

# OFMA 20th Annual Conference Picture Wall (Page 8-9)



## The B.F.E.\*

\*Base Flood Elevation

## OKLAHOMA FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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August 2010

### OFMA 20TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE—BY TOM LEATHERBEE, CFM, CHAIR

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From September 20th-22nd, floodplain management professionals came together at the Renaissance Tulsa for OFMA's 20th Annual Conference. The conference featured three days of training focused on this year's conference theme -- "Basics and Beyond: Community Outreach and Higher Standards."

Plenary sessions included presentations about the Risk MAP program, the Community Rating System, and using public meetings in the Master Drainage Plan process. The Keynote Presentations were given by Joe Remondini, who detailed the history and future of flood risk communication.

The afternoons consisted of breakout workshops covering topics from real-time radar hydrology to a case study of the Cow Creek Stream Restoration project in Stillwater. Following along with OFMA's recent successes in the area of education and outreach, one afternoon track was devoted to "train the trainer" programs for the Wards 3D Flood Model and the ASFPM Foundation's FloodManager game.

Particularly enjoyed by conference attendees was

Wednesday's Closing Plenary Session, which opened with Johnny Barron's look at epic flooding in Douglas County, Georgia. The focus on "Turn Around Don't Drown" continued with a presentation by Tracy Howison on the National Weather Service's education and outreach initiatives. Ron Flanagan delivered the Closing Address, in which he labeled OFMA as the key to community floodplain management successes.

Attendees had considerable time for networking at the vendor's social, which was held at the Oklahoma Aquarium, and in the hospitality suite, which was graciously hosted by Tetra Tech. OFMA's annual business luncheon featured the election of the 2010-2011 officers and a special presentation from Randy McLerran of the Oklahoma State Department of Education, who was instrumental in OFMA's successful effort to implement flood safety training for bus drivers across the state.

A separate training track was provided for members of OFMA's Disaster Response Team. DRT members had the opportunity to take a field-deployed version of one of



JOE REMONDINI, CFM, PE  
HONORARY BOARD MEMBER  
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

FEMA's National Incident Management System course. In a special training session following the conclusion of the conference, DRT members traveled to a house that had experienced simulated flood damage and were instructed on how to use the new FEMA Substantial Damage Estimator software.

Two groups deserve special recognition for their role in making this 20th Annual Conference a success: the dedicated members who work hard behind the scenes to ensure that all details are addressed, and the conference sponsors whose financial support allows OFMA to host first-class events.



In the time I have been associated with this organization, I have seen a number of tremendous successes achieved through the commitment and dedication of OFMA members. Based on these successes and on the stability of the organization and the strength of its members, OFMA is considered a leader among state floodplain management associations. In the coming year, our organization will continue to build on these successes.

### EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

OFMA's successes in the area of Education and Outreach are unprecedented in number and magnitude. As a result of OFMA's efforts, Oklahoma is the only state in the nation with a section of the driver training manual devoted to flood safety. Oklahoma school teachers now have access to an OFMA developed, Department of Education approved curriculum unit on the 3D Floodplain Model. At the urging of OFMA, school bus drivers across the state are now being trained on flood safety. Dee Robison and the Education and Outreach Committee plan to continue this work with a number of new projects,

## WORDS FROM THE CHAIR—BY TOM LEATHERBEE, AINS, CFM

including development of a "traveling trunks" program that will allow middle-school students to learn about floodplain management and basic H&H, creation of "pre-packaged" outreach presentations for floodplain managers looking to present to local interest groups, and continuation of the "Turn Around Don't Drown" calendar program. With help from Clint Strawn and Amy Brandley, OFMA will also continue its efforts to educate and assist county-level officials on all manner of floodplain management topics.

### CERTIFICATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OFMA, under the leadership of Joe Remondini, administers the Certified Floodplain Manager program in Oklahoma. In association with ASFPM, OFMA will soon begin to utilize the nationwide examination for new CFM candidates. OFMA is unique in requiring significant classroom preparation before allowing candidates to sit for the CFM exam, leading to a very high pass rate and to better qualified floodplain professionals. OFMA's commitment to the CFM program will remain strong.

