



# PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION OF FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS

The Texas Floodplain Management Association (TFMA) has established and intends to operate a state-wide program for certifying floodplain managers recognizing the floodplain management and hazard mitigation requirements of local, state, and federal programs dealing with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The Certified Floodplain Manager Program (CFMP) has been created by the TFMA to raise and maintain the professional standards of those individuals who manage floodplains, wetlands, and watersheds within the state of Texas. The program is designed to certify competency with the basic principals of sound floodplain management as mandated by the NFIP.

The primary goal of the CFMP is to improve the knowledge and abilities of

floodplain managers in the state of Texas. Improving NFIP knowledge and capabilities within local governments will contribute substantially toward reducing the state's flood losses and ensure the protection and enhancement of natural floodplain values. This primary goal will be achieved over time through encouraging self-study and attendance at training sessions; by requiring testing to obtain certification; requiring continuing education as a condition for recertification; and encouraging city and county governments to require training and professional certification of local floodplain managers.

On a larger scale and in a longer time-frame, a second major goal of the CFMP is increasing the prominence of floodplain management and hazard mitigation in decision-making by local and state

officials and the general public. This goal will be achieved over time through improving the recognition of floodplain management and hazard mitigation as a specific discipline; increasing the status of floodplain managers as knowledgeable professionals in a complex and important field; and promoting certification to provide greater visibility of the profession.

Professional Certification is to be a peer review process administered through the TFMA. Participation in the CFMP is strictly voluntary. TFMA is not establishing standards governing the conduct of any floodplain manager or other qualified applicant, nor is it establishing any set procedures for work performance. The CFMP is designed to establish educational, training, and experience criteria related to

floodplain management, hazard mitigation, and the National Flood Insurance Program and to certify that an individual applicant has met these criteria. The TFMA assumes no liability for any action or decision made by an individual Certified Floodplain Manager during the normal course of performing their prescribed duties and responsibilities of managing develop-

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ment within the identified floodplain as established by criteria of the NFIP and mandated by their respective employer or local governmental agency.

Any person with two full years, (1 year experience if the FEMA Training Course has been completed), of experience with the management of the state's floodplains, wetlands, and watersheds and who meets the credentials and requirements as established by the Professional Development /Certification Committee (PDCC) is welcome to apply for professional certification under TFMA's Certified Floodplain Manager Program. It is anticipated that most applicants will be local floodplain managers, however the program is open to individuals in the private sector, state and federal government and other agencies or organizations dealing with floodplain and other related disciplines. **It is mandatory that applicants are paid up, full time members of the Texas Floodplain Management Association.**

The initial Certified Floodplain Manager designation will be granted upon successful completion of an application, submittal of credentials, and a passing of a test. The Pass/Fail of testing will be the sole basis for the final determination to designate an applicant as a Certified Floodplain Manager.

To apply for professional certification, all applicants must obtain an application packet, complete the official CFMP Application, and return to the Texas Floodplain Management Association with the appropriate fee. An application fee will be charged to cover cost of printing, handling, and distributing of application materials.

As an interim process, those applicants applying for certification between the years 1996-1999 will be awarded the title of Certified Floodplain Manager upon completion of the above mentioned criteria. Beginning in the year 2000, all applicants must meet the above criteria and must also complete the four-day FEMA Floodplain Administrator Training Course (or approved equivalent) prior to being certified. TFMA will work with FEMA, ASFPM and other agencies to develop additional training opportunities.

Upon completion of the above requirements, and payment of appropriate fee, applicants will be awarded a certificate and

designated as a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM). The certificate will remain in effect for one full year from the date of issuance. At the end of the one-year period, each CFM must submit an application to TFMA for recertification. The application will be utilized to update the CFM's credentials and to document completion of the required continuing education credits. A recertification fee must be included with the application and the CFM must be maintaining membership in the Texas Floodplain Management Association. When these conditions are met, a new one-year certificate will be issued to the Certified Floodplain Manager.

