

The BFE*

* BASE FLOOD ELEVATION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Words from the Chair | **2**

OFMA Annual Conference Award
Winners | **3**

OFMA Annual Conference Photo
Recap | **4**

DRT Corner: Post Disaster Funding for
Individuals | **6**

Climate Change Ramblings | **8**

Floodplain Management Training
Calendar | **10**

OWRB Post-Flood Response | **11**

Check out Page 4 for a photo
recap of the 2019 OFMA Annual
Conference.





Words from the Chair

Brandon Claborn, PE, CFM

Congratulations to OFMA's new Chair

Brandon Claborn has been an OFMA member since 2002. Brandon serves as CEO of Tulsa-based Meshek & Associates, where he began his career nearly 20 years ago. A native Oklahoman, Brandon has dedicated his career to serving communities through H&H analysis, master drainage planning, and stormwater design.

On behalf of the Association, thank you to those who attended the 2019 Annual Conference in Durant. The OFMA Board and Conference committee spent many hours planning the conference events and presentations, and your participation made the conference a huge success. We were very fortunate to have public and private presenters as well as a variety of vendors at the conference.

The theme of the annual conference was "The 2019 Floods: What Have We Learned?" Personally, I learned the importance of telling our stories so that local, state and, federal leaders understand the importance of floodplain management. I had a front row seat for the flooding in Northeast Oklahoma and I was shocked to hear many stories relating to the flood that simply were not true. If we don't educate our leaders, floodplain management will not get the attention or funding it needs.

Additionally, I was reminded of the value of networking and continued learning. Changes in technology are having a significant impact on how we identify and quantify risk (2D models, LiDAR, Big

Data, etc.). Multiple presentations provided areas for me to grow in my understanding in better ways to use technology to improve floodplain management. I enjoyed catching up with colleagues and friends as well as making new connections. I've been involved with OFMA for almost 20 years and the value of this network of people seems to be growing exponentially.

I want to thank each of you who completed an evaluation form at the end of the conference. Except for those who forgot to bring a nice warm coat, the response was positive, and the suggestions were constructive. We will make adjustments in the future to make our conferences even better.

All OFMA members are welcome at the monthly Board of Directors meeting. Each month, our board members and committee chairs dedicate their time to doing the business necessary to keep the Association moving forward. There is no shortage of opportunities for new members to get involved. Please reach out to me or any other board member if you have ideas that will help us better serve the floodplain management community.

OFMA Annual Conference Award Winners

September 2019
Durant

OFMA Scholarship Award

Kelsie Schwab
University of Tulsa
Jesse Smith
Tulsa Community College

Ronald D. Flanagan Gold Project Award

Together Project
City of Broken Arrow

Special Recognition Award

Jennifer Smith Lawson
Meshek & Associates

Ronald D. Flanagan Platinum Project Award

Stormwater Management Program
City of Tulsa

Outstanding Recognition Award

Kenneth Schwab
City of Broken Arrow
Mayor Sandy Wright
City of Webbers Falls

Leatherbee-Robison Education Outreach Award

Mayor GT Bynum
City of Tulsa

Chairman's Award

Johnny Barron
City of Atlus

J. Gavin Brady Floodplain Manager of the Year Award

Teresa Tosh
Tulsa County Floodplain Administrator

Ben Frizzell Media Award

KOTV News on 6
Tulsa

Jeff Smith
Muskogee County Floodplain Administrator

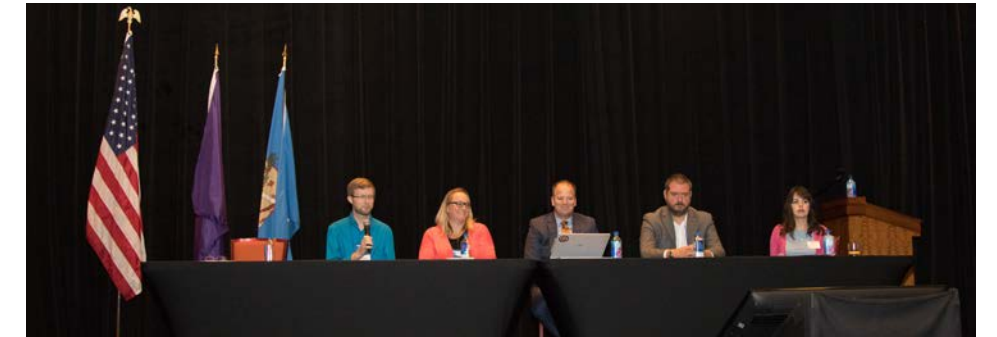
W. Kenneth Morris Honorary Lifetime Member Award

