



# FMA News

The Newsletter of the Floodplain Management Association  
[www.floodplain.org](http://www.floodplain.org)

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## Letter From the Chair



Greetings,

As you all know, FMA has become the recognized voice in floodplain management in three states. Our membership has increased significantly as federal and state floodplain regulations are changing rapidly. This has also significantly increased FMA outreach and education activities, as we engage in groundbreaking efforts to support local and statewide floodplain management programs. FMA also continues to collaborate with federal, state and local agencies to reduce flood risk in our communities.

FMA is partnering again this year with ASCE/Environmental and Water Resources Institute to host a symposium on September 28 in Sacramento to address the resiliency of California's water systems. We have been an active voice in the development of the California Water Plan and served in an advisory role for the California Statewide Watershed Program, the California Alluvial Fan Task Force, and the development of Building Code Standards for 200-year Floodplains in California. FMA continues participation in other strategic planning and policy efforts including the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project and FloodSAFE. Many FMA members participate on national committees and task forces to influence policies and legislation in floodplain management.

We need to build on our latest successes and look for ways to further expand our service to the floodplain management community. FMA's mission is to provide the best tools and knowledge for floodplain managers, communities and local officials looking to address flood risk and floodplain sustainability. FMA can partner with your agencies or organizations to conduct public or agency outreach and education on floodplain issues, develop educational materials, design professional training programs, facilitate public and inter-agency meetings, meet with local elected officials, organize and manage symposiums, and coordinate various projects including the development of local guidelines and standards in flood risk management.

**We would like to invite you to participate in a Task Force to explore ways in which FMA can better serve the floodplain management community.** Please contact lovanka or me at (916) 928-5177 or at phegedus@rbf.com if you would like to be part of this important initiative, or if you would like to discuss how FMA can assist your organization.



-Pal



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*Iovanka Todt, Executive Director*

## FMA Annual Conference & ASFPM Arid Regions Symposium! November 2-5, 2010, Henderson, NV!



- ◆ Changing Federal Regulations and Impacts in Arid Regions
- ◆ Implementation and Implications of the New Principles & Guidelines
- ◆ Meeting Stormwater Regulations in Arid Regions
- ◆ USACE & DRI Arid Regions Demonstration Programs
- ◆ Federal Interagency Floodplain Management Task Force Listening Session
- ◆ Workshops in NFIP, HEC models, Public Involvement, Ethics, Mapping and more, plus one-on-one sessions with FEMA
- ◆ Floodplain Management Research Forum
- ◆ Levee Certification, Maintenance, Design
- ◆ Stream Channel Stabilization and Hydromodification
- ◆ Alluvial Fan Flood Hazard Delineation, Flood Risk Mapping, Land Development Tools
- ◆ FEMA Risk Map Tools and Programs
- ◆ FEMA CRS Handbook & Community Self-Assessment Tools
- ◆ Renewable Energy Development in Arid Regions
- ◆ Dams and Reservoir Operations—Optimizing Storage
- ◆ Nevada Tribal Summit on Environmental Policy and Collaboration
- ◆ Demonstration Projects, Case Studies and Field Trips
- ◆ Student Networking Opportunities
- ◆ And much more!

**Call for Presentations! Deadline is June 4. Visit [www.floodplain.org](http://www.floodplain.org).**

### FMA Chair Receives Prestigious "Knight's Cross Merit of the Republic of Hungary Award

Pal Hegedus, FMA Chair and Vice President with RBF Consulting, recently received the prestigious Knight's Cross Merit of the Republic of Hungary Award, the country's sixth-highest civilian honor. The award was personally presented to him by the Environmental and Water Resources Minister, Imre Szabo, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Hungary, Laszlo Solyom.

The Knight's Cross award recognizes Hegedus' contributions in introducing advanced floodplain management and modeling techniques to local flood control agencies, as well as his work with staff and students at the Technical University of Budapest. A native of Hungary, he returned annually over the past 10 years to lecture on floodplain management and provide instruction in modeling programs such as HEC-RAS and FLO-2D. Additionally, he has been helping a local water agency in Szolnok in developing floodplain mapping and modeling for the Tisza River, the second largest river in Hungary.