In the event that an application for certification or recertification is denied, the applicant has the right to appeal the decision of the PDCC. Such appeals must follow the guidelines specified in the Rules and Policies of the CFMP. If a CFM fails to make an application for recertification within six months of the required reapplication date, he/she may be required to complete a new application package, pay the appropriate fee, and take another test before being recertified. If special circumstances prevent timely recertification, the PDCC will consider a waiver of these requirements. As stated in the above section, the CFM must meet the continuing education requirement for recertification. The PDCC will decide how many hours or units of continuing education will be required. During the first two years of this program, the number of continuing education hours has been set at eight. It is anticipated that the continuing education requirement will be met by attending the TFMA annual conference or other training programs offered by the state, FEMA, or other agencies and organizations approved by the PDCC. Prior approval for credit must be obtained from the PDCC for conferences and training courses offered by agencies and organizations not on the approved list. After a period of five years of successive certification, all CFM's will be required to retest their knowledge of the NFIP as well as complete the usual requirements for recertification. Retesting is necessary to ensure that applicants have kept abreast of any changes to the NFIP brought about by legislation, rules and regulations, and

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administrative or policy decisions.

It is the goal of the TFMA and the PDCC to develop advanced certification programs for the more experienced manager who has a wider range of management responsibilities beyond the minimum required by the NFIP. In addition, TFMA is supporting efforts by the Association of State Floodplain Managers, Inc. to develop a national certification for floodplain managers. When these programs become available, TFMA will notify all CFMs about the opportunity to obtain advanced or national certifications. However, it must be understood that these programs will operate independently from TFMA's current CFMP and will have separate applications, testing, and qualifications. When an applicant seeks advanced or national certification, one primary condition must be met: **the applicant must maintain his/her original CFM designation through the normal recertification process of the TFMA certification program.**

In order to cover the costs of administering the Certified Floodplain Manager Program, fees will be collected for specific actions. All checks shall be made out to the Texas Floodplain

Management Association and shall be deposited in a special CFMP Account maintained by the treasurer of the TFMA. The PDCC has established the following fees:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1. Request for Application Packet         | \$10.00 |
| 2. Submittal of Application Packet (Test) | \$40.00 |
| 3. Recertification                        | \$25.00 |
| 4. Five Year Recertification (Test)       | \$50.00 |
| 5. Request For Appeal                     | \$10.00 |
- (Will be refunded if appeal is upheld)

Additional fees may be established as the CFMP progresses, especially when the advanced Certification Program is developed.

To request an information brochure on the TFMA Certified Floodplain Manager Program, contact:

Ms. Penny Sturdivant, Treasurer  
Texas Floodplain Management Association  
c/o Brazoria County  
131 East Live Oak - Room 104  
Angleton, Texas 77515  
Telephone: 409/849-5711 Ext. 1295

## FEDERAL INSURANCE ADMINISTRATOR LEAVES

**E**laine A. McReynolds, Federal Insurance Administrator, has announced her resignation, effective at the end of May. Among other achievements, McReynolds, who was appointed in the spring of 1994, presided over the single largest 12-month increase (17.5%) ever in the number of policies in force under the National Flood Insurance Program. She will be returning to Tennessee and taking a position in the private sector. Spence Perry, formerly of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Office of General Counsel, has been named acting administrator. ❖

If you wish to request a copy of the Certified Floodplain Manager Program and an application packet, please write to Penny at the above address and include payment of the \$10.00 application request fee. Once TFMA has received and processed your completed application, you will be notified of the next available testing date and location. ❖



# FEMA / STATE PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD

On June 17-19, 1996, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of Region VI hosted the third annual Partnership Workshop in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The workshop involved the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) State Coordinators and Emergency Management Personnel from Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Louisiana along with FEMA staff from Region VI and Washington headquarters to discuss and explore solutions to common problems and issues concerning the National Flood Insurance Program. This workshop is in keeping with FEMA's Performance Partnership Agreement / Contract Agreement (PPA/CA) with State NFIP Coordinating and Emergency Management agencies.

During the workshop, five functional groups were developed to address issues in emergency and floodplain management. The five groups were: Directors, which addressed 10 issues and acted on all issues including PPA/CA; Preparedness, Training

and Exercise (11 issues); Response and Recovery (16 issues); Mitigation (18 issues); and Operations Support (6 issues). A total 62 issues were presented. The NFIP State Coordinators addressed the 18 mitigation issues.

The various issues were presented in a form similar to introduction of a bill in the legislature. The author presented the issue, discussed it, and attempted to get support from other group members. If support was obtained, a solution/resolution was then developed. The issue was then typed and sent on to another group for input (if needed) and eventually sent to the Directors for approval or sent back to committee for more information. Several issues were resolved during the workshop. Below is a list of issues that drew considerable support.

