



The Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation

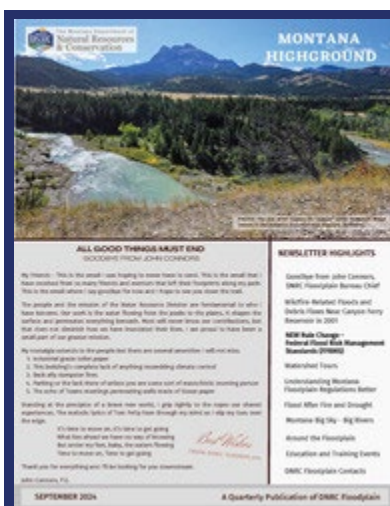
Montana Highground Newsletter

June 2025



On June 13, 2022 residents of Red Lodge, MT quickly learned first hand how flooding is the nation's most common natural disaster and it causes the most economic damage in terms of property loss. Now three years later the recovery process continues. Many of the flood impacted communities and property owners continue to repair and rebuild. (Photo by Courtney Long / with permission).

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Floodplain Program assists Montana communities with floodplain management by guiding development in flood-prone areas, flood awareness, outreach, and training that builds up local expertise. Floodplain mapping, permitting, mitigation, and flood insurance are cornerstones to reducing flood losses and helping communities protect infrastructure and improve public health, safety and welfare.



Same Floodplain Newsletter.

New Look and Format.

You probably noticed this edition of the DNRC Floodplain Highground Newsletter has a new look, feel, and format. It also has a new sender address which you may need to add to your trusted sender list. Upgrading to the new digital format allows us to share more resources, links and videos, plus manage our growing subscriber list efficiently. You can manage your subscriptions using the links in the footer of this email.

DNRC Floodplain Attends 2025 ASFPM Conference

Connections Made and Ideas Shared

That's a wrap! DNRC Floodplain joined 1,500 in-person attendees and 110 virtual attendees who participated in the 2025 Association of State Floodplain Manager's Annual Conference (ASFPM) in New Orleans in May. Our team is excited to share the information they learned with Montana communities to help property owners



PHOTO: Over 1,500 people participated in-person at the 2025 ASFPM Conference in New Orleans, LA in May. (Courtesy of ASFPM)

Learn more about
ASFPM

build using flood safe practices which will improve community resilience over time.

Nadene Wadsworth, DNRC Mapping, presented with Dr. Kristen Smith of Headwaters Economics (Bozeman, MT), Kelly Smith, local floodplain administrator for the City of Three Forks, and Jeremiah Theys, natural resource business manager with Great West Engineering. The group shared a roadmap for successful mitigation funding for rural communities and highlighted how Three Forks leveraged its partnerships to assess their flood risk, identify mitigation options, secure landowner cooperation, and funding for a multi-million dollar project to minimize the flood hazards and financial impacts facing approximately 40 percent of Three Fork's residents.

Next year, ASFPM will celebrate a 50-year milestone at the 2026 Annual Conference taking place May 31-June 4 in Milwaukee, WI. If you are interested in attending or joining ASFPM, [read more here.](#)



Save the Date: Next year's ASFPM Conference will be May 31 - June 4, 2025 in

*Milwaukee, WI. The Call for
Abstracts will go out in
September.*

CAP Offers Local Training

Floodplain, Permitting, Recovery and Agency Coordination

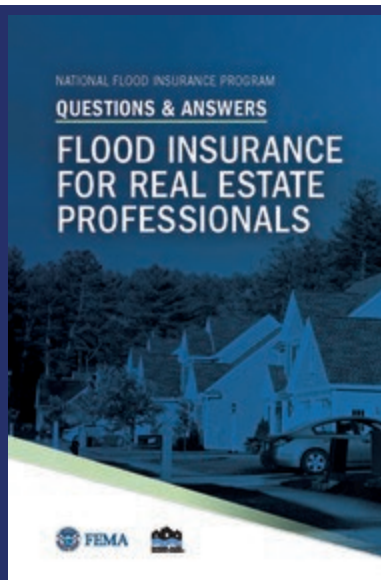
The DNRC Floodplain Community Assistance Program (CAP), consisting of Traci Sears and Shylea Wingard, traveled throughout Montana during April, May and June to work with local floodplain administrators, community officials, and permitting agencies to expand and strengthen the knowledge and expertise of the participants when it came to floodplain regulations, permitting, and agency coordination.