Todd McLellan
City of Norman



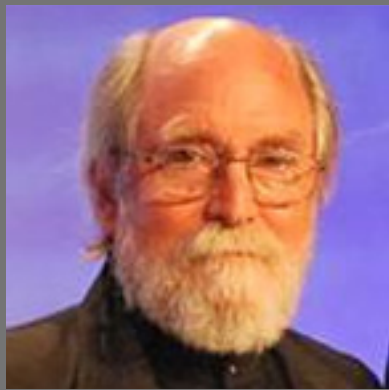


Thank you to Michael Kimbro for photographing the 2019 Annual Conference.



OFMA Annual Conference Photo Recap

September 2019
Durant



DRT Corner: Post Disaster Funding for Individuals

Bill Smith, PE, CFM

Over the past few months since the historic May-June 2019 flooding in Oklahoma, I continue to hear stories of mitigation, re-building, etc. FEMA provided personal assistance funding through Individual Assistance (IA) to many individuals immediately after the floodwaters subsided. There are several issues with this IA funding that I want our floodplain administrators to understand and communicate to their community officials and residents. First, this is not their payment to reconstruct their structure. This is for temporary housing, food, etc. It is the responsibility of each community's Floodplain Administrator to assess the damage of each structure, then issue Floodplain Development permits for structures that are not Substantially Damaged that are in the 1% Floodplain limits, or structures that are Substantially Damaged, but are compliant. If the structure is Substantially Damaged (SD) and is not compliant – that's a different issue. If your community has adopted the 2015 or newer International Building Code, then you are also required to assess for Substantial Damage, but not under

the NFIP, under the IBC.

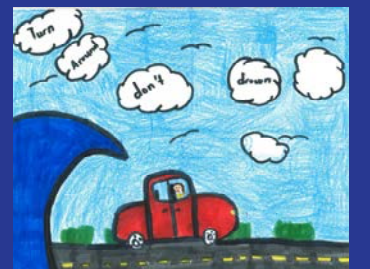
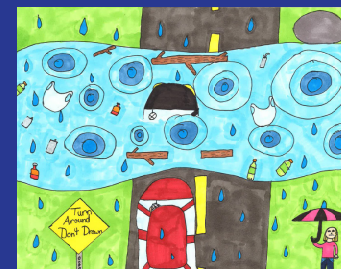
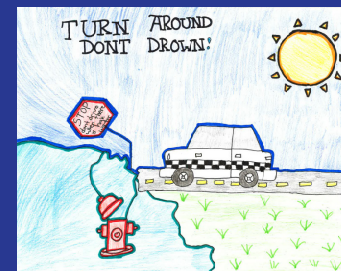
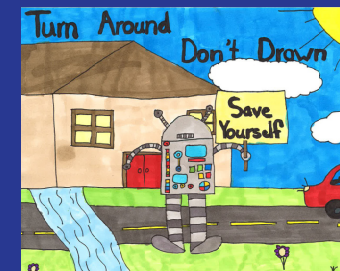
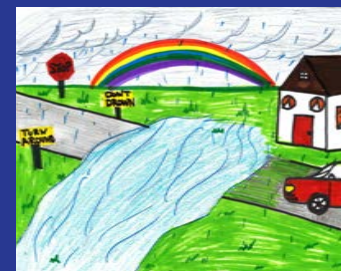
Residents are assuming and in some cases believe that they have been told by FEMA representatives that this IA funding is for rebuilding their structures. So they proceed without any SD assessment and without any floodplain development permit.

Especially for county floodplain administrators, trying to assess all structures in the SFHA after such a widespread disaster seems like an impossible task. Recently we were told a story of a county FPA who received a list from FEMA (post disaster and post SD Assessments) with a list of structures that were unknown to exist or unknown to have been flooded, yet received FEMA funding. Seems like there is a missing link that if FEMA receives a claim from an individual that they might share that information with the local FPA prior to issuing funds so the SD assessments can be performed to determine if the structures are SD or not, and if they are compliant or not – before any funding is released. Perhaps claims are being paid that should not be paid!! When this FPA

checked on some of the structures on the list, they were either totally rebuilt, there was no access to the property (locked gate) or there was no evidence of a structure damaged by flooding, but historic deterioration.