### TRAINING

OFMA's Training Cadre provides a number of training opportunities for floodplain professionals and is responsible for teaching the Advanced Floodplain Management component of OWRB's local floodplain administrator accreditation training seminars. A number of different workshop topics are offered throughout the year, and effort is underway to compile these courses into a formal catalog. Bill

Smith and the Training Cadre will continue to serve floodplain professionals statewide by offering high-quality training opportunities.

### DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM

OFMA's Disaster Response Team has become a model for a number of other states who are now seeking to form similar organizations. No where else in the country can local floodplain administrators faced with a flooding disaster make one phone call and receive immediate, on-site assistance from a team of trained personnel. When the DRT deploys, team members come prepared to assist the local officials with all manner of tasks that must be completed in the aftermath of a flood, and they come with prepared with equipment, training and expertise. Under Bill Smith's leadership, the DRT will continue to train in the classroom and in the field in order to be ready to deploy when disaster strikes.

### MEMBERSHIP

There is no doubt that OFMA exists to serve its members. With this in mind, growing and diversifying the membership base is an important goal. As a result of a pilot program that taught an OFMA-deployed version of the FEMA Managing Floodplain Development week-long course, OFMA has recently added a number of surveyors as members and CFMs. Based on this success, OFMA will offer this course twice more over the next year. Efforts to reach out to real estate and insurance professionals will continue, along with new efforts aimed at planners and building inspectors. Past-

*(Continued on page 3)*

(Continued from page 2)

chairman Clark Williams will head up the Membership Committee and will oversee these efforts.

### **POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

As a non-profit organization, OFMA does not lobby or engage in political activity. OFMA does, however, provide education on floodplain management topics to legislators, regulators, and other government officials. OFMA will continue to serve as the voice of its members and will continue its commitment to providing education that will aid policymakers in making decisions necessary to reduce flood risk.

### **CRS WORKING GROUP**

At the Annual Conference, a CRS

Working Group was formed to assist communities who are members or who are considering joining the Community Rating System. Bill Robison will head up this effort to create a sounding board and peer support group for communities willing to go above and beyond NFIP minimums.

### **ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION**

To succeed at these ambitious efforts, OFMA must remain a stable and financially responsible organization. Treasurer Carolyn Schultz and the Budget Committee will ensure that OFMA's finances are kept in order. In addition, Past-Chair Ellen Stevens will be leading a new effort to ensure that floodplain managers are recognized within their own communities for their

successes.

Looking ahead at the coming year, it is clear that OFMA is not merely alive and well, but that OFMA is poised to continue to grow and mature, better fulfilling its mission and better supporting its members. As Chairman, my primary responsibility is to make sure that the organization is positioned to succeed at its efforts and to make sure that its members are being served. To discuss where OFMA is going, to become involved with any of these projects, or to convey your needs as a member, please get in touch with me.

Tom Leatherbee, AINS, CFM  
OFMA Chairman  
planner@cityofdelcity.com  
(405) 671-280

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## **OFMA DRT CORNER—BY W. B. “BILL” SMITH, PE, CFM, DRT COORDINATOR**

The OFMA DRT held two training programs to coincide with the OFMA Annual Conference on September 20-22. On September 20 and 21 the ICS 200 Course was taught in back-to-back afternoon sessions by Harry Trottier, CFM, also a DRT volunteer. This 8-hour course was held at the Renaissance Hotel in Tulsa. There were 14 DRT members who attended. On Wednesday, September 22nd, after the Conference, W. B. Smith, PE, CFM held an on-site SDE field exercise to go through the basics of a residential home evaluation after a “flood” event at a house on his property. The van ride out was an opportunity to provide additional

instruction and answer questions. Ten DRT volunteers attended this training. There were three (3) of our new CFMs who were surveyors that attended both sessions. The next training session will be at the OFMA Spring Technical Workshop.

Mr. Smith traveled to Indiana the week before the OFMA Annual Conference to present the Disaster Response Team (DRT) program to the Indiana association, as they are considering creating a similar DRT. The conference was well attended, and there is significant interest in the DRT. Similarly, the Florida Floodplain Manager's Association is considering creating a DRT, and a

preliminary invitation has been made for Bill to attend their Annual Conference in March 2011. Mr. Smith also has invitations to speak at both the Central Area Emergency Manager's Workshop in Shawnee in November 2010 and the SW Regional Conference in March 2011 to share the Disaster Response Team with Oklahoma Emergency Managers.