## FEMA Evaluates NFIP, Advances Risk MAP

FEMA is engaged in a comprehensive effort to evaluate reform of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The initiative has captured stakeholder concerns/recommendations and is in Phase 2, which involves creating an NFIP Reform Working Group to conduct additional analyses of stakeholder feedback, develop evaluation criteria, and create a portfolio of public policy alternatives. This phase should be completed by end of May, followed by Phase III—evaluating public policy alternatives. The NFIP reform effort will consider initiatives internal to FEMA and across the Federal government. Examples include: the White House Long-Term Disaster Recovery Working Group; the Federal Inter-Agency Floodplain Management Task Force; the White House Task Force on Climate Change Adaptation; updated Principals and Guidelines for Water and Land Related Resources Implementation Studies; and the review and update of the Executive Order 11988.

Congress has currently extended the NFIP through May 31, 2010, but the program has been suspended multiple times in the past 6 months. Although this hasn't hurt ongoing flood hazard mapping efforts, it has impacted many citizens who tried to purchase flood insurance while the program was suspended.

FEMA also continues efforts to advance the Risk MAP program. Several innovations include increasing the link between hazard identification with mitigation planning, implementing watershed based studies, making funding available for the acquisition of new topographic data, and developing better risk communication products such as multi-frequency depth grids. The Risk MAP program is picking up pace and has a tagline: "Increasing Resilience Together."

*Results from the NFIP evaluation efforts (Phase II) as well as the latest innovations in Risk MAP will be discussed at the upcoming FMA Annual Conference in Henderson, NV, November 2-5.*

## FEMA Revises Preferred Risk Policies

The Federal Emergency Management Agency today announced that it is revising its Preferred Risk Policy under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to extend eligibility an additional year. Effective January 1, owners of buildings found to be in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) during a flood map revision, may be eligible for a preferred risk policy that will allow them to maintain a lower cost flood insurance policy for two years following the effective date of a flood map change. A SFHA is a high risk flood area, meaning that there is a one-percent annual chance of flooding.

"By extending the eligibility period for the preferred risk policies, homeowners and building owners will have two years at the lower cost rate," said FEMA Acting Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administrator, Edward Connor. "The two years will provide owners extra time to understand their flood risk and to consider this risk in their preparedness planning."

The discounted rate will be available, for the two year period, to owners whose buildings were found to be in a SFHA following a flood map revision that went into effect on, or after, October 1, 2008. In order to be eligible for the Preferred Risk Policy, buildings must also meet certain loss-history requirements. If there are two claims, or disaster relief payments for flood, of \$1,000 or more, or three losses of any amount, the structure is ineligible for the PRP.

Policy holders with a Preferred Rate Policy will see a \$10 increase when they renew their policies. This is the amount that was determined, through actuarial analysis, to be the amount needed in order for those buildings that are newly mapped into a SFHA to be revenue neutral to the flood insurance program. At the end of the extended two-year eligibility period, policies on these buildings will return to standard-rated policies.

For more information on FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program, and to identify your flood risk, visit [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).



## FEMA Map Information eXchange *NV Floodplain Management News*

On March 1, 2010, the FEMA's Map Service Center (MSC) and the FEMA Map Assistance Center (FMAC) were consolidated into the FEMA Map Information eXchange, or FMIX. The FMIX provides information to the public about NFIP rules, regulations, and procedures. The consolidation should increase efficiency and provide a one-stop shop for a variety of information, products, services and tools that support the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Now, for answers to most any flood hazard mapping question, you may call the FMIX. The toll free number for the FMIX is the same as before, 1-877 FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627) or you may email a map specialist at [FEMAMapSpecialist@riskmapcds.com](mailto:FEMAMapSpecialist@riskmapcds.com).