NRCS Development - Another issue that has come to my attention is the development of new NRCS ponds for an individual that are located in the SFHA, and no one has come to the FPA for a floodplain development permit. It appears that a pond was dug, the surplus material stockpiled nearby in the floodplain, and now the pond is full of water. Therefore there is no compensatory floodplain storage in this case. Yet again the FPA was not in the loop to require a floodplain analysis to be performed so that a determination could be made as to whether the stockpiling of this material caused a change in the BFE. Why doesn't NRCS have to also notify the local resident that is requesting support for development in the SFHA to contact the local FPA for a Floodplain Development Permit?? Is there another link in the cog missing again??

continued on Page 9...



DRT

...continued from Page 8

Local FPAs, especially for large counties are stretched to the limit to accomplish their jobs in a responsible manner. When we assisted two different FPAs with Substantial Damage Assessments we were able to complete 81 field assessments in the town in one day, yet the next day were only able to complete 23 field assessment in the county. Why – drive times!! We drove about 3 miles for the town and walked about 3

miles going house to house. We drove over 250 miles for the county and walked about 500 feet.

Let's not make things harder than they need to be. Every agency needs to work together for the benefit of those who have been impacted by a disaster. It is not prudent to tell an individual after they have rebuilt their structure that they were Substantially Damaged and not compliant and have to tear down the work that they just rebuilt.

Climate Change Ramblings

Johnny Barron, PE, CFM



The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report last month to update policy makers about the status of global warming trends and anticipated impacts. As a critical thinking individual, I remain skeptical regarding political clamor regarding what should be done about climate change (can it really be stopped?).

However, as a professional who plans for climate related emergencies, I had better keep an eye on climate change and try to adapt my planning efforts accordingly.

The recent report focuses mostly on the cryosphere (ocean and shoreline) but there are some updated forecasts for our part of planet earth.

“Extreme El Nino and La Nina events are likely to occur more frequently with global warming and are likely to intensify existing impacts, with drier or wetter responses in several regions across the globe, even at relatively low levels of future global warming (medium confidence).” IPCC SR Ocean and Cryosphere, Chapter 6, page 6-4.

The report states that a large El Nino event occurred in 2015-2016 which caused flooding in many regions of the world including the United States, Argentina, Uruguay, Britain and China. IPCC SR Ocean and Cryosphere, Chapter 6, page 6-35. This event has been labeled the first “extreme El Nino.”