To learn more about the DRT and opportunities to volunteer contact:

Bill Smith, PE, CFM  
HISINC, LLC  
28508 W. 41st St. S  
Mannford, OK 74044  
(918) 865-6977  
Email: wbsmith@hisinc.us

*The next DRT training session will be at the OFMA Spring Technical Workshop on April 7, 2011. Contact Bill Smith at 918. 865.6977 or via email at wbsmith@hisinc.us.*

## PLAN AHEAD FOR THE NEXT FLOOD—BY GAVIN BRADY, CFM, NFIP COORDINATOR

Community Assistance Visits (CAV's) have been the backbone of determining NFIP compliance since FEMA took control of the program in 1979. Before there were state associations, before we had training opportunities and before accreditation, the only face to face interactions the state or FEMA had with our communities was through a CAV. FEMA wanted a CAV conducted every 5 years which translated to Oklahoma performing 65-70 CAV's on an annual basis. With the OWRB Accreditation program and OFMA managing the state's CFM program, most participating communities spend at least one day a year learning about the importance of floodplain management.

It's safe to assume most of you know what a CAV is. The OWRB or FEMA, and sometimes together, will drive the floodplains of a particular municipality or county and document any development in these areas. After the floodplain tour, a meeting is scheduled with the local Floodplain Administrator and any other officials associated with the NFIP program in that community. Hopefully all development discovered during the CAV is permitted appropriately. If so, the CAV is then reviewed by FEMA and closed. If deficiencies are discovered, the CAV will remain opened until all items are addressed and corrected.

FEMA Headquarters has developed a CAV Prioritization Tool which all FEMA Regions delivered to the states last month. The days of performing a CAV in a community with very few or no flood insurance policies have ended. To determine which communities are CAVed, FEMA will look at other criteria such as Repetitive Losses, Federally Declared Disasters, Substantial Damage Claims, Claims outside the SFHA, Structures located in the SFHA, Population, and Projected Population. After all the numbers are placed in the spreadsheet, Communities are then ranked 1-382 (currently 382 Oklahoma communities participate in the NFIP).

As the OWRB decides in the next few weeks which communities to visit in FY 2011, we have to consider that CAVing the City of Tulsa or Oklahoma City, ranked 1 and 2 respectively, will take multiple days to perform while the City of Chickasha which is ranked 22 might take less than 1 day. Six counties are included in the top 25 which generally would include more than 1 person touring the floodplain, so the added costs of time and personnel will also need to be factored in.

The CAV Prioritization Tool will be posted on the OWRB website [www.ok.ok.gov](http://www.ok.ok.gov) in the near future. The OWRB will send CAV letters out months in advance so communities will have time to prepare.

A list of the top 25 communities as ranked by FEMA Headquarters. Is provided below:

1. Tulsa, City of
2. Oklahoma City, City of
3. Miami, City of
4. Lawton, City of
5. Tulsa County
6. Norman, City of
7. Ottawa County
8. Bartlesville, City of
9. Guthrie, City of
10. Stillwater, City of
11. Broken Arrow, City of
12. Edmond, City of
13. Wagoner County
14. Kingfisher, City of
15. Moore, City of
16. Rogers County
17. Sand Springs, City of
18. Bixby, City of
19. Sapulpa, City of
20. Midwest City, City of
21. Shawnee, City of
22. Chickasha, City of
23. Payne County
24. Muskogee, City of
25. Delaware County

*The OWRB will send CAV letters out months in advance so communities will have time to prepare.*



## NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM CAN HELP PROTECT OKLAHOMANS—FEMA NEWS RELEASE 1917-026, JULY 19, 2010

Recent flooding events in Oklahoma have underscored a painful truth: flooding can occur anywhere, at any time. In fact, flooding is America's most common natural disaster. Yet most homeowner insurance policies do not cover flood damage.

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) offers federally backed insurance to property owners and renters in Oklahoma communities that participate in the NFIP. Those communities have agreed to adopt and enforce ordinances that meet or exceed FEMA requirements to reduce the risk of flooding.

Nationwide, nearly 21,000 communities participate in NFIP, with 382 of those in Oklahoma. As of July 1, 16,642 flood insurance policies were in force in the state. The NFIP is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and policies are sold through private insurance agents throughout Oklahoma.