## **1. Funds for public assistance after a Presidential-declared disaster tied to participation in the National Flood**

## **Insurance Program.**

### **DISCUSSION:**

FEMA continues to award funds to county governments that do not enforce a flood loss reduction ordinance. If the declared county participates in the NFIP, certain requirements are placed on bridge replacement, new road construction, etc. Counties that do not participate in the NFIP but receive the declaration are eligible for federal monies for bridge construction or other activities that are not restricted, to build for the 100-year flood event (base flood). The issue is to have a check-and-balance system so that all entities that receive federal funding after a declaration must design projects to comply with the base flood.

## **2. Flood Insurance tied more with floodplain management.**

### **DISCUSSION:**

FIA (Flood Insurance Administration) and FEMA could assist more by helping community officials with their flood loss prevention ordinance. Perhaps the developer could

be required to provide a copy of the floodplain development permit along with the elevation certificate as part of the insurance requirement to obtain a standard policy. Many structures have flood insurance, but never pursued the local city/county floodplain permit.

## **3. FEMA policy for construction in unnumbered A Zones. Elevation criteria needed to assist the floodplain administrator.**

**DISCUSSION:** Many participating towns/counties have maps showing only unnumbered A Zones. Local officials are constantly seeking the best available data for development guidance. Perhaps FEMA could standardize a national policy for unnumbered A Zones.

## **4. Lack of federal freeboard requirement and conflicting regional policies.**

**DISCUSSION:** The federal requirements stipulate that residential and non-residen-

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# FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT SURVEY RESULTS

Assessing the needs and issues of floodplain management of Texas is a primary duty of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC, the designated state agency to coordinate floodplain management in the state of Texas). In our Winter 1995/1996 issue of "FLOODPLAN MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER" TNRCC conducted a survey of floodplain management. The following results are based on **43 responses to 2,300 surveys** that were mailed statewide to all floodplain administrators, legislators, community officials, engineers, surveyors, insurance agents, and private individuals in March 1996. Although we received a low response to our survey, the results are published here. The low response may be attributed to various factors such as the overwhelming concern over the severe drought that Texas is experiencing; too short of a response time to fill and return the survey; burn-out on surveys being conducted by everyone on anything; and lack of concern due to Texas not experiencing a major hurricane in the past twelve years.

The percent value shown at the end of each question is the percent that answered **YES** to the question. In an attempt to salvage something meaningful from the survey, we shall presume that the survey responses came from the "choir" of Texas Floodplain Administrators (FPA). The survey questions and our comments follow:

*1. Do you benefit from TNRCC's participation in floodplain management activities (i.e., newsletters, workshops, publications, technical assistance, etc.)? 98%*

COMMENT: It appears that overall TNRCC is providing acceptable guidance and assistance to Texas FPA's.

*2. Should TNRCC be involved in the following floodplain management activities:*

*Publication of newsletters? 98%*

*Floodplain management certification? 79%*

*Technical assistance? 91%*

*Training? 93%*

*Compliance with participation in the NFIP? 74%*

*Mapping of floodplains? 74%*

COMMENT: The responses indicate that TNRCC should limit its floodplain management activities to publications, training, and technical assistance. The general consensus is that the certification of FPAs should be done by the Texas Floodplain Management Association and mapping should be done by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

*3. Would floodplain management in your community or in the state be jeopardized if TNRCC DISCONTINUED participation in floodplain management? Any Comments? 63%*

COMMENT: Almost a majority of communities feels that TNRCC **must** continue to participate in floodplain management and feels that qualified state representation is necessary.

*4. With respect to our Floodplain Management Newsletter: Do you like the new format? 91%*

*Are the articles interesting and meeting your needs? 93%*

*What do you like or don't like about the newsletter?*

COMMENT: The response confirms that TNRCC's "Floodplain Management Newsletter" is addressing current issues of vital importance to Texas FPAs in a timely and informative manner. Thank you for your kind comments.

*5. Should Floodplain Administrators be Certified? 74%*

COMMENT: A clear majority favors certification of FPAs. See related article in this newsletter.

*6. Is new state legislation for the management of floodplains needed? 37%*

COMMENT: A clear majority **does not** feel new state legislation is needed. However, those that felt that new state legislation was needed gave the following comments in support: "We need legislation that will allow unincorporated  
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# ASSOCIATION OF STATE FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS' (ASFPM) SAN DIEGO CONFERENCE

ASFPMs recently concluded another very successful conference in San Diego, California with over 400 attendees. The Association of State Floodplain Managers held the 20th annual conference this year at the Catamaran Resort Hotel, June 10-14, 1996. The theme was "Coast to Coast, 20 Years of Progress". There were a number of great concurrent sessions with case studies and several special workshops, from mapping to the latest in computer modeling of floodplains.

