

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2021 Fall
Conference Recap **1**

Words from the Chair . **2**

2022 Save the Dates . . **3**

Professional
Development
Certification **4**

FEMA: New Mitigation
Tools Available to
Support Mitigation
Planning and Project
Development **5**

2021 Fall Conference
Awards **6**

Legislative Update . . . **10**

OFMA DRT Corner . . **11**

The BFE*

* BASE FLOOD ELEVATION

2021 OFMA Fall Conference Recap

Janet Meshek, CFM, PE, SR/WA | The BFE Editor

To all who participated, sponsored, or helped in any way with the 2021 OFMA Fall Conference in September, THANK YOU! While our 2020 virtual conference served a purpose with meeting as many of our education, training, and outreach goals as possible during the pandemic, being together was a real joy and a reminder of why we do what we do!

We enjoyed entertaining speakers (thank you Dr. Kloesel!), updates from all partner government agencies, and workshops on DRT, CRS, Hazard Mitigation, and Floodplain 101. The vendor social at beautiful Legacy Park and friendly (sort of!) competition on the cornhole field and great food were a part of the vendor social Monday night.

Tuesday brought committee meetings and region representative meetings. Our five representatives are now:

- Region 1 – Mike Kimbrough, ODOT
- Region 2 - Kenny Schwab, City of Broken Arrow
- Region 3 - Dennis Yocham, LeFlore County
- Region 4 - Johnny Barron, City of Altus
- Region 5 - Jessie Beck, City of Ponca City

2021 Recap and conference photos continued on page 6.



OFMA OKLAHOMA
FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS ASSOCIATION



Words from the Chair

Ellen W. Stevens, Ph.D., P.E., CFM | OFMA Chair

Congratulations to OFMA's new Chair

Ellen is a Civil Engineering consultant specializing in stormwater systems, floodplain management, river and bridge hydraulics, and water infrastructure planning. She has authored many publications, and made presentations at local, national, and international professional meetings.

Ellen has a Ph.D. in Agricultural Engineering from Oklahoma State University, and Master of Engineering and B.S. degrees in Civil Engineering. She is a licensed professional engineer in Oklahoma and six other states and is a CFM. She is also active in engineering accreditation, serving on the ASCE task committee developing updated criteria for civil engineering programs and is presently an executive committee member at large of the ABET Engineering Accreditation Commission.

Greetings OFMA members and BFE readers,

It is an honor to serve as your chair, and all of us in OFMA leadership are committed to maintaining an organization that serves your needs, whether you are on the front line as a community floodplain administrator or stormwater manager, an official in an NFIP community, a consultant, or in some other role. It was truly exciting to have an in-person conference this fall, and we are optimistic that we can continue to resume the events that our members enjoy and value. To that end, we are in the beginning phases of planning our annual Legislative Reception, Spring Technical Workshop, Stormwater Conference, Annual Conference, plus a Mitigation Workshop.

After a difficult time, I like to think of this as a year to re-engage, re-energize, and step up our efforts to fulfill our mission, "We encourage and support, with our partners, flood-safe development and flood mitigation. We promote sound floodplain management practices and the natural and cultural benefits

of the floodplain. We support the floodplain management profession through education and certification." We spent a lot of time at the recent strategic planning meeting brainstorming how we can best serve our members, and I would appreciate your thoughts on that.

Also, now that more activities are feasible, we are planning to have more on-going committee activity throughout the year, with the objective of improving OFMA's value as a resource to the members. The regional representatives are also committed to serving the members in their regions. You can find your region on the OFMA website (<https://okflood.org/regions/>) and contact information for the regional representatives and other board members (<https://okflood.org/board-of-directors/>).

With your participation and input, OFMA will continue to grow in its ability to serve the membership. We welcome your participation in all activities and your thoughts about how to serve the members best.

2022 SAVE THE DATES

2022 Spring Technical Workshop

April 14, 2022
River Spirit Casino Resort
8330 Riverside Parkway
Tulsa, OK 74137

2022 Stormwater Quality Technical Workshop

TBA

2022 OFMA Annual Conference

September 19-21, 2022
Choctaw Casino & Resort
4216 US-69
Durant, OK 74730

More information about 2022 events coming soon!