Many people mistakenly believe flood insurance is not available to them because their neighborhood has never flooded. That is not the case. More than 25 percent of claims paid are from areas at medium or low risk of flooding.

"Don't let anyone tell you that you can't buy flood insurance unless you live in a high-risk flood zone," said Linda Delamare of FEMA's Floodplain Management and Insurance Branch in Denton, Texas. "Everyone lives in a flood zone to one degree or another."

Homes can be insured against flood damage for up to \$250,000 and commercial buildings insured for up to \$500,000. Separate policies covering contents can provide insurance up to \$100,000 for homes and \$500,000 for commercial properties. Renters can insure their personal property for up to \$100,000. The average homeowner's premium for flood insurance is less than \$570 a year - a bargain considering that just five inches of water in a home can cause more than \$11,000 in damage.

"It's important to note that federal disasters are declared in less than half of flooding events," Delamare said. "NFIP claims, on the other hand, are paid regardless of whether a disaster is declared."

On July 2, President Obama signed a bill reauthorizing NFIP through Sept. 30, 2010. It must be reauthorized again to be offered beyond that date. Policies purchased now will be effective 30 days after the premium is paid and will remain in effect for a year. Typically there is a 30-day waiting period from the time the premium is paid until the policy becomes effective.

For more information on NFIP or for a list of Oklahoma agents who sell flood insurance, consumers should call 1-888-379-9531 or click [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov). The insurance agents and specialists at the toll-free number can also provide information on communities that participate in the NFIP and on how an individual's property is zoned.

## OFMA WEBSITE TO GET A NEW LOOK—AMY BRANDLEY, CFM, OFMA SECRETARY

To better serve members, in April 2010, the OFMA Board commissioned the update of the OFMA website. The goal of the initiative is to develop and deploy a user-friendly website to support member services. Specific objectives include the development of a website to enable the membership easy and fast access to OFMA publications, educational information, and legislation initiatives about floodplain management in Oklahoma. Additionally, the site should keep the membership informed about the Association's activities and upcoming events. The new site is scheduled for deployment in late 2010. Once deployed, an email will be sent to our membership to request input. In the interim, please visit our test site at [www.okflood.org/newsite](http://www.okflood.org/newsite) and forward your comments to Ana Stagg, Website Committee Chair, at [astagg@meshekengr.com](mailto:astagg@meshekengr.com).



TEST NEW OFMA WEBSITE AT [WWW.WWW.OKFLOOD.ORG/NEWSITE](http://WWW.WWW.OKFLOOD.ORG/NEWSITE)

## OKLAHOMA STREAMGAGES THREATENED—BY ANA STAGG, PE, CFM, VICE-CHAIR

A lack of funding could shut down a number of Oklahoma streamgages over the coming year. The US Geological Survey has announced the discontinuation or conversion of 278 streamgages from its program nationwide. To date, seven Oklahoma streamgages have been converted from continuous record discharge to stage-only stations. Four Oklahoma gages have been targeted for discontinuation, and more could be affected if no additional funding is obtained. Also, water quality data collection associated with these gages has been discontinued.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) notes lack of funding as the primary reason for changes in the program. Funding for the Oklahoma streamgages program is provided by USGS in cooperation with the Oklahoma Water Resources Board (OWRB) and other State, Tribal and local agencies. The USGS has already identified streamgages at risk for discontinuation (see [water.usgs.gov](http://water.usgs.gov) for more information) due to lack of funding. The agency pledges to identify other funding sources for the operation of these streamgages.

Derek Smitee, Chief of Water Quality Division for OWRB, comments on the situation by adding that if no funding is identified soon, "these streamgages will be discontinued. It may not occur this year, but it will occur soon as costs continue to rise and funding remains static or—even worse—continues to decrease."

"These streamgages provide critical information for water quality and flow mitigation projects, including floodplain modeling," states Janet Meshek of Meshek & Associates, an engineering consultant firm located in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and specialized in floodplain modeling. "Without these streamgage data, our ability to protect people and property will diminish," Janet concludes.

"We want to try and protect lives and property and give people a heads up as soon as possible when we think there could be flooding occurring," states Nicole McGaveok, of the National Weather Service. The information coming from the gages is used for forecasting and is crucial during severe weather. The gages "are constantly transmitting information about rivers to the National Weather Service," she concludes. Jim Wellman, of the U.S. Geological Survey, agrees and says that these budget cuts could have serious consequences.

