



Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS (AMFM) AND DNRC FLOODPLAIN JOINT NEWSLETTER

Serving Montana's Communities Since 1974



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Sun River – photo by Mark Boesch

HIGHGROUND

June 2015

This newsletter and other state floodplain management activities are funded, in part, through grants from FEMA.

SAVE THE DATE

MT Department of Natural Resources & Conservation's (DNRC)

7th Annual Floodplain Resource Seminar



July 20-24, 2015
Helena College—University of Montana
Helena, Montana

The 7th annual MT DNRC Floodplain Resource Seminar is a week-long venue at UM Helena College, July 20-24, 2015, offering numerous free sessions related to Montana floodplain management.

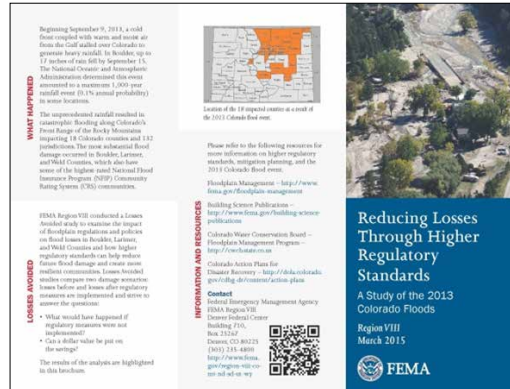
Sessions will cover a wide spectrum of topics including Floodplain Basics, the relationship between floodplain management and DES, navigating the local floodplain ordinance adoption process, flood insurance for agents and floodplain professionals, Cost of Construction workshop with a focus on accessory structures, technical presentations, Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) prep and exam, Floodplain 101 for Realtors, and more.

The Floodplain Resource Seminar provides a unique opportunity to obtain important and beneficial tools and resources for local officials, city and county staff, floodplain administrators, attorneys, watershed committees, planners, sanitarians, realtors, insurance agents, state staff, engineers, students, and many others working in Montana floodplain management and natural resources.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Floodplain Program at 406-444-0862 or visit the MT DNRC Floodplain website: www.mtfloodplain.mt.gov. Email Briona Shipman, Floodplain Training Coordinator at bshipman@mt.gov with questions. Register at the following link: https://app.mt.gov/cgi-bin/confreg2/index.cgi?CONFERENCE_ID=4683&ACTION=INTRO

Reducing Losses through Higher Regulatory Standards

By Brooke Buchanan Conner, PE,
Senior Engineer FEMA Region VIII



There is a new report, hot off the press, on the catastrophic 2013 Colorado Floods and the impact that floodplain regulations and policies had on flood losses in the six Colorado communities that were most heavily impacted. The FEMA report, *Reducing Losses through Higher Regulatory Standards*, March 30, 2015, reviewed flood damage data from the Colorado floods to quantify the benefits of higher standards and what types of regulations and policies could have the most impact on reducing future flood damages.

A few of the report's key findings:

- Regulatory practices that have the most impact on reducing flood damage:
 - Requiring increased freeboard as part of design standards
 - Restricting floodplain development
 - Restricting construction of basements in new or expanded floodplain areas
- Restricting floodway development and keeping critical facilities out of the floodplain have significant positive impacts on reducing flood losses
- Adopting higher floodplain regulations results in benefits to communities; and not implementing regulations can result in substantial increases in flood losses for communities

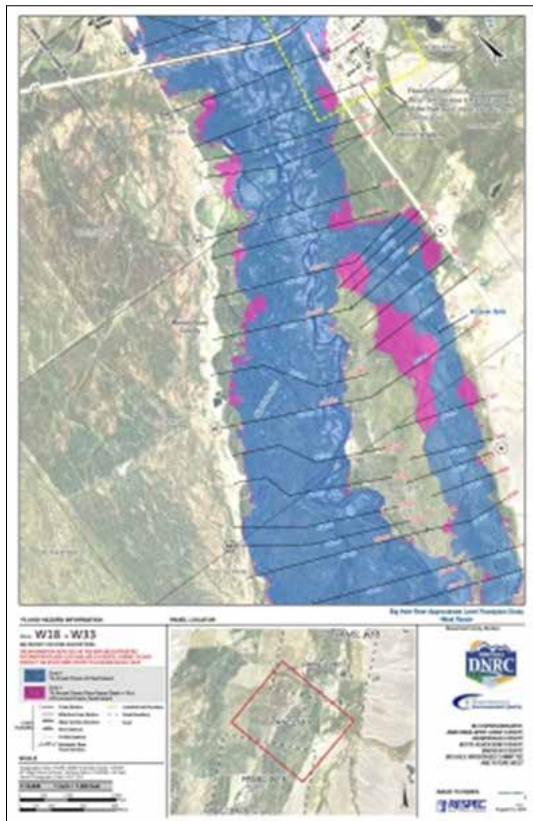
In September 2013, an unprecedented rainfall event occurred along Colorado's Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, resulting in catastrophic flooding that impacted 18 Colorado counties and 132 jurisdictions. After an event of this magnitude, FEMA would typically conduct a loss avoidance study to assess the cost-effectiveness of mitigation measures such as acquisition of properties in the floodplain and implementing flood control measures. However, the 2013 floods provided a unique opportunity to evaluate the losses avoided through a non-traditional approach.