Texas had several representatives from the public and private sector. Roy Sedwick, Executive Director of the Texas Floodplain Management Association (TFMA) was reelected as ASFPM Chapter Chairman. Congratulations to Pat Hoggard, with the City of Tulsa, on being elected as the new Region VI representative and to Ken Morris, with the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, who was elected Treasurer of ASFPM. As many of you know, the Federal Emergency Management

Agency (FEMA) Region VI consists of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

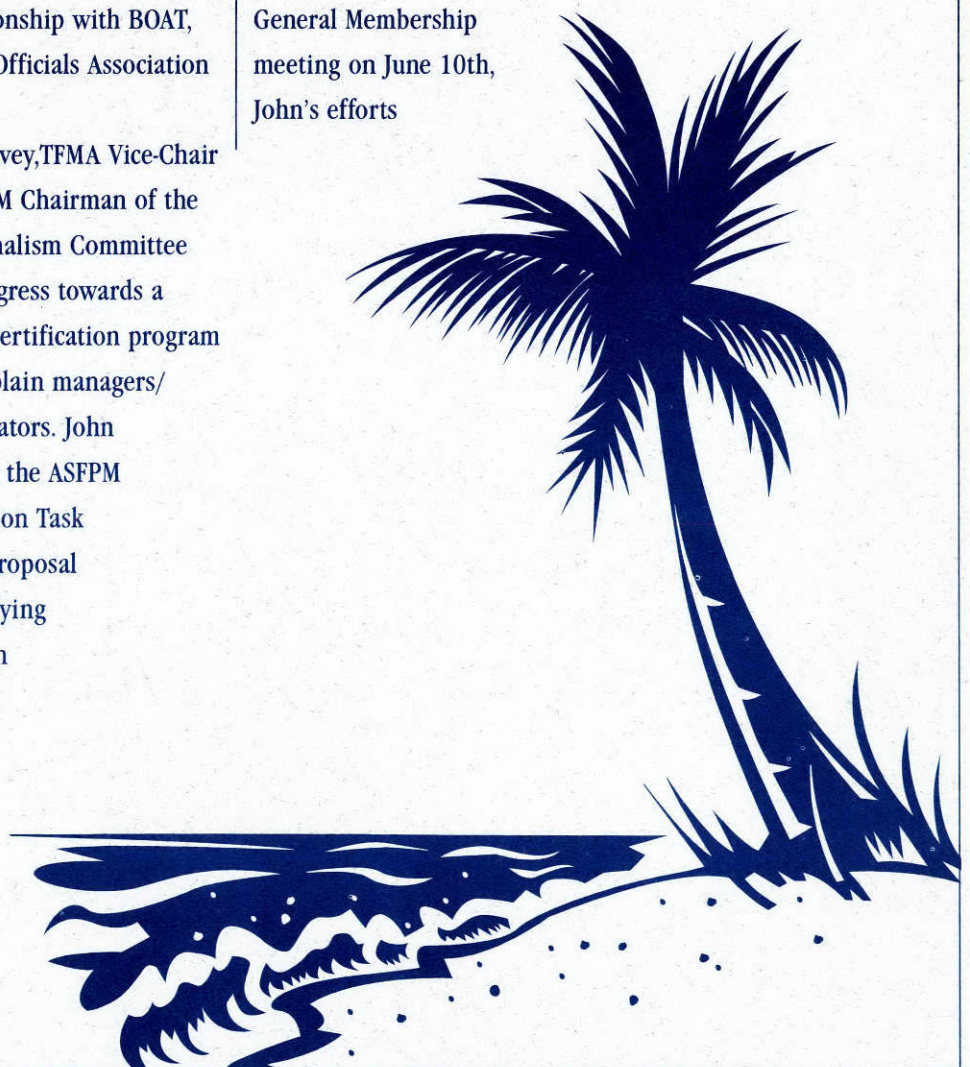
Many excellent speakers presented papers at the annual conference. Of special importance in Texas was a paper presented by Frank Pagano and Dianne Calhoun (FEMA Region VI) on substantial damage/improvement and the relationship with BOAT, Building Officials Association of Texas.

John Ivey, TFMA Vice-Chair and ASFPM Chairman of the Professionalism Committee made progress towards a national certification program for floodplain managers/administrators. John presented the ASFPM Certification Task Force's "Proposal For Certifying Floodplain

Managers" at the ASFPM Board meeting held on June 8, 1996. The proposal was given unanimous approval by the Board and John was directed to have the final program ready by the Little Rock conference in 1997. The new ASFPM Board met on June 12 and confirmed their commitment to the certification program. At the General Membership meeting on June 10th, John's efforts

were recognized with an award of a ASFPM watch. Congratulations, John, and thanks for your great work.