Leslie Lewis, of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation Bridge Division, reports that "discontinuation of any streamgage would result in the loss of years of river level data provided by that gage." "We can't recreate the data once gone," she explains. The funding of the streamgages is critical for the preservation of years of valuable flow/level data.

In a segment published on September 17, 2010, Chris Wright, of Tulsa News On 6, reports that "there could be 20 fewer gauges by the end of the month. The feds cover roughly half the costs and the Oklahoma Water Resources Board has been covering the rest. But the state's ongoing budget woes means the board can no longer afford to keep them all up and running."

OFMA is urging its members to support the continued funding of the streamgages program in Oklahoma and across the country. The Association is of the opinion that only a *state appropriation* for the program would provide long-term solution to this reoccurring crisis. Please contact your state legislators to request financial support for this very worthwhile program.

Your organization may also assist by funding these gages directly. If you wish to contribute financially, please contact Derek Smithee at [drsmithe@owrb.ok.gov](mailto:drsmithe@owrb.ok.gov) today for details.

*Leslie Lewis, of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation Bridge Division, reports that "discontinuation of any gauge would result in the loss of years of river level data provided by that gauge." "We can't recreate the data once gone," she explains.*

**2010 OFMA AWARDS:****RECIPIENTS:****SILVER SCOOP AWARDS**

The Silver Scoop Awards are presented to key individuals that contribute significantly to the Association. Award recipients help make the Association click. The Silver Scoop symbolizes the importance of communal "channel maintenance" programs, as opposed to a one time clean up. Award recipients scoop a lot and scoop often. Scoop contents are always rich and organic. One or more Silver Scoop Awards are given annually to Association members.

Phillip Beauchamp, Altus  
David Wakefield, Flanagan & Assoc.  
Harry Trottier, McIntosh County  
Mayor Jimmy Tramel, Pryor  
Bill Robison, Tulsa  
Julie Cunningham, OWRB

**SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

This scholarship is awarded to a graduating Oklahoma High School Senior who is planning to pursue a career in a floodplain management related field and is intended for educational financial support.

Chelsea Frieze and Zachary Moore

**BEN FRIZZELL AWARD**

In 2000, OFMA Board of Directors created this award to honor Ben Frizzell, who passed away May 15, 2000. In 1995, Ben became the Public Information Officer for the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency management and did a marvelous job. Ben was recognized by FEMA in 1994 with their prestigious "Meritorious Service Award". The award cited his service during numerous disasters, including the 1992 Hurricane Andrew and the 1993 Midwest Floods. One of Ben's many sayings was, "Life is too short, it's like a commercial, HIT 'EM hard, make your point, then give them something to laugh about and remember."

Barry Hughes, Irving Productions

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD**

Special Recognition Awards are presented by the Board of Directors annually. These awards are given to individuals in the floodplain management business that have demonstrated excellence in an endeavor that is worthy of recognition. One or several of these may be given in any given year.

Karen Gentry, Ed Spencer, George Brown and the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety  
Sandy Garrett, Randy McLerran, Jana Rowland and the Oklahoma Department of Education  
Jerry Barnett, OWRB  
Dee Robison

**OUTSTANDING RECOGNITION AWARD**

Outstanding Recognition Awards are presented by the Board of Directors annually. These awards are given to floodplain management professionals who have excelled in improving our profession statewide and nationally.

Leslie Lewis, ODOT, and Bill Smith, HIS Inc.

**CHAIRMAN'S AWARD**

Outstanding Recognition Awards are presented by the Board of Directors annually. These awards are given to floodplain management professionals who have excelled in improving our profession statewide and nationally.

Michael R. Melton, OWRB

**R.D. FLANAGAN PROJECT PLATINUM AWARD**

This award was created in 2001 for Oklahoma communities or agencies that go above and beyond the minimum. Stream restoration, repetitive loss buyouts, green belt creation and floodplain partnerships are examples of project candidates. The OFMA Board will review all candidates and more than one Project Award can be given in any year.

Ottawa County Floodplain Management Program

**MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

MERITORIOUS: "deserving of honor or esteem". This award celebrates individuals who serve the public honorably, with exceptional knowledge and experience, and who possess the steadfast desire to use their gifts to further the cause of floodplain management, to save lives and property from flooding.