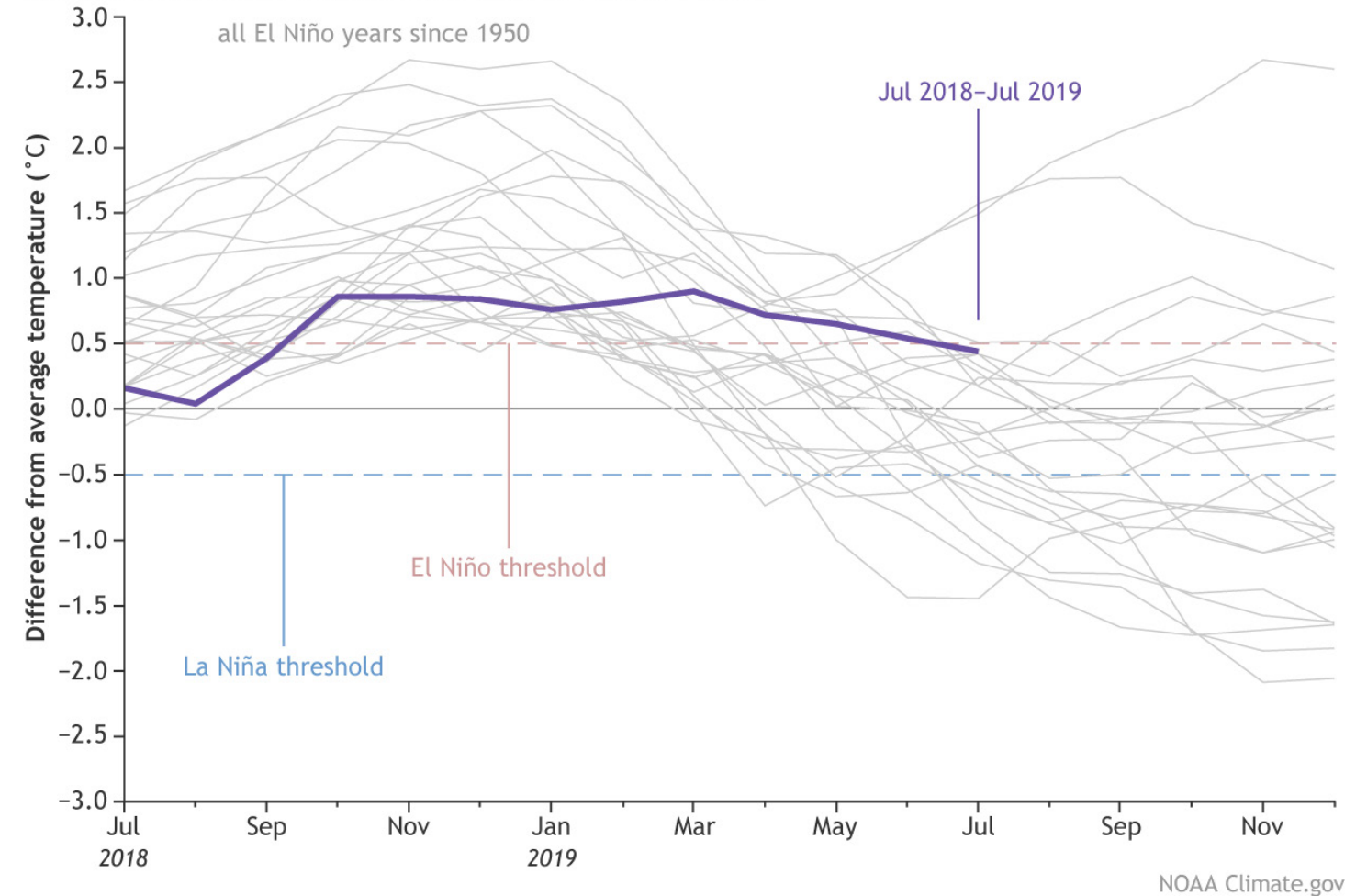
Besides extreme flooding, climate change may bring more extreme droughts, wildfires and winter storms to Oklahoma.

So what can we do about it?

“Limiting the risk from the impact of extreme events and abrupt changes leads to successful adaptation to climate change with the presence of well-coordinated climate-affected sectors and disaster relevant agencies. Transformative governance inclusive of successful integration



Monthly sea surface temperature Niño 3.4 Index Values



of disaster risk management and climate change adaptation, empowerment of vulnerable groups, and accountability of governmental decisions promotes climate-resilient development pathways.” IPCC SR Ocean and Cryosphere, Chapter 6, page 6-6.

I’m sure most of you agree that NFIP standards may be a decent first step but floodplain management should include standards for areas adjacent to flooding. As you know, the 1% chance flood is routinely exceeded. It seems every year we hear reports of record flooding. Climate change is one of several factors that combine to make FIRMS less reliable as a means to communicate actual risk.

While FIRMs are better than nothing, we need to increase our focus on protecting and regulating areas outside the 1% chance floodplain. As weather patterns become more extreme, our paradigm of using

past weather to predict future weather, is increasingly revealed to be inadequate.

Too often, people use flood maps incorrectly. I once heard a developer once say, “look right here, FEMA says this property won’t flood.” As flooding events grow more extreme, we are kidding ourselves if we expect high water to stay within the 1% chance floodplain.

As floodplain managers, perhaps we need to adapt our risk communication message. Is it wrong to get people thinking in terms of extreme floods? We tend to expect the next flood to be like past floods but climate change suggests that may not be the case. One way to “empower vulnerable groups” is to help them understand the risks of extreme floods so they can protect themselves with flood insurance.

Of course, this is easier said than done but shouldn’t we be discussing how to get there?

Floodplain Management Training Calendar

The OWRB offers the following resources to educate and train floodplain management professionals on effective floodplain management practices and requirements. Floodplain administrators can earn credit toward Oklahoma’s accreditation requirements by attending an approved conference or workshop, or completing FEMA’s online courses.

Sign up today! Space is limited. Courses, dates, and locations are subject to change or cancellation.