While higher regulatory standards and floodplain management principles are generally advocated as best practices, there is actually little empirical data to demonstrate the return on investment for these regulatory or policy actions. So FEMA conducted a study of the 2013 Colorado floods to assess and compare the benefits of implementing higher regulatory standards and policies. The results are summarized in the report, and posted online: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/105543>

Hear first hand about this new report and its findings from 9-11am on Thursday, July 23rd at the Floodplain Resource Seminar in Helena! Brooke Buchanan, one of the report authors and a senior engineer with FEMA Region VIII in Denver, will be in Helena to present the report and discuss how building and regulatory standards can help reduce flood losses for communities.

(portions of article excerpted from www.FEMA.gov and *Reducing Losses through Higher Regulatory Standards*, FEMA-DR-4145-CO, March 30, 2015)

Big Hole River Floodplain Maps Recently Completed



One of the recently completed Big Hole River Floodplain Maps

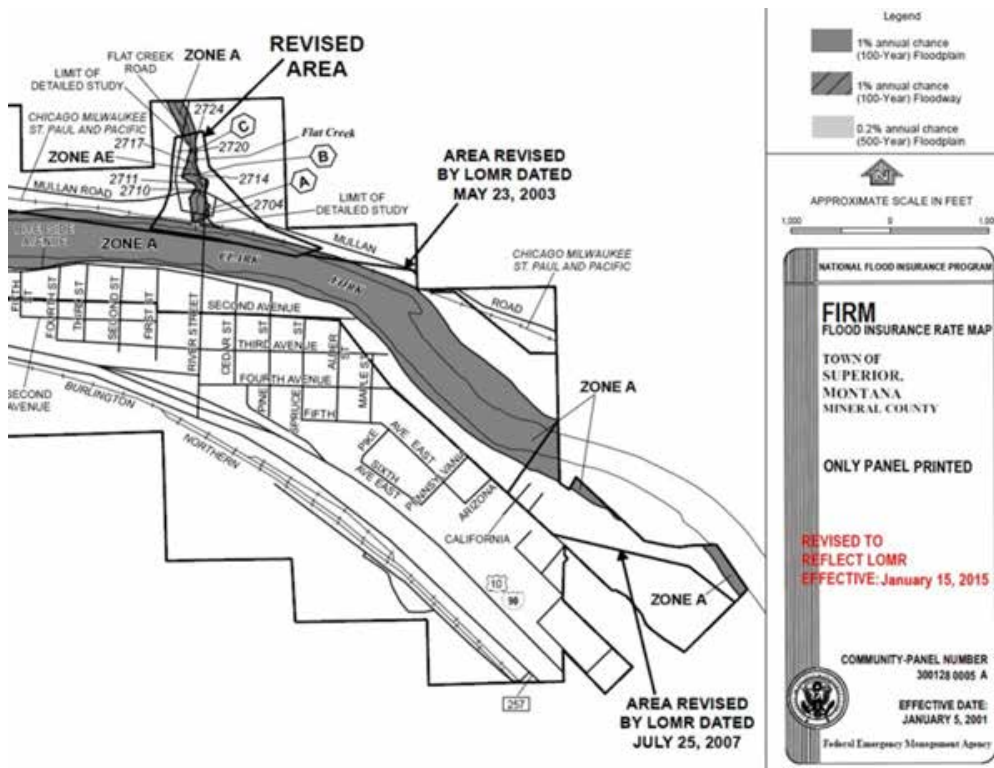
New floodplain maps for 116 miles of the Big Hole River were recently completed and have now been adopted by DNRC. The floodplain mapping project began in 2011 and was a collaborative effort between the Big Hole Watershed Committee, Beaverhead, Madison, Butte-Silver Bow, and Anaconda-Deer-Lodge Counties, Future West, DNRC, and Montana Department of Environmental Quality. The project was championed by the Big Hole Watershed Committee, based on local interest to improve floodplain management in the basin. All partners contributed funding towards the mapping project, which was managed by DNRC.