Joe Remondini, USACE

**W.K. MORRIS LIFETIME MEMBER AWARD**

This Honorary Membership is given to Association member(s) that have made valuable and significant contributions over a significant number of years to the Association for the improvement of floodplain management in the State of Oklahoma. One or more of these awards are given annually. The awards committee and Board of Directors select award recipient(s).

Clint Strawn, Woods County Commissioner

**PUBLIC OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR AWARD**

This award is generally given to an official that has implemented public policy initiatives which demonstrate excellence in addressing present and future floodplain management needs for his/her community. The award recipient could be an elected or non-elected official. The award is given annually. Similar selection procedures are followed as explained in the FPM of the Year Summary.

Ray Vaughn, Oklahoma County Commissioner District 3

**FLOODPLAIN MANAGER OF THE YEAR**

Each year OFMA selects an individual that has shown significant excellence in the field of floodplain management. The individual has demonstrated dedication through the administration of his/her community's floodplain management program in pursuing the goals of flood loss reduction and in the prevention of loss of life. This award is given to an individual annually. Nominations are received each year from the general membership and the awards committee selects the individual based on their achievements. The individual must be a member of the Association.

Tom Leatherbee, Del City

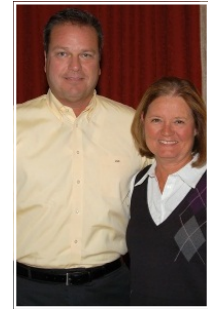
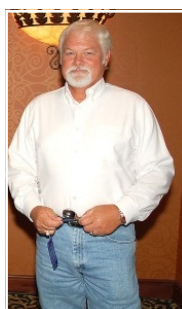


## OFMA 20TH ANNUAL CON





# CONFERENCE PICTURE WALL



## PARAMETERS FOR THE FLOOD MAPPING SCIENTIFIC RESOLUTION PANEL—BY FEMA

The Administrator of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is making available an independent scientific body (hereafter referred to as the Scientific Resolution Panel) that can be convened when deemed necessary by FEMA or a joint agreement of FEMA and a community appellant. The Scientific Review Panel will review and resolve conflicting data related to proposed Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) as provided for in the National Flood Insurance Act, as amended by (42 USC 4104(e); 44 CFR Part 67.8).

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participating communities are strongly urged to collaborate with FEMA throughout the study of their flood hazards, providing available data, models, and other scientific information that would enhance the final Flood Insurance Rate Map and avoid appeals. When such appeals are necessary, community consultation is the preferred method of resolution. Such consultation allows for collaborative evaluation and discussion of the conflicting data between FEMA and the appellant and usually facilitates a mutually acceptable resolution. On occasions when community consultation cannot produce a mutually acceptable resolution, the Panel will be made available. The Panel will be made up of experts on hydrology, hydraulics, and other pertinent sciences, as they apply to the development of Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) for FEMA flood studies.

### BASIS OF APPEAL

A community must submit an appeal to FEMA during the regulatory 90 day appeal period.

The regulations require appeal submissions to include technical or scientific data. The appeal documentation must include alternative BFEs which, through the use of “alternative methods or applications result in more correct estimates of base flood elevations, thus demonstrating that FEMA’s estimates are incorrect” (44 CFR Part 67).

### UTILIZATION OF THE PANEL:

After at least 60 days of community consultation on a submitted appeal have elapsed, the appellant community can elect to bring their appeal to the Panel. A community, whether working on its own behalf or that of interested parties, must serve as the official appellant.

The appellant community must elect to bring their appeal to the Panel no later than 120 days after the submission of the appeal to FEMA.

In instances where a good faith consultation between FEMA and the appellant exceeds the 120- day aforementioned deadline and does not result in a final resolution, FEMA may choose to submit the appeal to the Panel for resolution. FEMA will make initial determinations whether the submission includes sufficient information to qualify as a valid appeal pursuant to 44 CFR Part 67 or is simply a statement of protest.

