized.



Job Corner

Visit [ASFPM Job Corner](#) for more information and the most up-to-date job listings. Or post your own job opening. It's completely free!

News & Views February 2015

ASFPM Signs an Official Memorandum of Understanding with the US Army Corps of Engineers

ASFPM, which has had a long history working with the Corps of Engineers formally and informally, took another step through the recent signing of an official Memorandum of Understanding. The MOU addresses traditional and new areas of cooperation between ASFPM and the Corps, including: Supporting investments in water resources infrastructure; fostering cooperation among stakeholders; supporting the USACE Civil Works transformation; collaborating on education and training through the CFM program; supporting research, development and outreach associated with non-structural flood risk reduction such as the USACE nonstructural floodproofing committee, Silver Jackets and National Flood Barrier Testing and Certification Program.

"I am excited about the potential of this MOU to forge an even more comprehensive partnership with the USACE, especially areas where we may not have collaborated as extensively in the past," said ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis. "The USACE is an integral federal partner in managing the nation's flood risk."

Photo right: ASFPM Executive Director (left) signs an official Memorandum of Understanding with the US Army Corps of Engineers. Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick, Commanding General and Chief of Engineers, also signed the MOU. Photo below from left: Major General John Peabody, Dep. Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations; Steven Stockton, Dir. of Civil Works; Chad Berginnis, ASFPM Exec. Dir.; Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick, Commanding General and Chief of Engineers; Merrie Inderfurth, ASFPM Washington Liaison; Ada Benavides, Assistant Director of Civil Works; Karen Durham-Aguilera, Dir. of Contingency Operations and Office of Homeland Security



Awards Nominations sought for ASFPM 2015 Conference

Deadline is March 15

Join the stars who have received national recognition over the years for doing the right thing and doing it well. Below are the award categories for excellence in floodplain management. Click [here](#) for details on the awards you can submit for worthy programs, projects, and people.



- **Tom Lee State Award for Excellence**
- **James Lee Witt Local Award for Excellence**
- **Larry R. Johnston Local Floodplain Manager of the Year**
- **John Sheaffer Floodproofing Award**
- **Media Outreach Award**
- **Louthain Award for Distinguished Service**
- **Meritorious Lifetime Achievement in FPM Award**

Help us showcase the many successes across the country! Simply go to the ASFPM [awards nomination page](#) and submit the information online. Make sure you get it in by the March 1 deadline. It is highly recommended that you provide applicable letters of support for your nomination. Send those to Diane Brown at diane@floods.org. She can also answer your questions about the process or categories by calling (608) 828-6324. Winners will be notified in April to allow time to make travel arrangements.

Nick Winter Memorial Scholarship Fund for College Students

Deadline: April 1, 2015

ASFPM and the ASFPM Foundation will grant a \$2,500 scholarship for the 2015-16 academic year to a full-time college junior or senior currently enrolled in an undergraduate program related to floodplain/ stormwater management, or a student enrolled in a graduate program in a field related to floodplain/ stormwater management. Eligible applicants include current undergraduates in a four-year college program, applicants to a graduate program, or current graduate students. Applicants must be enrolled in an accredited university or college in the U.S. and be a U.S. citizen. Eligible fields of discipline include civil or environmental engineering, planning, emergency management, environmental sciences, or other disciplines with a demonstrable link to floodplain and stormwater management.

Applicants must complete a [Scholarship Application Form](#). Selection preference will be given to those applicants who demonstrate a history of civic or volunteer service, as well as a financial need (i.e. full-time students responsible for their own tuition), in addition to meeting the basic qualifications. In order to be considered, the Scholarship Review Committee must receive the application form and a separate reference letter by April 1, 2015. Scholarship funds will be paid directly to the recipient's university.

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

ASFPM Foundation information is available on the website: <http://www.asfpmfoundation.org/>

Time to Start Thinking about ASFPM's Silent and Live Auctions at our Upcoming National Conference in Atlanta

Silent and live auctions are held annually at the ASFPM national conference. Each year attendees at the conference have the opportunity to bid on valuable goods and services donated by local businesses, ASFPM chapters, corporate sponsors, and individuals. All proceeds from the auctions go to the ASFPM Foundation, created in 1997, to support research and education that promote wise and sustainable floodplain management.

When, where and how you can bid and buy?