The new study provides an approximate level floodplain analysis with 100-year flood elevations. The study begins above Jackson in Beaverhead County and ends at the confluence with the Jefferson River in Twin Bridges in Madison County. It does not include a 34 mile stretch of the Big Hole River along the Butte-Silver Bow County boundary which was mapped in 1986 and adopted by FEMA as an Approximate Zone A floodplain on Butte-Silver Bow County's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). Prior to this new study, a 100-year floodplain hadn't been identified or mapped for the most of the 116 miles of the Big Hole River, with the exception of a 22 mile stretch along the Anaconda-Deer Lodge County boundary which had an approximate floodplain delineation dating back to the 1970s, identified on the county's FIRMs.

The new floodplain maps and reports were adopted by the State of Montana on January 13, 2015, through a Final Order issued by DNRC. The maps have not yet been adopted by FEMA. Floodplain maps and reports which have been adopted by the State can be incorporated into local and county floodplain management regulations.

Madison, Beaverhead, and Anaconda-Deer Lodge Counties are currently working on updating their local floodplain regulations to incorporate the new maps and study, so they can begin administering to the new floodplain maps and elevations. More information about the project, along with the adopted floodplain maps and reports, can be found here: www.mtfloodplain.mt.gov/big-hole-floodplain-study-products

The Importance of Updating Floodplain Maps



An Updated Floodplain Map. This 2001 Flood Insurance Rate Map from the Town of Superior has been revised three times by Letters of Map Revision (LOMRs), most recently on January 15, 2015.

what drives federal flood insurance requirements and dictates where local floodplain regulations need to apply.

The responsibility of keeping floodplain maps up-to-date and accurately reflecting the current flood risk falls to the floodplain administrator and local community. Floodplain permitting is the primary way that a floodplain administrator keeps their floodplain maps up-to-date.

When a Floodplain Administrator reviews a floodplain permit application for a proposed project, one of the most important things to always consider is: 'will the proposed project change the area at risk of being flooded in a 100 year flood event?' If the answer is 'yes', then the floodplain map should likely be updated to reflect that change. The Floodplain Administrator should require the floodplain map to be updated as one of the floodplain permit conditions. It doesn't do any good in the long term to approve floodplain permits for projects that will change the areas at risk of being flooded, and then not have that change reflected on the floodplain map. If a community doesn't ensure the map is updated during the permit process, there are often consequences the community will eventually need to deal with.

For example, a project is proposed in a mapped floodplain to replace an undersized culvert that historically can't pass a 100 year flood. The culvert currently causes flood waters to back up and flood several upstream properties, which is shown on the effective floodplain map. The proposed project detailed in the floodplain permit application will be a new box culvert that will pass a 100 year flood, and eliminate the constriction issue. If the project is permitted and constructed, however,

Floodplain maps are fundamental to both flood insurance and floodplain regulations. Floodplain maps (along with any supplemental study information) essentially dictate where flood insurance is required, and where local floodplain regulations must apply. This is because their purpose is to convey areas at risk of being flooded during a 100-year flood event.

So whether you think your maps are woefully inaccurate and out-dated or whether you think they do a great job of accurately showing the flood risk, they are your effective maps. In most cases, a lot of background information, engineering work, effort and cost went into identifying the known flood risk areas on your maps, even those floodplain maps from long ago. The information on your effective maps, for better or worse, is

and the map isn't updated in the process, the properties upstream of the culvert will still be shown as having a flood risk, even though the flood risk on their properties has been significantly reduced. A lender will still look at the existing maps and will still need to require flood insurance for insured structures on those properties. The floodplain administrator will still need to require a floodplain permit for activities on those upstream properties, even though they technically aren't in the 100 year floodplain anymore. The same is true for projects that cause a rise to the 100 year flood elevation (also called base flood elevation or BFE), and increase or change the extent of the flood risk. If the floodplain map isn't updated to show the changed flood risk, the map is inaccurate and becomes outdated and obsolete. Maintaining floodplain maps is one of a community's most crucial roles.