Members from conservation districts, Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and local leaders and officials gathered together for a one-day meeting co-facilitated by DNRC Floodplain to gain a better understanding of how each agency regulates waterways, handles permitting and responds to disaster events. Many attendees stated how beneficial it was to meet in person for the collaboration and networking. Events were co-coordinated with area partners and held in the counties of Cascade, Flathead, Madison, Missoula, Park and Stillwater.



Photo: Tenlee Atchison of the High Plains Outpost (formerly Cascade County Conservation District) and Traci Sears (DNRC Floodplain State NFIP Coordinator) co-facilitated an agency coordination meeting focusing on floodplain basics and permitting on April 9th, 2025 in Great Falls, MT (By: Shylea Wingard)

Floodplain Training offered for Montana Realtors



Regional Floodplain Training for Montana Realtors was offered for members of the Bitterroot (Hamilton), Northwest (Kalispell), Missoula and Billings realtor associations during April and May.

Over 200 realtors learned about disclosure requirements, floodplain maps, development regulations, permitting, and flood insurance. Realtors received 4-hours of continuing education for attending the half-day course taught by DNRC Floodplain. The program is grant funded and several realtor associations have already requested educational classes for 2026.

[Download the Guide Flood Insurance For Real Estate Professionals](#)

Montana gears up for drought and fire

The Montana Drought monitor indicates that June is a critical month for precipitation and the lack of it has accentuated drought conditions.

Many regions are experiencing snowpack below normal, low river levels, and dry conditions. According to 130 years of record keeping (dating back to 1895), May 2025 was the 50th driest on record. Average total precipitation was 2.14 inches which was 0.28 inches less than normal.



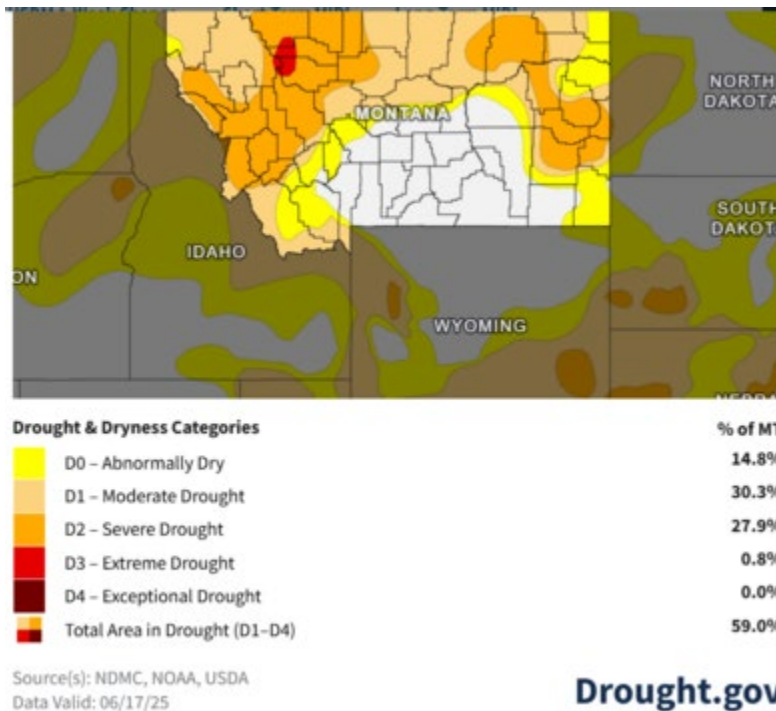
Beaverhead River outside of Dillon, MT shows low water due to below normal snowpack in the area. (By: Shylea Wingard - April 2025)

South-central Montana is the notable exception where snowpack, precipitation, and stream flows remain above normal.