The next auctions will be held at our [national conference in Atlanta](#), May 31-June 6.

How to make your tax-deductible donation?

Provide the following information to [Luci Sherwood](#), our silent auction coordinator:

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

We will announce the shipping and delivery information for silent auction items after it's been determined.

Here are a few of the 2015 auction donations to date:

One week timeshare in Sedona, Arizona, choice of golf resort or Red Rock Scenic Resort
Wine, cheese, and cracker baskets
Jewelry
State-themed gift baskets
Gourmet chocolates

Call for Applications to the 2015 Mary Fran Myers Scholarship

The Mary Fran Myers Scholarship recognizes outstanding individuals who share Myers' commitment to disaster research and practice and have the potential to make a lasting contribution to reducing disaster vulnerability.

At least one scholarship recipient each year will receive financial support allowing them to attend the Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop. Scholarships can cover part or all of transportation, meals, and workshop registration costs. Recipients are recognized at the workshop and may be asked to serve as panelists, where they can highlight their research or practical experiences with hazards and disasters.

As the longtime co-director of the Natural Hazards Center, Myers recognized that many of the people and organizations that could benefit from and contribute to the workshop—including local practitioners, students, and international professionals—were among those least likely to afford it. The scholarship was established by NHC in 2003 to fulfill Myers' request that qualified and talented individuals receive support to attend, ensuring that representatives of all ages, professions, and communities be represented at the workshop. Learn more and apply [here](#).

Policy Matters!

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



Since February has a day to celebrate US presidents, it seemed appropriate to discuss the role they have had in dealing with how we manage flood risk in the nation. This column will not perform an in-depth research of the issue, but instead, highlight some key milestones that have impacted federal flood policy and programs as we see them today. The association produced an interesting historical account of some of these issues in [The Nation's Responses to Flood Disasters: A Historical Account](#), written by James Wright in 2000.

We could start with the Swamp Act, signed by President Zachary Taylor in 1849, which did not directly involve federal investment, but did give what was considered useless “swamp” land to states (starting with Louisiana and expanding to 14 others). The states could sell these lands so property owners could “reclaim” the land for agricultural use—as long as the state used the revenue to build levees and drainage ditches. The result of this Act was the conversion of 65 million acres of wetlands to other uses, mostly ag.

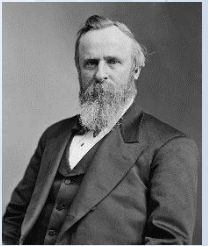
In 1879, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed legislation creating the Mississippi River Commission, which focused on ways to control flooding and improve navigation on the Lower Mississippi River. The MRC ultimately adopted a “levees only” policy to control flooding. The 1917 Flood Control Act (Woodrow Wilson) allowed the federal government to nudge into managing flood risk by directing the US Army Corps of Engineers to build some specific levees, notably in Sacramento, California. The Miami Flood Control District (local) was formed in Ohio in 1923 and demonstrated a watershed systems approach to managing floods.

The full expansion of the federal government into flood control came via the 1936 Flood Control Act signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt against the advice of Gilbert F. White (who worked in the President’s budget office at that time). This Act clearly stated, “...flood control is a proper activity of the federal government in cooperation with the states.” White’s advice to FDR was that this would lead citizens, as well as local and state governments, to ignore their flood issues, thinking flooding was the problem of the federal government. Prophetic indeed.

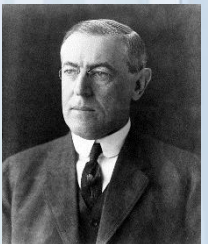
President Calvin Coolidge has often been criticized for his actions during the [Great Mississippi Flood of 1927](#), the worst natural disaster to hit the Gulf Coast until Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The federal government did not provide disaster relief, although he did eventually name Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover to chair a commission in charge of coordinating private donations for flood relief. Coolidge did not want to incur the federal spending that flood control would require, believing property owners should bear much of the cost. But Congress wanted a bill that would place the federal government completely in charge of flood mitigation. When Congress passed a compromise measure to build federal levees on the entire lower Mississippi River in 1928, Coolidge declined to take credit for it and signed the bill in private. Interestingly, Herbert Hoover’s role in this disaster gave him exposure to later be elected President.