How does a floodplain administrator know what impacts a proposed project will have on BFEs or

floodplain boundaries? By ensuring an encroachment analysis is done as part of the floodplain permit application, unless the proposed project is in the Flood Fringe. An encroachment analysis is an analysis performed by an engineer to assess the effects of a proposed project on a flood elevation, flood flows, or flood velocity. Regional DNRC Engineering Specialists can help floodplain administrators review floodplain permits and encroachment analysis information and when a project should be required to update the FEMA floodplain map as one of the conditions on the floodplain permit. FEMA maps are updated through FEMA's Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) process. The 2014 Montana Model Floodplain Regulations contain specific language to help clarify when encroachment analyses, LOMRs and Conditional LOMRs (CLOMRs) should be required as part of floodplain permits. For more information on LOMRs, see: www.mtfloodplain.mt.gov/mapping-and-technical-resources

Letter of Map Revisions (LOMRs) – Recent Changes

FEMA recently announced a contractor change for LOMR and Conditional LOMR (CLOMR) reviews. Paul Anderson with the Compass Team (consisting of CDM Smith and AECOM) will now be receiving and reviewing all new MT-2 application submittals for LOMRs and CLOMRs in Montana. Paul is based out of Denver, CO. Contact information is: andersonp@cdmsmith.com 303-383-2418

Montana's DNRC Floodplain Program is now conducting concurrent technical reviews of all LOMRs and CLOMRs submitted for projects in Montana. DNRC's quality review occurs concurrently with FEMA's, and helps provide additional oversight and review.

Floodplain Mapping Status

Current Countywide Mapping Projects

Sweet Grass County and the City of Big Timber recently completed a multi-year county-wide DFIRM (Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map) project to convert their existing 1982 paper FIRMs (Flood Insurance Rate Maps) to digital format. The project included a new detailed floodplain study on 43 miles of the Yellowstone River to replace the existing Yellowstone River floodplain that had been mapped in 1982 using approximate methods. The new maps and Flood Insurance Study went into effect for flood insurance and regulatory purposes on May 18th. Sweet Grass County and the City of Big Timber used the state model ordinance to adopt new local floodplain regulations and incorporate their new maps and information.

After ten years of technical work, meetings, and public review, new DFIRM maps for Missoula County and the City of Missoula will go into effect on July 6th. The project involved a combination of new floodplain studies, conversion of existing mapped floodplains from paper format into digital, and the use of updated, more accurate topography to refine some of the existing mapped floodplains. The City and County are currently updating their local floodplain regulations to coincide with the new maps and information.

On October 16th, Stillwater County's DFIRM conversion project will be completed and the county will have new DFIRMs to replace their existing paper FIRMs from 1985. Like Sweet Grass County, Stillwater's project involved a new detailed floodplain study along 44 miles of the Yellowstone River through the county, and the conversion of the remaining mapped floodplains from paper

format into digital. Stillwater County and the Town of Columbus will all be updating their floodplain regulations to incorporate the new maps.

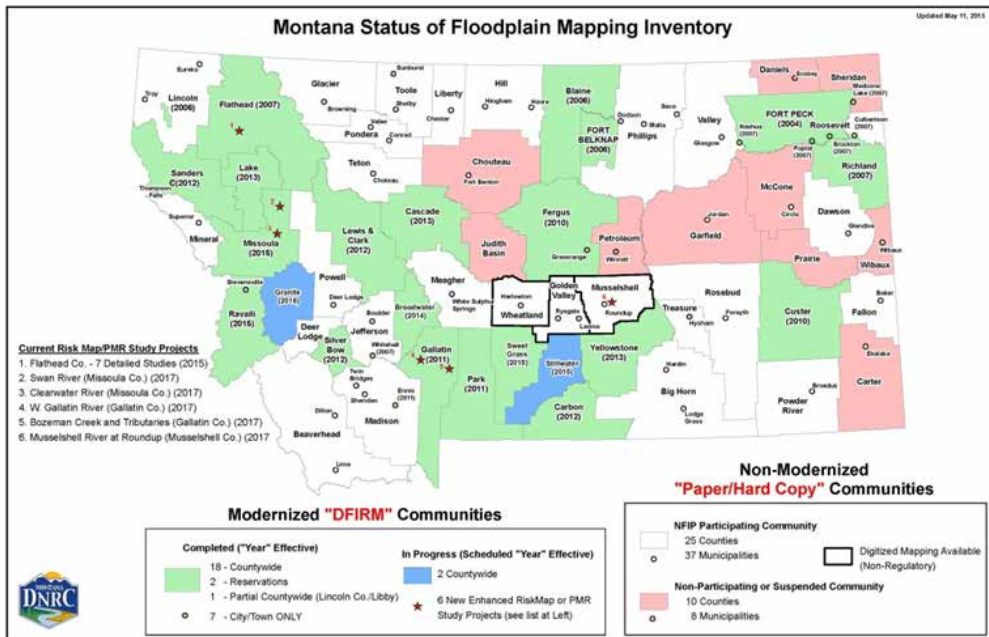
Preliminary DFIRMs have been issued for Granite County. The official comment and appeal period on the draft maps and Flood Insurance Study will end on June 8th. Revisions will be made based on submitted appeals and comments before final maps and studies will be generated. Final DFIRM maps to replace the existing paper FIRMs from 1982 are anticipated to go into effect in spring 2016, with Granite County and the Towns of Philipsburg and Drummond anticipating updates to their floodplain regulations to coincide with the new maps.