To find current and historical drought maps, data and outlooks for Montana check

<https://www.drought.gov/states/montana>

Click to view Montana's most recent drought conditions



ABOVE: The Montana drought map shows 59.0% of the total area in the state is suffering from drought conditions as of 06/17/25.



Limited rainfall in May and June has heightened the concern for drought and fire. (By: Shylea Wingard)



Flooding was not a major concern for many Montana communities who used the time for flood preparedness and advanced recovery meetings to improve agency coordination. (Photo: Beaverhead River | Shylea Wingard | April 2025)



Flood After Fire

Homes in or near wildfire burned areas face a higher risk of flash flooding and mudflows. The DNRC and the Montana Commissioner of Securities and Insurance (CSI) encourage you to plan ahead and protect your home by purchasing flood insurance. Check with your insurance company to see if you are covered for flood damage. New policies generally take 30 days to take effect, so remember to plan ahead.

Visit [MTfireinfo.org](https://mtfireinfo.org) for more information on wildfire impact areas.

[MTfireinfo.org](https://mtfireinfo.org)



Learn about
wildfire impacts

To learn more about how flood risk increases after a wildfire see [FEMA's Flood After Fire Factsheet.](#)

For more flood-after-fire or flood insurance information, visit the Office of the Montana State Auditor [Flood - Montana Commissioner of Securities and Insurance](#)



Check Out the Post-Fire Flood Awareness PSA



Floodplain Resources and Guidebooks

Recent publications from the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)



Guidance on Structural Safety in Flood Areas: ASCE 24-24

Flood Resistant Design and Construction

ASCE 24 provides minimum requirements for flood resistant design and construction of structures that are subject to building code requirements or floodplain management regulations in flood hazard areas and is intended to meet or exceed the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). This standard applies to new construction, including subsequent work to such structures, and work classified as substantial

More Information on
ASCE 24-24

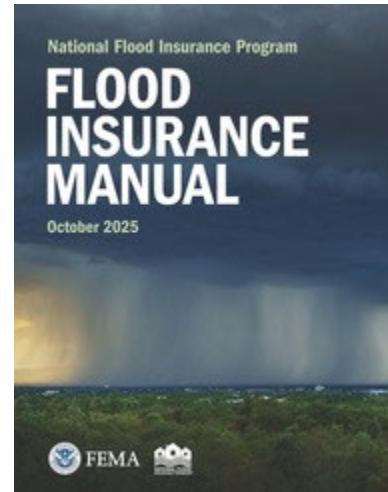
improvement of existing structures that are not historic structures.

FEMA Updates Flood Insurance Manuals

FEMA updated the NFIP Flood Insurance Manual, the National Flood Insurance Program Claims Manual and the Standard Flood Insurance Policy Commentary. The intent is to provide new information, clarify existing instructions, and offer guidance that enhances program understanding for flood insurance agents and property owners.

The updated Flood Insurance Manual will apply to flood insurance policies issued on or after October 1, 2025. The Claims Manual and the Standard Flood Insurance Policy Commentary will apply to flood insurance claims occurring during the 2025 hurricane season. Documents are available on the FEMA.gov flood insurance website.

[Click to view Flood Insurance Manuals and Handbooks](#)



View Manual

Save the Dates

June 30, 2025 | 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

New Floodplain Administrator Training

2-Hour Virtual Workshop | [Click Here](#) / Ask Shylea for Link

July 23, 2025 | 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

"How to Update Your Floodplain Ordinance"

2-Hour Virtual Workshop | Watch for Email | Ask Shylea

October 6-8, 2025 | MAP Conference / Helena MT

November 12-14, 2025 |

Montana DNRC Resource Seminar

- Watch for more information

December 2- 4, 2025 | L0105 Public Information

Basics | Fort Harrison | Helena, MT |

Contact Betsy Ross, MT DES, betsy.ross@mt.gov



Contact DNRC Floodplain's Community Assistance Program (CAP)

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Contact your local
floodplain
administrator

**State & Local
Contact Information**





Have a fun and safe summer.

Doug, Traci, Shylea, Nadene, Hannah, Monica, Sarah, Nicole, and Amanda.

<https://dnrc.mt.gov/Water-Resources/Floodplains/>



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