Remember, next year's ASFPM conference will be held in Little Rock, Arkansas in May 1997. Make plans now to attend. ❖





## Survey Results *continued from page 5*

areas to have the tools to comply with minimum FEMA & NFIP standards,” and “Managers need to be trained and certified to get rid of the “good-ol-boy” attitude....”

7. With respect to Floodplain Management training: Is TNRCC doing an adequate job with its workshops? 63%

Do TNRCC/FEMA publications address your needs? 77%

COMMENT: Again this confirms that floodplain management training and related publications are vital to Texas FPAs' conducting sound floodplain management and keeping their communities in compliance with NFIP regulations. The comments given not only solicited more basic workshops but more workshops on specific floodplain management topics for FPAs, city managers, mayors, county judges, and commissioners. There is also a demand for home study courses.

8. Do the flood maps meet your needs? 58%

COMMENT: It seems that more than half are satisfied with the flood maps they have. However, those that answered no did so with comments such as: “Updates with elevations are desperately needed”; “NO! NO! NO! NO! NO! NO! NO! Map is so out of date that it is next to useless”; and “Flood maps are too generalized. Most insurance companies & lenders can't even

find most roads. Map bases are obsolete.” The split seems to be attributed to size and urban/rural makeup of the community.

### 9. Additional comments:

The spectrum of comments ranged from praising TNRCC for its customer-oriented service to the comment that “*Maybe someone other than TNRCC could do a better job.*” Other comments reflect the dire need for training and assisting the floodplain administrators across the state: “*Until I have additional training and can reach some level of confidence, I do not feel effective in my role as administrator,*” and, “*More TNRCC or FEMA visits to each community to advise, train, help on a one-to-one basis.*”

Other comments reflect the frustration and demand of the local floodplain administrator who is on the front line daily, trying to mitigate a potential flood disaster: “*Maybe we should cut all federal funding for flood disasters. If people want to or unintentionally build in the floodplain and their property floods...Tough luck! They should have looked at the maps first. We already have to hold peoples' hands too much,*” and, “*Let's remember: it's an insurance device; it is statistically meaningful; it is not an individual site flooding map!*” ❖

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT AND TIME SPENT ON THIS SURVEY!**

## FEMA/State *continued from page 4*

tial structures be built at or above the base flood elevation (BFE). In a case of full development of the flood fringe area, all structures built at the BFE would be in danger of flooding. A change in the federal requirement to allow for a safety margin is warranted.

### 5. Certification of the local Floodplain Administrator.

DISCUSSION: Communities

participating in the NFIP continue to have the same problem with ordinance compliance. In most cases, communities fail to take ordinance compliance or record keeping seriously. The one element that is missing seems to be accountability. The issue of mandatory certification of the local floodplain administrator through training and testing is of utmost importance.

### 6. Area below dams not zoned for flood danger.

DISCUSSION: Many Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) as well as Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBM) show reservoirs on the maps with special flood hazard areas identified around the shoreline. Immediately below the dam, the area on the map is delineated Zone X or C, a minimal flood prone area. This zone designation sends

out the message that this area is open and clear for development without concern for flood potential. During a dam break, downstream development is of great concern. The issue is to develop a new zone, a dam breach inundation zone. Development below a dam carries a greater hazard due to the possibility of dam failure. Zone A designations for these areas is at least warranted. ❖



# Important Phone Numbers For Floodplain Administrators

**Federal Emergency Management Agency  
(FEMA),**  
Region VI (817) 898-5127  
FEMA Publications (800) 480-2520  
FEMA Floodplain Maps & Flood Insurance Studies  
(800) 358-9616

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
District Offices**  
Tulsa District (918) 669-7401  
Albuquerque District (915) 568-1359  
Fort Worth District (817) 334-2681  
Galveston District (409) 766-3930

**Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission**  
Floodplain Coordination Team (512) 239-4710  
Water Utilities District Administration (512) 239-6161  
General Information (512) 239-1000

The Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission is an equal opportunity / affirmative action employer. The agency does not allow discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or veteran status. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this document may be requested in alternate formats by contacting the TNRCC at (512)239-0010, Fax 239-0055 or 1-800-RELAY-TX (TDD), or by writing P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087.

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