Current Risk Map/ Physical Map Revision (PMR) Study Projects:

In Flathead County, seven new detailed floodplain studies were conducted and updated topography was used to refine some of the existing Approximate A floodplains. The project will update 37 of the county's 72 DFIRM panels. The new maps will go into effect on November 4th, 2015. Flathead County, Whitefish, and Kalispell will all be updating their floodplain regulations to incorporate the new maps.

Missoula County and DNRC are working together to fund and conduct new updated floodplain studies on a 19 mile reach of the Swan River and a 9 mile reach of the Clearwater River. The studies will replace outdated existing mapping and are expected to be completed in 2017.

In Gallatin County, new floodplain studies are underway for a 30 mile section of the Gallatin River and 20 miles of Bozeman Creek and its tributaries through the City of



Bozeman and Gallatin County. Following technical and public review, the new studies and maps are anticipated to go into effect sometime in 2017, replacing the existing mapping with more accurate, updated mapping and information.

Musselshell County and the City of Roundup requested DNRC assistance with new floodplain mapping on the Musselshell River after the 2011 flood event. A new detailed floodplain study is underway for a 10-mile stretch of the Musselshell River around Roundup to replace their existing Approximate Zone A floodplain maps from 1986. After technical and public review is completed, the new study and updated mapping are anticipated to go into effect sometime in 2017.

FEMA Elevation Certificates

By Marijo Brady, PE,
FEMA Region VIII

FEMA recently published a fact sheet – *Elevation Certificates: Who Needs Them and Why*

(<http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/32330>). The fact sheet is useful for any local official or property owner to read. A few additional pieces of information to know is that while an Elevation Certificate (EC) is not required for pre-FIRM properties, here's why you

1. If an EC is provided at the time of writing a policy or at renewal, the insurance agent can compare the pre-FIRM subsidized rate to the actuarial rate. The actuarial rate for buildings in the SFHA is based on elevation – the lowest floor within the footprint of the building to the Base Flood Elevation. Your insurance agent, if writing a policy underwritten by the NFIP, will ALWAYS give you, the policyholder, the cheaper of the two rates. For some properties, the pre-FIRM subsidized rate may be cheaper initially, but over time, the ACTUARIAL rate will be the better deal. This is especially true for pre-FIRM non-primary residences, pre-FIRM repetitive loss properties, pre-FIRM buildings that are substantially improved, and pre-FIRM business properties. These types of properties will see a 25% increase to their premium annually until an EC is provided to actuarially rate the policy.

Again, FEMA will still provide the policyholder the cheapest rate – pre-FIRM subsidized or actuarial based on EC. SO! There's no reason to wait to find out what that actuarial rate is.

2. FEMA does not pay nor reimburse a policyholder for the costs associated with hiring a surveyor to complete an EC. Check with land surveyors to see if they will offer a better rate if multiple property owners engage them, and talk to your neighbors to see if this is an option.

3. With an EC in hand and the actuarial rates known, a property owner could consult with their community to determine if a Mitigation Grant program (elevation, relocation, or demolition) might be an option. For the community, a large number of property owners interested may offer some Mitigation Grant opportunities too.

National Dam Safety Awareness Day

By Adam Powers, DNRC Dam Safety Outreach Coordinator



The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) will observe the 30th anniversary of the Montana Dam Safety Act on May 31, 2015, which is also designated as National Dam Safety Awareness Day.

For more information go to the Montana Dam Safety webpage at <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/water/operations/dam-safety>

Laurence Siroky, chief of DNRC's Water Operations Bureau and one of the original architects of the 1985 Dam Safety Act, noted the law was aimed at protecting Montanans from dam failure and encouraging responsible use and maintenance of dams.

"Under this law, dam owners are responsible for scheduling an engineering inspection of their dam at least once every five years," Siroky said. "They're also required to perform proper maintenance and have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that outlines notification procedures to local law enforcement and emergency management agencies, including evacuation maps for all areas that could be impacted."