### PANEL SPONSOR

The Panel will be under the operational direction of a Panel Sponsor. The Panel Sponsor will be an organization selected by FEMA and will be: (1) Independent from FEMA and other influences such that findings of Panels will be deemed neutral and independent from FEMA

or associated influence; (2) Capable of receiving reimbursement of costs from FEMA, and (3) Not subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

The Panel Sponsor will be responsible for: (1) Selecting and maintaining a cadre of scientific experts in surface water hydrology, hydraulics, coastal engineering, and other engineering and scientific fields that relate to the creation of Flood Hazard Maps and Flood Insurance Studies throughout the United States; (2) Identifying a list of potential panel members from the cadre of experts based on the technical challenges of the specific appeal, and (3) Employing for panel operations an individual familiar with the principles of the NFIP statute and regulations.

### PANEL COMPOSITION

A panel of up to 5 members will be chosen from the Panel Sponsor’s pre-qualified list. The appellant chooses a simple majority, and FEMA chooses the remaining panelists.

The Panel may include representatives from Federal agencies not involved in the mapping study in question and other impartial experts. The Sponsor must ensure panelists have no personal or professional interest in the appeal and do not reside in the State from which the appeal has been filed. FEMA employees cannot serve on the Panel.

### ROLE OF THE PANEL

Following deliberations, the Panel shall render a written decision that rejects or supports an appeal as filed. The Panel will make a determination based on knowledge

*(Continued on page 11)*



**ASFPM 35<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE—SAVE THE DATE—CHAD M. ROSS, CFM**

SAVE THIS IMPORTANT DATE: May 15-20, 2011, for ASFPM's 35th Annual National Conference "Flood Risk Management: The Winning Ticket," at the Galt House Hotel & Suites in Louisville, Kentucky. Presentation abstracts are due October 31, 2010.

The CALL FOR PRESENTERS is now online for the Association of State Floodplain Managers 35th Annual National Conference in Louisville, KY, May 15-20, 2011. It can be downloaded from the conference page at <http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuid=663>. The conference page will also soon contain Speakers instructions, Sponsorship and Exhibitors information, and a link to the conference hotel.

Our conference theme for 2011 is derived from Kentucky's rich horse racing history combined with the goal of effectively managing flood risk. Kentucky has an expansive and complex stream system with over

90,000 miles of rivers and streams and more navigable miles of water than any other state, except Alaska. Subsequently, this abundance of water also puts Kentucky at significant risk from flooding.

This Call for Abstracts seeks a broad range of professionals to address the many issues and problems associated with reducing flood damages and flood risk, making communities more sustainable, and managing floodplains and fragile natural resources.

In addition to the CONCURRENT SESSION Presentations, ASFPM is also accepting proposals for a limited number of half- and full-day TRAINING WORKSHOPS. Those wishing to submit for either a concurrent session or workshop will use the same Survey Monkey collector.

Please forward this message to all your peers and post it in your



newsletters, list serves, websites and bulletin boards. This is an event you DON'T want to miss. We look forward to seeing you in Louisville!

The 2011 Conference webpage can be accessed at: <http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuid=663>.

*Chad M. Ross, CFM*  
*Conferences & Special Events*  
*Planner Association of State*  
*Floodplain Managers, Inc.*  
[chad@floods.org](mailto:chad@floods.org)  
[www.floods.org](http://www.floods.org)

*(Continued from page 10)*

or information submitted by the appellant, indicating whether the BFEs proposed by FEMA are scientifically or technically incorrect.

A report containing the Panel's rationale and decision will be made available to the public. The Panel must expeditiously make its determination about the appeal and present its public report no later than 150 days after the appeal is brought to the Panel.

#### **DECISIONS OF THE PANEL**

The Panel's determination will become the recommendation to the Administrator for appeal resolution;

the Panel's determination will not be subject to further staff review within FEMA.

Subject to final review and approval by the Administrator, FEMA will incorporate Panel findings and determinations into revised preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps and Flood Insurance Studies, as applicable per Regulation.

When changes in the FIRMs are required, FEMA will make a revised Preliminary FIRM available to the community for review prior to issuing the Letter of Final Determination.

The appellant will be encouraged to accept the determination of the Panel. If the appellant is not

satisfied, the appellant may appeal to the appropriate United States District Court, pursuant to 44 CFR 67.12.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

This process will be available to all community appellants beginning on November 1, 2010.

In instances where an appeal is currently in the consultation phase, but which has not had a Final Determination issued, that community appellant will have until January 15, 2011, to request their appeal be brought to the Panel for disposition. FEMA will have the authority to offer the Panel resolution process to other existing appellants as it determines.



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