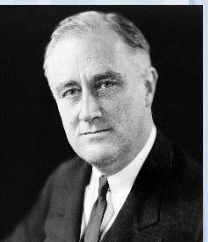
Zachary Taylor



Rutherford Hayes



Woodrow Wilson



Franklin D.
Roosevelt

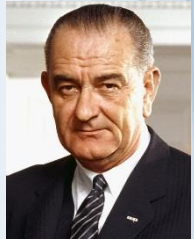


Calvin Coolidge



Herbert Hoover

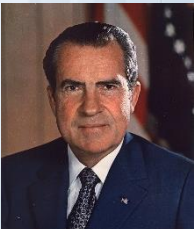
The Water Resources Council was created by the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965 (Lyndon Johnson) that included a Federal Interagency Floodplain Management Task Force of all relevant federal agencies to integrate flood policy and programs. The group is now housed in FEMA. WRC helped create Executive Order 11296, signed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1969. This was the first EO directing federal agencies to not increase flood risk through their actions to build, fund or provide technical assistance to activities in flood hazard areas.



Lyndon B. Johnson

On the same day LBJ, a candidate for the President having the most influence on flood policy, signed EO 11296, he transmitted [House Document 465](#) to Speaker of the House John McCormick. This document was a report from the Federal Task Force on Flood Control Policy, chaired by Gilbert White, which outlined a “Unified National Program for Managing Flood Losses.” The LBJ transmittal letter contained a paragraph that summarizes what ASFPM continues to promote today: “The Federal interest in this matter is beyond doubt. The Federal effort to cope with the problem will be unsparing. But I cannot overemphasize that very great responsibility for success of the program rests upon State and local governments, and upon individual property owners in hazard areas. The key to resolving the problem lies, above all else, in the intelligent planning for and State and local regulation of use of lands exposed to flood hazard.”

Among the 16 recommendations in this report were: (1) map the nation’s floodplains, (2) collect more useful flood damage data, (3) all federal agencies should support relocation and floodproofing as alternatives to repetitive reconstruction, (4) improve flood forecasting and warning, and (5) study the feasibility of flood insurance. You can judge how well you think each has progressed.



Richard Nixon

In 1968 Congress passed the National Flood Insurance Act (another LBJ signature), setting up the NFIP, which was instrumental in now having 22,000 communities guiding development in flood hazard areas, while providing federal flood insurance to 5.5 million policy holders. This was the first time the federal government provided an incentive for nonstructural approaches to manage flood risk. A major change in the NFIP occurred in 1973 (President Richard Nixon) when flood insurance was made mandatory for loans backed by federal institutions. A number of modifications have been made to the NFIP over the years, with the 2012 and 2014 reforms addressing the \$24 billion debt, by moving the subsidized policies toward full risk rates over a number of years.

EO 11296 was replaced by EO 11988, signed by President Jimmy Carter in 1977, which provided clarification to federal agencies for undertaking actions in floodplains.



Jimmy Carter

Other presidential actions that affected flood policy include the directive by President Bill Clinton to establish a federal task force to study the causes and suggest solutions of the Great Midwest floods of 1993. Gen. Gerry Galloway led that group and produced the seminal document: [Sharing the Challenge: Floodplain Management into the 21st Century](#). Many of those recommendations have been implemented, but many have not. ASFPM policy positions are similar and we continue to promote them.



Bill Clinton

President Barack Obama just updated EO 11988 with EO 13690, issued Jan. 30, 2015. This updated EO proposes a higher standard of protection (essentially freeboard) for any federal action in floodplains in order to protect taxpayer investment that funds those actions. Obama has undertaken a number of other actions that tie flood risk/flood loss reduction to climate change and national security because