The act also requires dam owners to outline strategies for repairing a dam in danger of failing, Siroky said.

This year's Montana Legislature implemented new dam safety laws focusing on impoundment structures for mine tailings ponds. Siroky said the law was proposed by the Montana Mining Association after a tailings pond breach in August of 2014 at the Mount Polley Mine in British Columbia. The breach released millions of cubic yards of mine waste into a local creek and lake.

"Dams provide critical water storage with a broad range of benefits for our state – irrigation, hydroelectric power, flood control, recreation and municipal water supplies, among others" said DNRC Director John Tubbs. "DNRC owns and manages 20 water-storage projects statewide and we place a premium on dam safety and maintenance."

Along with managing its own water projects, DNRC also operates the state's Dam Safety Program, which regulates the construction,

operation and maintenance of Montana's dams to protect life and property. The program provides training and outreach to dam owners and engineers, and assists with emergency preparedness activities.

Of the thousands of dams in Montana, an estimated 185 are structures that could pose a threat to downstream residents. Siroky said there are two or three incidents each year involving dam malfunctions; most of these involve small dams and are caused by deterioration of the outlet works.

It's a shared responsibility between state and federal agencies, dam owners, emergency responders and citizens to know their roles in the event of an emergency. For the estimated 160,000 Montanans and businesses living downstream of a dam there are actions they can take for their own safety, including:

- Knowing the benefits and risks associated with dams
- Knowing evacuation routes and areas that may be inundated by water and debris
- Maintaining flood insurance
- Having an evacuation plan

Siroky also encouraged citizens to contact local law enforcement or emergency responders if they notice anything unusual or suspicious at a dam, such as significant water seepage.

National Dam Safety Awareness Day is held each year on May 31. The date corresponds to the failure in 1889 of the South Fork Dam in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. More than 2,200 people lost their lives in what is regarded as the most catastrophic dam failure in US History.

Emergency Action Plan to be Developed in Miles City



The Montana DNRC Floodplain and Dam Safety programs have teamed up with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), FEMA, Custer County, and Miles City to develop an Emergency Action Plan for their levee. The Miles City levee is about seven miles long and protects approximately two thirds of the city from potential flooding along the Yellowstone and Tongue Rivers.

As part of efforts to minimize the flooding impacts to residents, DNRC proposed a joint project through the Silver Jackets Program to develop a Levee Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Silver Jackets is a national initiative spearheaded by the USACE and involves FEMA, US Geological Survey, National Weather Service and state agencies like Montana DNRC, DEQ, and Disaster and Emergency Services to reduce flood risk and support floodplain management.

The identified floodplain in Miles City saw a major change in 2010, when FEMA remapped the area. The USACE determined that the 70 year-old levee was too shallow and too narrow to maintain protection for the city indefinitely. Community leaders have begun conducting several studies to determine the best long term strategy to protect citizens

and maintain property values in the shadow of the levee. The development of an Emergency Action Plan for the Miles City levee is an action that can save lives and property.

The emergency plan analyzes data on the depth, velocity, and travel times of water for several levee breaches to determine evacuation areas. The emergency plan will focus on the community's ability to prevent a failure of the levee. It will also highlight warning and evacuating systems and procedures as well as efforts for a rapid recovery in the event of the levee overtopping. By having a plan, residents may see a reduction in their flood and homeowner insurance rates through points granted in the Community Rating System.

An additional benefit of this project is to utilize the EAP developed for Miles City as a template for levee emergency plans in other Montana communities. The National Levee Safety Act, a part of the Water Resources Development Act of 2014, encourages communities to adopt a comprehensive emergency management program of inspections, maintenance, and emergency planning for levees owned and operated by the jurisdictions. The project is expected to be completed by mid-summer.

Flathead CD: Flood Day 2015



DNRC's newest Ward's Science Floodplain Simulator

The MT DNRC Floodplain Program was pleased to staff a station again at this year's annual Flood Day, held in Kalispell on April 23, 2015. This event is intended to engage high school students and educate them about flood awareness and natural resource management through interactive resources, tools, and hands-on activities. This day is coordinated and facilitated each year by the Flathead Conservation District. The county fairground Expo building

hosted the event for over 100 Flathead County High School students who attended the venue. Groups of kids made the circuit of stations: a water holding demonstration, the Rolling Rivers trailer, a "sources of pollution" display, and the floodplain simulator table, manned by DNRC's Marc Pitman and Bri Shipman. A sand bagging competition between groups of students ended the day's festivities and was a satisfying end to a productive day of learning.