Mark Your Calendars!

2022 ASFPM Annual National Conference
May 15-19, 2022
Orlando, Florida
"Shining Light on Mitigation"

Registration opens in February 2022.





Professional Development Certification

Joe Remondini PE, CFM | OFMA PDCC Chair

The Association of State Flood Plain Managers (ASFPM) is our national organization of which OFMA is an Accredited Chapter. They have a professional certification committee that coordinates with the Accredited Chapters including our PDCC. The Accredited Chapters are Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, New Mexico, Illinois, and North Carolina.

The Digital Exam has been implemented for anyone wanting to become a Certified Flood Plain Manager (CFM). The application process has changed somewhat for those in Oklahoma. However the final cost and guidance will be discussed at our annual retreat the last week of October. The following is what we know now and some options to be decided.

Oklahomans will still have to apply to take the exam through our PDCC and meet OFMA's existing requirements. Applicants must be members of OFMA and take the FEMA class: "Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP" and other things as described on our website that also contains the Application. The application will still be reviewed for approval by the OFMA PDCC. If approved a digital exam request will be sent to ASFPM with pre payment.

For at least through June 2022 a paper exam will be offered for \$50.00 with an in-person proctor. The cost for the digital exam is \$85.00 paid to ASFPM before the exam is scheduled. An additional fee likely will be assessed by OFMA to take the exam. Renewal of the CFM will remain with OFMA.

The Digital Exam is available through a private vendor (Scantron) at any of their testing centers as well as on applicant's computer with an on-line proctor. There are guidelines established to ensure a discreet secure examination.

During digital exam discussions by the Accredited Chapters and ASFPM other points of interest were raised. A letter signed by all six Accredited Chapters was sent to ASFPM to help solidify our standing with national. Two main points of the letter were requested for consideration. Those were first to allow the Accredited States to continue offering the paper exam option, second to allow any other state to become an Accredited Chapter. We believe an Accredited Chapter offers better opportunities to support local floodplain management through training and coordination at the local level.



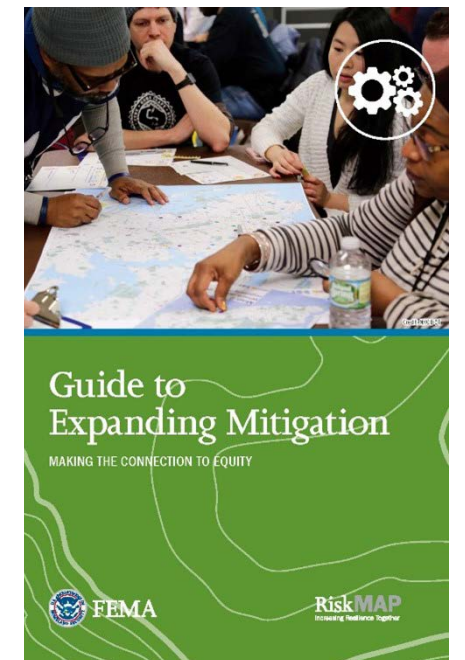
FEMA

New Mitigation Tools Available to Support Mitigation Planning and Project Development

FEMA Publishes Eleven "Guides to Expanding Mitigation" for Local officials, flood plain managers, emergency managers, mitigation officials

FEMA Region 6 participates in cross-regional sharing of learning opportunities and resources to benefit stakeholders in all regions. Today, we introduce you to the "Guides to Expanding Mitigation" that spark ideas about how mitigation projects can be strengthened by understanding their relation to other sectors of society. The series was informed by conversations with over 100 stakeholders from a wide range of organizations and includes Guides on the following topics:

- Agriculture
- Arts and Culture
- Codes and Standards
- Cemeteries
- Whole Community
- Communications Systems
- Equity
- Electric Power
- Municipal Financing
- Transportation
- Public Health



Although the series was developed by FEMA Region 2, the information shared in the Guides is universal. Each is written using plain language and features ideas and resources for collaboration during the project development or planning process. Whether the reader is an emergency manager, community official, or someone new to mitigation, they can use the Guides to build broader community resilience.

