

Region 9 Annual Status Report



2020-21

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Introduction

Region 9 represents Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada and the island nations of Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. It serves a culturally diverse population in excess of 47 million people and covers almost 400,000 square miles with a breadth of more than 8,000 miles and three time zones, including the international date line. The region's most common disasters are hurricanes, typhoons and other storms such as atmospheric river events that can cause flooding, flash flooding and landslides. It also experiences earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and wildfires.

Key Accomplishments

Key accomplishments for the past year in Region 9 included state floodplain management programs pivoting to virtual platforms to provide technical assistance and training to their NFIP communities during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

- Hawaii conducted their annual 2021 FEMA CAP Conference virtually.
- Nevada conducted their annual 2020 Floodplain Managers Workshop virtually.
- Arizona provided support for the physical map revision occurring in Maricopa County that went effective in September 2020 which included 17 NFIP communities.
- California Department of Water Resources (CA DWR) hired a CA State CRS Coordinator.

Challenges

In 2020, Major Disaster Declarations for the Covid-19 Pandemic were made by California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. The Covid-19 Pandemic led to the cancelation of many scheduled events in Region 9 due to stay at home orders. One of the greatest challenges for the past year has been adjusting to working in a COVID-19 environment. Many of us have been working from home and finding ways to conduct the meetings, training and workshops we usually do in person to a virtual platform. Coordination for online training, pivoting to virtual conferences and completing CAVs and CACs virtually has been a major challenge.

In 2020, Region 9 continued to experience devastating fire disasters in Arizona, California, and Nevada. The annual fire season for the western region states is starting earlier and ending later each year. Along with fire disasters, there were also hurricane and flooding disasters in the region.

- Hawaii experienced several flooding disasters over the past year. Hawaii declared a Major Declaration on July 9, 2020 for Severe Storms and Flooding (DR-4549-HI) and had an Emergency Declaration on July 25, 2020 for Hurricane Douglas (EM-3529-HI). Hawaii created a “one-stop” web page for the [March 2021 Floods](#) to assist residents and businesses impacted by flooding.

- California had two Major Disaster Declarations for wildfires in 2020 (DR-4569-CA, DR-4558-CA). The 2020 California fire season also included 19 Fire Management Assistance Declarations. Wildfires burned 4.1 million acres in California making 2020 the state's worst fire season on record.
- Arizona had seven declared fire disasters in 2020 including the Big Horn Fire. The Big Horn Fire occurred in the Santa Catalina Mountains north of Tucson and was the largest fire in Pima County history.
- Nevada had six Fire Management Assistance Declarations in 2020.

Priorities

In FEMA Region 9, the focus for the coming year(s) at the regional level will be on contacting NFIP communities every five years in the form of a community assistance visit or community assistance call as directed by FEMA. Another goal for some of the states in Region 9 will be to maintain or improve their Tiered State Framework (TSF) Status for the CAP-SSSE grant program.

- Hawaii intends to focus on increasing state and county compliance and resiliency through building codes, floodplain management regulations, substantial damage assessments, and the BRIC Program.
- Arizona will be providing support for physical map revisions (PMRs) occurring in the state and going effective in 2021 in the Prescott Valley Area and Alluvial Fans 5 & 6 in the areas of Scottsdale, Phoenix, Unincorporated Maricopa County, Carefree, Cave Creek. Future PMRs include Coconino County, Cochise County and Mohave County.
- Nevada plans to continue providing virtual training to Nevada NFIP communities, and conducting virtual outreach and education by developing tools to assist with this goal.
- California staff are working with a consultant preparing to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for CAVs/CACs. The SOPs will provide guidance, consistency, improve quality, and help train new staff.

Recommendations

- Recommend ASFPM continues to provide timely information and updates regarding the implementation of Risk Rating 2.0 by FEMA.
- Recommend ASFPM continues to provide access to webinars and virtual trainings for members that offers CECs. The current robust series of webinars and virtual trainings allows CFMs to maintain their certification even during the current Covid-19 Pandemic.
- Recommend ASFPM offer guidance and resources on substantial damage and substantial improvement plans and FEMA endangered species act requirements for NFIP communities.
- Encourage ASFPM to continue to share policies, activities and educational materials promoting sound floodplain management in communities. It is beneficial to share success stories from communities in other regions.