Association of Montana Floodplain Managers (AMFM) Corner

Message from the Executive Director – Larry Schock



Mark Your Calendar!

May 31st – June 5th, 2015
AMFM Conference

This year the ASFPM annual conference will be held in Atlanta, Georgia May 31st – June 5th, 2015. The theme for the conference is Mitigation on My Mind. Safe travels to those that are attending this years' conference. For more information please visit the ASFPM website at www.floods.org.

As the Executive Director of the Association of Montana Floodplain Managers I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank each and every one of the speakers who participated in the 2015 AMFM Conference and pre-conference workshops in Helena and all of the people who helped organize and run the event. I think that this was our best conference yet. Based upon the positive feedback that we have received about the CRS Workshop, the Technical Session, and the Floodplain Basics Session, it appears that the attendees and our membership also agreed.

Sixteen years ago when the concept of forming a Montana floodplain organization was contemplated it was decided that the main goal of AMFM would be to provide training and support for the local floodplain administrator. Since we all know that the answers in the floodplain world are not always in the ARM's, CFR's, or MCA's. The idea of the annual conference was put forth as an opportunity for the FPA's to not only receive valuable training, but to also provide them with the opportunity to network with, and learn from others, who may be facing similar situations and problems. Today the AMFM's goals are still the same; however

our guiding concepts have evolved and expanded to include all of the floodplain folks working in the private and government sectors too.

In order to meet our goals the AMFM has long sought the assistance and support of the very people who we seek to train, our floodplain family. The support we receive from our members and sponsors, serving on the board and in administrative roles, is greatly appreciated and very important. However another equally important area that we need your support in is with our annual conference presentations. If you have never given a presentation but always wanted to, or if you have been hesitant to give a presentation because of nerves, you should consider presenting at next year's AMFM conference. While the room may be big, our floodplain family is small. We are very supportive and welcoming to anyone who wants an opportunity to grow personally and professionally by giving a presentation at our conference. Therefore, I would encourage everyone to consider standing at the podium at the 2016 AMFM Conference in Fairmont and sharing your knowledge and experiences of working in the floodplain world with the rest of us!

Community Rating System Workshop

Montana DNRC Floodplain Program, AMFM, French and Associates, Ltd., AE Dynamics, Insurance Service Office (ISO), and FEMA sponsored a three part series of training workshops for the Community Rating System (CRS) Program at the annual AMFM conference held in Helena this year. French Wetmore supported by Carrie Higinbotham and Gina Gabriel assisted local floodplain administrators and other

local officials in understanding the CRS and its benefits to their local community. The workshop addressed how to put together specific community information for a successful CRS cycle visit. The workshops emphasized impact adjustment maps for various activities and provided examples for participants. Materials from the workshop are available. Contact Traci Sears or AMFM.

Four New CFMs in Montana!

Congratulations to the following individuals who recently became Certified Floodplain Managers (CFMs):

Robert Neihart, Project Manager at WWC Engineering in Helena

Scott Pfahler, Civil Engineer with the DNRC Floodplain Program in Helena

Forrest Sanderson, Planner with KLJ Engineering in Billings

Andrew Short, Project Manager at Territorial Landworks in Missoula

To become a CFM, individuals take an exam administered through the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) and maintain their certification through continuing education. Montana currently has 89

CFMs, the highest number of CFMs per capita in the US! For a complete list of CFMs, click here: <http://www.floods.org/Certification/certlist.asp>

In Montana, proctors administer CFM testing at least twice a year: at the annual AMFM Conference in March and at the free Resource Seminar in Helena in July. The next scheduled CFM exam and prep session will be offered on Friday, July 24th in Helena at the Floodplain Resource Seminar. Prospective test-takers need to apply to ASPFM (www.floods.org) for exam registration before July 3 and are encouraged to allow about 3 months for testing preparation.

See: www.mtfloodplain.mt.gov/2015MTFloodplainResSeminarSched.pdf for more information.

New FPAs in Montana

Carbon County

New: Brent Moore with CTA Group,
brentm@ctagroup.com
406-896-6285

New: Caleb Minnick, P.E. CFM
calebm@ctagroup.com
406-222-0104 ext.1603

City of Red Lodge

New: Peter Italiano
commplanning@cityofredlodge.com
406-446-1606 ext. 118
P.O. Box 9
Red Lodge, MT 59068

Forest Sanderson has retired for a brief moment and is now working for KLJ in Billings Montana. We have even started to see him hanging around some of our training events. Congratulations on the new job.