The guides are available on FEMA.gov: <https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/region-2/guides-expanding-mitigation>.

For more information, contact Dustin.Busse, Dustin.Busse@fema.dhs.gov

2021 OFMA Annual Conference Update continued from page 1.

We had a day of breakout and plenary session on funding, hazard mitigation, outreach and technical topics, broken up by the annual business meeting at lunch. Ellen Stevens took over as OFMA chair and Lincoln Irvine as the Vice-Chair while our fearless leader Ron Johnson moved to Past Chair. Tuesday evening was our annual awards banquet, highlighting:

Calendar Contest Winners

1st Place – Rosalie Lindly – Jay Upper Elementary School

2nd Place – Susannah Irvine – Epic Charter School

3rd Place – Kevin Mathis – Home School

Honorable Mention - Sterling Roberts – Stone Canyon Elementary School

Scholarship Winners

Cooper Philips - Southwestern University, Georgetown, TX

Robin Schwab – University of Oklahoma

Ella Claborn – University of Arkansas

Chairman's Award

Matt Kock, Meshek & Associates

David Webb, Meshek & Associate

Chris Rogers, Meshek & Associates

Floodplain Manager of the Year Award

David Smith, City of Woodward

Public Official of the Year

Muskogee County District 1 Commissioner
Ken Duke

R.D Flanagan Gold Project Award

Tulsa River Parks Authority Flood
Remediation Project

R.D Flanagan Platinum Project Award

City of Tulsa Stormwater Management
Program – CRS 1

The final award of the night was awarded to Ron Flanagan for the Honorary Lifetime Member Award, for his unequalled leadership in OFMA and the national floodplain management community. As Paul Zachary, Tulsa City Engineer, so aptly put it, "Your initial personal and professional sacrifices during the efforts to elevate the awareness of flood hazards were an investment that will be paying dividends for generations to come. Thank you for your care and concern for doing what is right for the citizens of the City of Tulsa. You have given your best to the next generation. We are grateful." That was one of many accolades for the man who has been the backbone of our organization for the past 30 years.

Wednesday began with a presentation by Paul Zachary on "The Tulsa Story: Becoming a CRS Class 1 Community." It was a story about going from the most disaster-prone community in the 1970's and 1980's to recognizing the need for the kind of stormwater management program that CRS promotes, to a picture of where communities can be when faced with existing or potential flooding disasters.

The final two plenary sessions dealt with funding and climate resilience, two of our most pressing needs and concerns. The conference ended following prize drawings. Thanks again to all who participated in any way.



Photo Recap of the 2021 OFMA Annual Conference





Legislative Update

Tom Leatherbee, CFM | Legislative Director

As part of our commitment to reducing flood risk in Oklahoma, OFMA engages in a comprehensive legislative education and monitoring program that allows us to increase awareness of important issues related to pending legislation while remaining in compliance with applicable ethics and tax restrictions. By its nature, this program is reactive and is highly focused on addressing issues raised by others. For the 2022 Legislative Session, OFMA will continue these efforts, alongside beginning a proactive campaign to advocate for dramatic improvements to the State's hazard mitigation and risk reduction infrastructure.

- OFMA has identified many barriers that prevent communities across the State from engaging in meaningful natural hazard mitigation and flood risk reduction activities. These barriers include:
- High cost of entry to participate in the hazard mitigation grant process, with costs existing in a variety of areas including staffing, training, scoping, and application development);
- Lack of state support for mitigation grant activities, including the State's continued unwillingness to fund a state share of mitigation activities (both pre-disaster and post-disaster), leaving local governments entirely responsible for the non-federal cost share;
- Inadequate coordination among the varied state agencies with a role in mitigation;
- Resistance to creative uses of one-time funding sources to fund investments in mitigation.

In response, OFMA has begun seeking support for meaningful structural and process changes at the legislative and agency levels. Unlike some groups that attempt to achieve policy goals using campaign contributions or paid lobbyists, OFMA seeks to drive change by encouraging and facilitating educated discussion among policymakers. During the 2022 Legislative Session, OFMA intends to encourage discussion about the following potential policy initiatives:

- Coordinate Mitigation at the State Level. Reconceptualize and reformulate the State Hazard Mitigation Team to better serve to coordinate risk reduction activities and

prioritize mitigation projects.

