

# Region 8 Annual Status Report



2020-21

Traci Sears, CFM  
Region Director

## Introduction

Region 8 encompasses the states of Colorado, Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

The ASFPM state chapters in Region 8 are:

- [Colorado Association of Stormwater and Floodplain Managers](#)
- [Association of Montana Floodplain Managers](#)
- [Utah Floodplain and Stormwater Management Association](#)

## Key Accomplishments

- Each state chapter holds an annual conference that last 2 to 4 days. Most of the conferences were done virtually due to COVID. The conferences offer additional training classes, story sharing, networking, and continuing education credits for CFMs, planners, engineers, and surveyors.
  - The Colorado Association of Stormwater and Floodplain Managers (CASFM) Annual conference was held virtually on September 29 – October 1, 2020.
  - USFMA conducted a virtual conference on October 20-23, 2020.
  - AMFM was able to conduct an in-person conference prior to the COVID shutdowns in March 2020.
    - There upcoming conference will be held virtually on March 2 -4, 2021.
- Most offices and organizations have been able to go completely remote due to COVID restrictions.
- State Emergency Coordinators have experienced unbelievable obstacles this year:
  - Wildfires – Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and Utah
  - Earthquakes – Utah
  - COVID – all states
- NFIP Coordinators have gotten through the CAP Tier Assessments and are working on new CAV/CAC practices, new CAP funding tool, and quarterly reporting changes.
- RISE Challenge has started another great student interactive competition in Montana.

## Challenges

- NFIP Coordinators offices continue to navigate the enormous workloads identified in the State Assessment Letters, new NFIP CAP Tier Programs, new CAP funding tool, and overhaul of the CAP Program.
- State CAP programs are still seeing significant work increases with each mapping project. Additional funding is still not being provide to cover for this workload.

- Communities are struggling with assistance with enforcement and legal issues. There is minimum support from FEMA and sometimes the state NFIP offices.
- Concerns with virtual challenges due to COVID-19 and communication plans for communities.
- Two state NFIP Coordinators resigned from their positions.

## Priorities

### Montana:

- Legislative activity – Floodplain continues to work with the Conservation Districts on Stream Restoration projects, best practices, and possible regulatory clarity for rural projects.
- ASFPM is currently assisting AMFM with legislative support. This is a critical and much needed service to the States and Chapters. The Chapter feedback has been extremely positive about their assistance.
- The state is working on a Floodplain Quick Guide.
- Montana has put together a comprehensive flood after fire program with the FAF committee, FAF Guidebook, FAF SOP for the state is in final draft, and the creation of the FAF Commercial PSA.
- December 2020 Montana CAP was able to hold a COVID safe CFM Exam for nine individuals.
- Concerns about the wording and information contained in the CFM Exam was brought up by all test takers. Montana CAP has expressed concern to ASFPM and CBOR.
- Big Sky RISE Challenge – First one conducted during this unusual school year. Five teams competed.

### North Dakota:

- Flooding –
  - Federal Disaster declared for March 21-April 28 flooding (19 Counties). ND Governor requested a federal disaster for 47 ND Counties due to fall flooding.
  - Experienced unprecedented fall flooding – statewide emergency.
- Dionne Haynes the NFIP Coordinator for North Dakota has resigned. North Dakota is advertising for the position now.

### South Dakota:

- Currently working on flooding disasters that have continued since spring of 2019. There are 25 counties that are listed under the FEMA-4463-DR, South Dakota Disaster Declaration as of Sept. 23, 2019.
- South Dakota also held a CFM exam in 2020.

### Wyoming:

- Kim Johnson the NFIP Coordinator has been pulling triple duty as he helps out with COVID relief.
- Kim Johnson the WY NFIP Coordinator is back at home. We wish him a speedy recovery.

## Colorado:

- Doug Mahan the NFIP Coordinator is moving forward even during COVID restrictions.
- The state is also tackling recovery from three of the state's largest wildfires in Colorado's history that occurred in 2020.

## Utah:

- Utah is still in discussions with ASFPM about possibly hosting a conference in Salt Lake City.
- Current Mapping Projects – Mapping projects have more than tripled in their state. Their CTP is getting another person 100 percent funded by FEMA to help with the mapping side. See *Region Issues #3*.
- Compliance Issues – The state and local communities are seeing an increase in compliance issues. Utah has several new and ongoing compliance violation cases. More are being found every day.
- Kathy Holder, the Utah NFIP Coordinator, took another position with the emergency management side. Utah announced Angelia Crowther as their new NFIP Coordinator. She is working with Region VIII and Montana on program administration. Rachel Struhs has also joined the Utah team as the CAP intern.
- Alluvial Fan – Utah is concerned with the progressing alluvial fan inventory they are currently working on. It has been suggested that as they are identified there may be some rules that exist that would require no development in these areas if the state has IBC codes. This could become a big political problem in our state. They have requested clear guidance from FEMA on this.

They are also still dealing with mapping issues with alluvial fans because of the FEMA definition of AO zone and not allowing height of more than 3 feet on maps. There are areas in the state that have 8 feet depth and high velocities associated. They just had them turn these areas back to A zones with no depth or velocity. This makes it hard for the FPA and the community to regulate these areas appropriately. There needs to be assessment of possible rules changes, as well as guidance from FEMA to assist with alluvial fan issues.

## Recommendations

- Discussion and recommendations for CFM Exam.
- ASFPM assistance to help state CAP expend additional grant funding due to travel restrictions under COVID.
- Share resources with state chapters on holding virtual conferences.
- Provide more information to members on the services and accomplishments of ASFPM.
- Risk Rating 2.0 – Unknown variables based on third party information. Not sure how equitable this will be since there is no way to challenge the “engine” information. Hoping that ASFPM can include this concern with their feedback to FEMA on RR 2.0