Town of Fromberg

New: Richard Anderson
mayor@fromberg-mt.gov
406-668-7383
P.O. Box 236
Fromberg, MT 59029

Town of Joliet

New: Amber Foechterle
townofjoliet@gmail.com
406-962-3567
P.O. Box 210
Joliet, MT 59041

Town of Chinook

New: Shawn Higley
shighley@wwcengineering.com
406-443-3962
1275 Maple St. Ste-F
Helena, MT 59601

Town of Harlem

New: Shawn Higley
shighley@wwcengineering.com
406-443-3962
1275 Maple St. Ste-F
Helena, MT 59601

Town of Hardin

New: Russell Dill SPW
PublicWorks@hardinmt.com
406-665-9292
406 N. Cheyenne
Hardin, MT 59034

Annual DNRC Awards

Lewis & Clark Local Floodplain Manager Award for 2016



Traci Sears and Sean O'Callaghan

Congratulations to Sean O'Callaghan, Gallatin County Planning Director and Floodplain Administrator, the recipient of the Lewis & Clark Local Floodplain Manager Award for 2015. This award recognizes outstanding individual efforts and contributions to floodplain management at the local level. The Lewis & Clark Local Floodplain Manager Award honors an individual responsible for the development of a successful and proactive local program or activity or one who has faced challenges to implement flood hazard reduction at the local level in the absence of sophisticated programs and support. The award was presented at the Association of Montana Floodplain Manager's (AMFM) annual conference that was held this past March in Helena, Montana.

Sean's involvement in Montana floodplain management has brought him into focus as a major asset, not just to his own community, but other Montana communities with local floodplain programs. His efforts to implement and maintain a meticulous and compliant floodplain program have been the example framework other communities have used to build their own local programs. Sean is a leader and his willingness to be involved in training venues, draft rule making, and providing input on floodplain scenarios covering the spectrum from permitting case studies to floodplain litigation to presenting as a subject matter expert is to be highly commended. His level of engagement has been supportive to his community and state staff, in addition to serving as a successful example to others involved in floodplain management in Montana. Gallatin County has recently applied to and was successful in joining the Community Rating System due to Sean and Chris Scott's hard work, successful CAV, and incentive to pursue the CRS program.



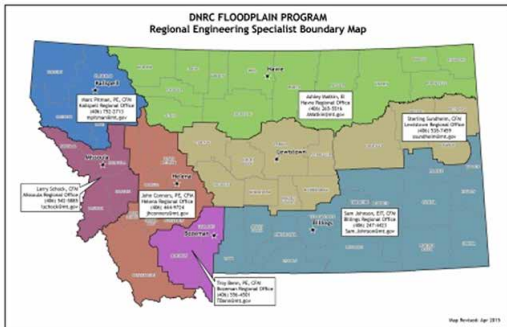
Kevin Doyle and Steve Story

DNRC presented Kevin Doyle with the Engineering and Floodplain Mapping Black Belt Award for Excellence. Kevin works for Michael Baker Engineering, Inc. (Lakewood, CO), and has served as FEMA Region VIII's lead project manager and technical advisor for the last 10 years. During his tenure, Kevin has been integrally involved in every Map Modernization and Risk MAP project within Montana. His expertise and knowledge of the floodplain mapping program have significantly contributed to the credibility and success of new mapping products throughout Montana.



Mary Guokas was also presented the Lewis & Clark Appreciation Award for eight years of Floodplain Services to Local Communities Award. Thank you again Mary for your dedicated commitment to the Montana floodplain Program.

DNRC Regional Engineer Update



Marc Pitman recently took over DNRC Regional Engineering floodplain duties for Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties. Marc works out of the Kalispell Regional DNRC office and previously served as the Kalispell Regional Manager and provided floodplain permit review assistance to Flathead County. With his transition to full-time Regional Engineer, he will now provide also permit review assistance for Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders Counties.

Specialists provide complimentary engineering technical support to Montana counties and municipalities who participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. DNRC technical assistance is provided to communities with limited resources and expertise to help them evaluate the sufficiency of floodplain permit submittals and make sound floodplain management decisions. See: www.mtfloodplain.mt.gov/contacts for more details.

A big thank you to Larry Schock from the Missoula Regional DNRC office, who previously assisted Lake, Lincoln and Sanders Counties. Larry will continue to cover Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Granite Counties. DNRC Regional Engineering

Highground Editor - DNRC Floodplain Program
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