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Flood Risk Management Planning

The Army Corps is co-chairing with FEMA the Federal Interagency Floodplain Management Task Force (FIFM-TF). The Task Force, made up of several federal agencies including USGS, HUD, NRCS and CEQ, held workshops in May 10 to solicit input from agencies and others on the needs and outcomes of this effort. **The Task Force plans to conduct a Regional Listening Session at the FMA Conference in Henderson, NV, November 2-5, 2010.** Don't miss this important opportunity to discuss your ideas and help shape national policy in floodplain management.



The Intergovernmental Flood Risk Management Committee (IFRMC) is a similar effort also headed by FEMA and Army Corps leadership, with additional input from NAFSMA (National Association of Flood and Stormwater Agencies), ASFPM (Association of State Flood Plain Managers), and other organizations. This Committee is discussing upcoming legislation and how proposed legislation would impact flood risk management policies and activities. For more information, visit the NAFSMA web site at [www.nafsma.org](http://www.nafsma.org), or the ASFPM web site at [www.floods.org](http://www.floods.org).

The Army Corps plans its 2010 Flood Risk Management Program Workshop 21-24 June, Minneapolis, MN, in collaboration with FEMA and all Silver Jackets teams to accomplish the following:

- ♦ Share information regarding its Flood Risk Management (FRM) and Silver Jackets programs including components, tools and policy developments since program creation;
- ♦ Review and coordinate key USACE and FEMA FRM program activities in conjunction with FY2010 performance objectives;
- ♦ Develop and improve partnerships with our regional and state intergovernmental partners; and
- ♦ Share updates on activities and successes and further develop knowledge and skills related to managing flood risk.

The Army Corps will be hosting a special session at the FMA Annual Conference to discuss the latest developments in the Flood Risk Management Program and tools.



We'll take it  
from here.

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- Program/Policy Development
- Non-Structural Solutions
- Stormwater Master Planning



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## U.S. Army Corps Releases Draft of Revised Vegetation Variance Policy

The U.S. Army Corps vegetation variance policy was issued in 1997 to implement Section 202(g) of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1996. The policy recognizes that there may be some instances where vegetation may preserve, protect or enhance natural resources and/or protect the rights of Native Americans. This variance process is designed to accommodate those special cases when it is possible to do so while still maintaining the safety, structural integrity and function of the levees and allowing for access for inspection and flood fighting. This policy was incorporated into ER 500-1-1 in 2001.

The revised process incorporates several agency-wide approaches, some of which include lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, implemented since the original vegetation variance process was first issued in 1997. Some of these approaches include the following:

- ◆ Conducting broader flood risk management planning
- ◆ Applying procedures consistently on a national basis
- ◆ Managing levees on a system-wide basis
- ◆ Ensuring Levee Safety Officers are part of the review process
- ◆ Using Agency Technical Review (ATR) to ensure quality, consistency, and credibility
- ◆ Documenting technical decisions consistently
- ◆ Sharing best practices and lessons learned nationally

The comment period closed April 25 and the Corps is currently reviewing the comments. Following review of the comments, the Corps will evaluate and revise the policy as appropriate and then issue final guidance. The final, revised guidance will be published in the Federal Register with a summary of the comments provided in the public comment period. Will not speculate on the completion date.

## U.S. Army Corps Partners with Desert Research Institute on Arid Regions Track at the FMA 2010 Annual Conference

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Desert Research Institute are presenting a 1-day track on November 4, 2010 at the FMA Annual Conference in Henderson, NV, covering the results of work performed under Army Corps demonstration programs. These programs focus on urban flood damage reduction and channel restoration in the arid and semi arid regions of the Southwestern United States.

The goal of the programs is to develop and demonstrate innovative technologies to address regional problems. This year's tasks particularly focus on risks and uncertainties presented by potential climate change on flood, post-fire hydrology and in-stream and riparian vegetations.

Work is being undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Engineering Research and Development Center (ERDC) in collaboration with the Desert Research Institute of Nevada. Efforts have focused on the Truckee River (NV), the Las Vegas Wash (NV), Rio Salado (AZ), the Middle Rio Grande (NM) and San Luis Rey (CA).

USACE FEMA DWR

# Levee Certification?

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