

## **A Career in Floodplain Management opens up a World of Opportunities**

*Earn degrees in floodplain management from the University of Washington, and Western Kentucky University.*

Want a challenging career that is in high demand, covers a broad range of disciplines, and helps keep communities safe from multiple types of natural disasters? Floodplain managers work at the local, state, federal and tribal levels, at non-profit organizations, as well as engineering and urban planning firms.

And because floods happen everywhere, even the driest places on Earth (see photo at right), that means you could be working as a floodplain manager anywhere in the world.

Duties of a floodplain manager vary. You might perform flood risk analyses and map revisions, develop sound comprehensive flood hazard mitigation plans, manage flood-prone areas through innovative floodplain management regulations, strike a balance between development and natural functions of floodplains, plan, design and implement multi-purpose floodplain restoration and flood risk reduction programs and projects, communicate effectively with individuals, small and large groups or provide testimony at state Legislature or Congressional hearings.

Ample challenges and rewarding career opportunities exist for individuals with education and training on floodplain management. In the U.S. more than 22,000 communities participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and by federal law, each one must designate a floodplain administrator, yet there are fewer than 9,000 Certified Floodplain Managers in the U.S.



*Photo of University of Washington students inspecting a "green" levee.*



*Photo taken in Death Valley by Western Kentucky University Students during a field experience course.*

A recent study estimated that worldwide flood losses would reach \$1 trillion per year by 2050. Hurricane Katrina cost more than \$100 billion in damage alone. About 40 percent of the U.S. population lives in coastal areas, and population growth there is three times the national average. More and more people are moving into harm's way and adding infrastructure to these high risk areas. Climate change increases the risk, not only to coastal communities subject to sea level rise and storm surge, but also inland regions subject to more intense rainfall. Mitigating flood risks can strengthen and make communities better prepared and more

attractive. The floodplain manager is the first line of defense against bad development decisions. Such actions require expertise and experience in a range of disciplines, such as

hydrology and hydraulics, geomorphology, coastal processes, ecological functions, geospatial analysis, community planning for development and hazard mitigation, floodplain management, policy analysis, infrastructure investment and climate change science and adaptation.

**Where can you get the education and training to enter this exciting field?**



[Western Kentucky University](#) offers a [Bachelors of Interdisciplinary Studies degree with Concentration in Floodplain Management](#). For more information contact Professor Warren Campbell at [warren.campbell@wku.edu](mailto:warren.campbell@wku.edu)



[University of Washington](#) in Seattle offers a [Master of Infrastructure Planning and Management with a Floodplain Management Degree Option](#). The program is a hybrid, distant learning program and the majority of the courses taken online with the exception of two, two-week Seattle-based summer resident sessions. For more information contact Professor Bob Freitag at [bfreitag@uw.edu](mailto:bfreitag@uw.edu).