Barack Obama

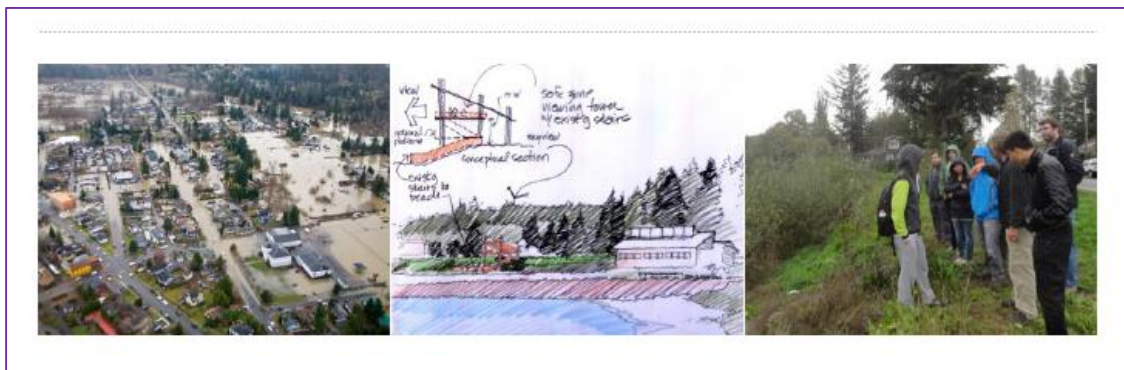
climate change and the threat to life, property and the economy are what will impact our security as a nation.

A number of actions signed by Presidents have had an impact flood risk management, such as the Clean Water Act signed by Richard Nixon, as well as conservation programs signed by Roosevelt, Kennedy and Johnson and others.

Sometimes, those of us working to manage flood risk think our issues are far from the minds of our nation's top decision makers. But hopefully this brief summary demonstrates that is not the case, and helps you see that what you work on every day has far-reaching, national implications.



Deadline Nearing for University of Washington's Floodplain Management Graduate Degree Program



The University of Washington's Master of Infrastructure Planning and Management now offers a degree option in floodplain management, allowing students to earn their master's with a focus on the study of coastal and riverine floodplain management. The program, which features a hybrid format that requires in person and online course completion, starts this summer. The application deadline is April 15.

Bob Freitag, a longtime ASFPM board leader and professor at UW, said, "The approach we are using is designed to meet the needs of practitioners. The majority of the courses in the program can be taken online with the exception of two summer Seattle-based resident sessions. Because students will be encouraged to share and discuss real world personal and work-related case studies, we expect the program to be attractive to employers." Click [here](#) to see the curriculum, course sequence and other details.



What's happening around the nation?

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

Florida

Before sea level rises, Miami Beach officials want to raise West Avenue 1½ to 2 feet. The first phase, which will likely begin this February, involves work on West Avenue from Fifth to Eighth streets and from Lincoln Road to 17th Street, the area shown in the picture, taken by Joey Flechas, at right. Read the article [here](#).



The World



Every Feb. 2 is #WorldWetlandsDay. The latest research shows that 64% of wetlands worldwide have been lost since 1900, and that 76% of populations of freshwater plants and animals have disappeared in the last 40 years alone (according to the WWF's Living Planet report), which is worse than any other ecosystem. World Wetlands Day seeks to highlight the varieties of ways in which wetlands provide for us all, and the many ways that we can all contribute to their conservation and restoration. Read more [here](#).

Massachusetts

The owner of 48 Oceanside Drive in Scituate (right) had just repaired her \$1 million vacation home from a devastating 2013 storm when the Atlantic came crashing through a giant picture window last month. The Jan. 26 blizzard marked at least the 10th time the house has been damaged in four decades — and probably the 10th time it will be rebuilt, in part with taxpayer dollars. Photo by Jonathan Wiggs with the *Boston Globe*. Read article [here](#).



Louisiana



While most of the Mississippi River's delta plain is losing ground, new land is forming at the mouths of the Wax Lake Outlet and the Atchafalaya River. The image at left is from a 30 year time series from the NASA Earth Observatory. See the image series and read more [here](#).

Multiple States across the Nation

"With the National Flood Insurance Program more than \$20 billion in debt and a law that would increase premiums delayed for four years, some states are taking it upon themselves to buy up their highest-risk flood properties." Photo at right, by Michael Dwyer with the AP, shows frozen sea spray coating a house with a damaged deck the day after a winter storm Jan. 28, 2015. Read the article from AL.com [here](#).





Mitigation on my Mind!

ASFPM's 39th Annual National Conference, May 31-June 5, 2015

Registration for the year's most comprehensive floodplain management training and networking opportunity is now online! Register to attend **"Mitigation on my Mind"** at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. The preliminary draft program is also available for review, though some changes are expected in the coming months. Need a hotel room? No need to wait – the room block is currently open and accepting reservations. Visit www.asfpmconference.org for more information.