General Course Information

- No registration fee required
- All courses are worth six CECs unless otherwise noted in the course descriptions
- Open to all community officials, engineers and interested individuals
- Lunch is on your own
- Floodplain Administrator Accreditation Application
- Memo on Accreditation to Community and County Officials
- Contact Cathy Poage by email at cathy.poage@owrb.ok.gov or at 580.256.1014 if you have questions or need help registering.

2019

OWRB Courses

December 5 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Floodplain Management 101	<i>Location TBD</i> Tulsa
February 3 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.	FEMA L-273	<i>Location TBD</i> Oklahoma City

OFMA Courses

December 5 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Floodplain Management 101	<i>Location TBD</i> Tulsa
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2020*

Floodplain Management 101	February 3: Midwest City February 19: Oklahoma City March 4: Clinton March 25: Chickasha April 14: Altus May 13: Woodward May 27: Adrmore June 17: Northeast TBD June 24: Oklahoma City
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Advanced Training	February 3: Midwest City February 19: Oklahoma City March 4: Clinton March 25: Chickasha April 14: Langley May 13: Woodward May 27: Adrmore June 17: TBD June 24: Oklahoma City
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**2020 dates and locations subject to change.*

OWRB Post-Flood Response

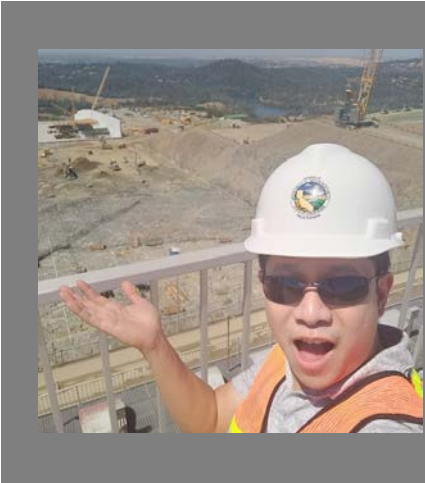
Yohanes Sugeng, PE, CFM

OWRB Floodplain Management Program continues to work with several local entities throughout the state after Summer 2019 historic flood event. As part of the post-flood response FEMA and the OWRB are offering workshops on the Substantial Damage Estimator (SDE) Tool. FEMA developed the SDE tool to assist State and local officials in estimating Substantial Damage for residential and non-residential structures in accordance with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as adopted by the communities. The tool can be used to assess flood, wind, wildfire, seismic, and other forms of damage. It helps communities provide timely Substantial Damage determinations so that reconstruction can begin quickly following a disaster. The SDE rules help communities reduce the risk of future flood damage by ensuring damaged properties are rebuilt or repaired to current community floodplain standards. Due to the importance of the substantial damage assessment after the disaster, OWRB is partnering with FEMA to provide additional SDE trainings. SDE workshops were scheduled at the OFMA Annual conference, Stillwater on September 25, and in Langley on October 15.

Related to the 2019 Arkansas River flood, State Representative Lonnie Sims, District 68, has initiated an interim study to conduct a state-level review of the actions taken leading up to and in response to flood event. Two days of hearings were held recently with state and local government officials as well as individuals presenting their perspective on the flood preparation, emergency response, economic impact and recovery. OWRB Executive Director Julie Cunningham presented information on NFIP and Dam Safety Programs including coordination with the OFMA Disaster Response Team and the need for a state funding mechanism for flood mitigation projects. The intent of the study is to determine ways to better prepare and respond to future flooding events.

FEMA approved four project grants for Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) projects in FY2019. In addition to the Project Management grant, three other projects were approved: a five watershed Discovery, a Phase II Study of Pecan Creek in Comanche County and an NFIP Outreach Special Project.

The Discovery project will provide an assessment of flood risk in the



Robert S. Kerr, Kiamichi, Muddy Boggy, Lower Canadian and Lower Cimarron watersheds and identify potential flood mitigation actions. The study area also includes portions of three non-NFIP participating counties.

Pecan Creek is located in Comanche County between Lawton and Cache. The adjacent watersheds have detailed studies and the area has seen increased development.

The NFIP Special Project has two main objectives: increase NFIP participation through a targeted outreach program of community meetings and promotion of higher standards for community floodplain development by adoption of building codes and the Community Rating System (CRS).

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