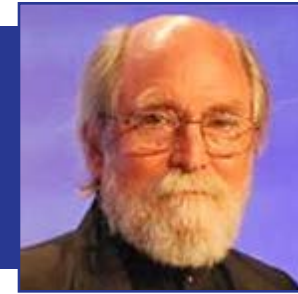
- Encourage and Support Local Mitigation Efforts. Identifying temporary and permanent funding sources that would allow the State to provide a portion of the non-federal cost share for mitigation and disaster response, with the potential for increased state assistance for communities that have committed to comprehensive mitigation strategies.
- Reinvent State Agency Role in the Mitigation Grant Process. Explore the creation of a unified process for accessing mitigation funding, which could include consolidated project scoping, technical assistance for sub-applicants and centralized contracting for application development and project management services, and an overall change in focus to holding state agencies accountable for providing customer service to applicants and ensuring that grant funds are always maximized.
- Effectively Leverage One Time Funding. Evaluate potential to use a portion of the State's \$1.8 Billion American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) allocation to fund mitigation, with the potential to administer that funding using a nonprofit sub-recipient to explore possible efficiencies and a new service delivery model for mitigation funding.
- OFMA intends to return to holding the annual Legislative Reception at the State Capitol this spring, so please be on the lookout for more information once the session begins and a date can be set. The more members who participate in the Legislative Reception and reach out to their Senator and Representative to discuss these issues, the more successful our efforts will be. Additionally, I am pleased to announce the formal appointment of a legislative committee (officially known as the Insurance and Regulatory Affairs Committee) by the OFMA Board:

Tom Leatherbee, Chair
Jennifer Wasinger, Vice-Chair
Rachael Cooper
Ed Fite
Kenny Schwab
Morgan Pearson
Monica Cardin
Ana Stagg

Please feel free to contact any of us should you have any questions, need help with a legislative inquiry or constituent service request, or want to become more involved.

OFMA DRT Corner

Rev. W. B. "Bill" Smith, PE, CFM | OFMA DRT Coordinator



At our Strategic Plan Retreat last week we talked a lot about Mitigation.

You have heard the old adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Similarly, Preventative Maintenance is much cheaper than Disaster Response. Each year at this time, I remember back to a class that I taught to new Floodplain Administrators. Phillip Beauchamp, CFM of Altus, Oklahoma, was in that class and asked for some clarification after class. Phillip went back to Altus, and that winter, the City crews cleaned out ditches, culverts, etc., in preparation for spring flooding. The next spring, the rains did come, and there was no flooding in Altus because the conveyance systems were clean and allowed the stormwater runoff to flow without hindrance. I think of Phillip each time I teach that segment of floodplain management. If every community would take the time this winter and do a similar type of project next spring, when "It will Rain Again, and possibly Flood Again," perhaps the flooding will be minimal or non-existent. So I suggest you do some "mitigation" this winter.

I also want to clarify the difference between Floodplain Flooding and Stormwater Flooding. In both cases, our citizens get their feet wet or more. There are more floodplains than just the FEMA Regulatory Floodplain. Every river, channel, creek, etc., has a floodplain. Sometimes they are regulatory under FEMA and the NFIP, and sometimes they are not. Regardless, there is a floodplain that can affect our citizens. Similarly, every bar ditch, driveway culvert, etc., that flows stormwater runoff has a "floodplain," With undersized bar ditches or undersized culverts, or culverts whose ends are bent down, create flooding issues on the streets, roads, and in yards or fields. Both types of flooding can cause damage or injury to people. So regardless of the source of the flooding, use the resources available to "mitigate."



Funding Acknowledgment

Funds to produce The BFE come in part from the National Flood Insurance Program and State Support Services Element of the Community Assistance Program, which is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The BFE is published by the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association, Inc. Information and opinions contained herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Directors. Items for publication and other editorial matters should be directed to:

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