If your firm or organization is interested in high-level exposure at this conference, be sure to check out sponsorship opportunities. The ASFPM annual national conference is THE place to engage your stakeholders and clients. Contact Chad Ross at chad@floods.org for more information. We look forward to welcoming you to Atlanta!



Coastal GeoTools 2015



The best opportunity to share your geospatial expertise and network with your peers from all sectors is just one month away. Register this week to take advantage of the early registration rate and discounted hotel room block – all registration categories will increase next week. If your firm or organization is looking to increase the impact of your participation, there are still a few exhibitor and sponsor opportunities available as well. Don't forget to pack your golf shoes – this year's golf tournament is sure to be top-notch. Get full details on all of this and more on the conference website at www.coastalgeotools.org.

New ASCE 24-14 Flood Resistant Design and Construction standards are now available



The American Society of Civil Engineers recently published its 24-14 Flood Resistant Design and Construction standard. This standard was prepared through the consensus standards process by balloting in compliance with procedures of ASCE's Codes and Standards Activities Committee. The individuals who served on the ASCE 24-14 Standard Committee, listed below, include quite a few ASFPM members. Well done. If you'd like to purchase the standard, click [here](#):

Christopher P. Jones, P.E., M.ASCE, Chair
Larry Buss, P.E., D.WRE, M.ASCE, CFM
Russell J. Coco, P.E., M.ASCE
James P. Colgate, RA, Esq., CFM
William L. Coulbourne, P.E., M.ASCE, F.SEI
James B. Destefano, P.E., AIA, F.SEI
Gary J. Ehrlich, P.E., M.ASCE
Shou-Shan Fan, Ph.D.
Kenneth J. Filarski, FAIA, AICP, LEED-AP BD+C, CFM, SAP+AEER, NCARB
Daryle L. Fontenot, P.E., CFM
Carol Friedland, Ph.D., P.E., CFM
Michael J. Graham, CFM
John L. Ingargiola, EI, CBO, CFM
Catherine M. Kaake, P.E., M.ASCE
Philip Line, P.E., M.ASCE
E. Michael McCarthy, P.E., M.ASCE
Joseph J. Messersmith, Jr., P.E., M.ASCE
Kimberly Paarlberg, P.A.
John Squerciati, P.E., CFM, M.ASCE
Terri L. Turner, AICP, CFM
Robert A. Wessel, Ph.D., F.ASTM
Thomas G. Williamson, P.E., F.ASCE, F.SEI
Garland Wilson, P.E., M.ASCE

Job Corner

Visit [ASFPM Job Corner](#) for more information and the most up-to-date job listings. Or post your own job opening. It's completely free!

From the Director's Desk

Chad Berginnis, CFM
Executive Director, ASFPM



EO 13690 and the FFRMS – YES WE CAN!

It is always exciting when we see national policy changes for the better – especially when it has such a direct impact on floodplain management in the nation. When I started my career in the Ohio's state floodplain management program, one of my first jobs that I did for several years was commenting on federal projects that went through the "state clearinghouse" for Executive Order 11988 compliance. In the hundreds of projects I would see annually, most were bridges, water/wastewater treatment plants, and improvements or expansion to federal facilities. I had some very interesting interactions with federal and state agencies (since many state projects such as transportation projects are implemented by the state), talking to engineers and others about EO 11988 standards. So, I personally feel things have come full circle from the standpoint of making improvements to this trusty old standard that has been with us for some 38 years and in my mind, I am thinking, "It is about time!"

Why is ASFPM comfortable with EO 13690 and the FFRMS?

Of course when evaluating a policy, ASFPM tries to look at it from the standpoints: Will it accomplish what is intended? Is it practical? Is it implementable? Will it lead to effective floodplain management in the nation? The answer to all of these is a definite yes. Allow me to elaborate further.

First, flood losses are increasing in the nation, averaging more than \$10 billion per year. And we know that from recent large disaster events such as Sandy and the historic floods in Colorado, over half of the total losses were outside of the mapped flood hazard areas. Many of us know the statistic that 25 percent of NFIP claims are outside of the mapped 100-year floodplain. The bottom line is that we need to consider areas beyond the mapped floodplain as well. The new Federal Flood Risk Management Standard will require agencies to consider these areas and add sensible protection to structures in the floodplain that not only will make the structure more resilient, but will reduce flood insurance rates. A win-win!

Second, the new standard is really the federal government catching up to what most of the nation is already doing. What you may not know is that more than 60 percent of the US population lives in a community that has adopted a freeboard, and hundreds of communities have freeboard standards that equal or exceed the freeboard alternative of the FFRMS. Thanks to ASFPM member David Conrad, who has taken some existing datasets and applied population figures to them, there are many more communities implementing freeboard than what is commonly thought. In fact, a complaint that I have heard often is that communities that have a freeboard now, find it difficult working with federal agencies under EO 11988 that insist they do not have to comply with those higher local or state standards.

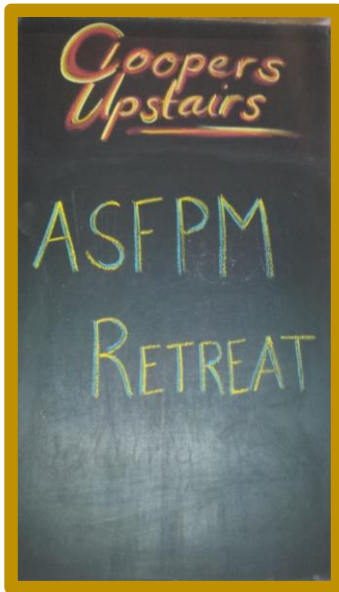
Third, if history is any guide, agencies will exercise their best judgment when applying the new standard to their policies and procedures. In 2012, HUD began a comprehensive update of their procedures to comply with EO 11988, which led to agency rulemaking. ASFPM provided extensive comments to their proposed procedures – some we supported, some we had concerns with. But what struck me is that agencies have experience and discretion when determining which programs this applies to and how the EO will apply. They have had to comply with EO 11988 since 1977, and since the new EO and FFRMS are essentially an update to EO 11988, I would be shocked to see any significant expansion of programs and policies that the new standard applies to. What we do know from the Council on Environmental Quality [fact sheet](#) and verbally from FEMA is that this will not apply to the NFIP.

Finally, the standard incorporates the use of climate-informed science, and nature-based approaches in a pragmatic and flexible way. The guidelines acknowledge that the climate science is evolving and changing – in some areas we have very good data such as sea level rise information, and in other areas the data has yet to be developed as our understanding deepens. And of course, it is one of three alternative approaches an agency can use. The EO sets the stage for adapting to the changing flood risk in a given area and ensure the long-term resiliency of federal investments. Also, floodplain management professionals know that incorporating nature-based approaches entirely or in part can be cheaper, more effective and enhance open space amenities of communities. Nature-based approaches can be used in combination with or instead of new, existing or other similar measures. It is encouraging to see the natural values and functions being more prominently recognized.

I have gotten feedback from many of our members on the EO and FFRMS, and encourage all of you to continue to do so. Feedback has generally ranged from this is a good step, to the FFRMS doesn't go far enough. What is more difficult to know at this point is the exact impact of the EO on a particular program outside of the NFIP, and on some of the USACE programs where we have heard representative of those agencies. Then again, that is the purpose of agency rulemaking. So while we may not understand the exact impact on every program at this time, we can make some reasonable assumptions, and based on the decades of experience with EO 11988, I am confident this is a very positive and practical change for the nation.

Your partner in loss reduction,

Chad



**In “The Insider” next month,
we’ll update you on the ASFPM
Board Retreat happenings that
occurred late this February.**

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. If you have any questions, please contact Michele Mihalovich at editor@floods.org. Questions, items for publication and other editorial matters should be directed to: ASFPM, 575 D’Onofrio Drive, Suite 200, Madison, WI 53719, (608) 828-3000, editor@floods.org. Check with editor@floods.org to see about the deadline for News&Views.



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Looking for training opportunities to earn CECs for your CFM? If so, be sure to check out our web calendar, which already has several training opportunities listed for 2015! Search the calendar by state using the directions below, or use the category drop down menu.

<http://www.floods.org/n-calendar/calendar.asp>

- Go to the calendar and click on the search feature icon at the top of the calendar. Type your state's initials in parenthesis (for example "(WI)") into the search field and it will pull all the events (training, conferences, etc.) that are currently listed on the calendar for your state. What a great way to find upcoming training for CECs! The only events without a state listed in the event title are EMI courses which are all held in Emmitsburg, Md.

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