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# FLOODPLAIN FORUM

www.lcra.org

SPRING/SUMMER 2006

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE LOWER COLORADO RIVER BASIN: WORKING TOGETHER TO SOLVE COMMON PROBLEMS

## TCRFC celebrates five years of service, Board holds strategy meeting

The Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition celebrates five years this year. In that short period, the coalition has pulled together 54 members and received national recognition as a premier floodplain organization. "The coalition has had a tremendous track record of providing benefits to its members," said Burnet County Commissioner James Oakley, coalition chairman.



The TCRFC Board consists of (clock-wise from upper left) Chair James Oakley, Burnet County Commissioner; past-Treasurer, Blair Weir, retired Marble Falls City Council; Vice Chair Robert Lindsey, Mills County Judge; Treasurer Brian Shirley, Marble Falls City Council; Region IV Representative Joe McSier, City of Brady; Region I Representative Monica Martin, Warton County; Region I Representative Vickie Box, Bastrop County; and Region IV Representative Terry Felton, City of Marble Falls.

To continue this legacy of service to the membership, an in-depth strategic planning board meeting was convened. The group recently held a brainstorming session focused on opportunities to serve basinwide needs in the future, expanding the already extensive services to members and focusing on each of the four TCRFC regions.

This was the first meeting with all four of the new TCRFC regional representatives, so the Board was able to garner more technical information and focus on regional needs. The regional representatives also helped focus on defining the services and benefits on which members place value and what they need to help better manage floodplain awareness and issues in their cities or counties. One idea is to have an annual summit conference with concurrent sessions

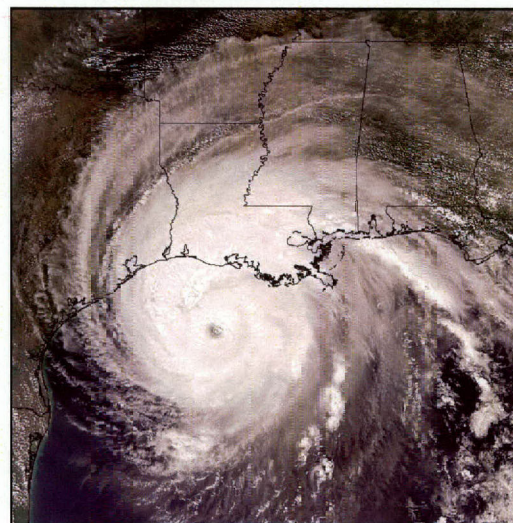
for technical staff and elected officials. Other ideas included re-invigorating the community recognition and awards program and more media outreach.

To celebrate the TCRFC's fifth year, the coalition is planning a birthday party in conjunction with the fall bi-annual membership meeting, scheduled Oct. 11, 2006.

## Another active tropical weather season expected

Following the most active hurricane season on record in 2005, this year is shaping up to be another very active year. The combination of very warm ocean water temperatures and low wind shear across the tropical Atlantic should create a favorable environment for the development of numerous tropical storms and hurricanes. The National Hurricane Center is forecasting between 13 and 16 named storms, 8 to 10 of which are expected to become hurricanes.

Forecasters generally agree that it is statistically unlikely to see a repeat of the 2005 record, 28 named storms. While no one can predict if a hurricane will strike Texas this year, the western Gulf of Mexico is forecast to have a greater than normal chance of seeing a hurricane along the coast. Everyone needs to follow weather reports closely and be prepared in case a storm does move in our direction.



### Congratulations to Roy Sedwick for two recent awards

2006 NOAA Environmental Hero Award - One of only ten recipients this year!

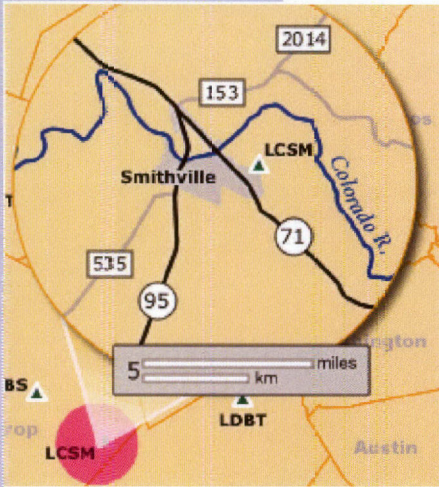
2006 ASFPM Honorary Lifetime Membership (Association of State Floodplain Managers) - For his many years of service to the association and to the field of Floodplain Management.

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## LCRA's High Accuracy Reference Network (HARN) provides online survey benchmark data.



Helpful benchmark data and GPS control data can be found at <http://harn.lcra.org>.

LCRA's High Accuracy Reference Network (HARN) brings together tools and data that are at your disposal to assist with elevation and coordinate determination in the watershed covered by the Colorado River and its tributaries.

LCRA has developed a database of more than 1,400 benchmarks and GPS control points throughout the LCRA service area. LCRA uses this database daily to map all survey, engineering and GIS data to a common coordinate system and NAVD88 (North American Vertical Datum of 1988) elevation datum. The benchmark control that has

been developed by the Surveying & Mapping department not only provides a user with elevation data but also accurate coordinate values of each control point in the system. Additionally, LCRA has four Coop CORS (Continuously Operating Reference Stations) that log GPS data 24 hours a day—seven days a week. CORS allows a user to access GPS data that is logged on a GPS receiver at a remote location. This allows surveyors, engineers and floodplain coordinators to establish both accurate coordinates and elevation of any point.

To assist in the dissemination of this data to the public, LCRA has developed a Web site that allows a user to acquire pertinent benchmark, coordinate and GPS data using ESRI's iMap interface. This Web site can be accessed by typing HARN.LCRA.org into your browser's address bar.

## Matagorda County flood map scoping begins

The Matagorda County flood map scoping began in April as part of FEMA's Map Modernization program. Halff Associates is the study contractor for the countywide project and will work with Federal Emergency Management Agency and Michael Baker Jr., the National Service Provider for Map Modernization. LCRA will serve as a Cooperative Technical Partner (CTP) for the project.

According to the scope of the study, Halff Associates will utilize existing technical information and studies provided by the county, cities and other agencies to update existing mapping information, perform re-delineations and match to the topography to create the new maps. The new digital Updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) will allow for easier overlays and will show cross-sections and 2-foot contours.

## FLOODPLAIN NEWS IN BRIEF


### Map modernization and permit files

As FEMA's Map Modernization program moves forward, it is vital that local communities retain all of their Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). This is a requirement of the National Flood Insurance Program and will aid in record keeping and retention of permit files. In addition, the Federal Emergency Management Agency grandfather clause has a provision that allows a community to provide a letter verifying information that is needed for an insurance agent to properly rate a flood insurance policy.

To help citizens receive accurate flood insurance ratings, communities should build permit files for all future structures and include a copy of the permit, elevation certificate and a FIRMette.

### TCRFC Interactive Mapping Service Updates

This service has now been in operation for a year! The Web-based tool (<http://tims.lcra.org>) offers mapping solutions for

TCRFC communities as well as a map change tracking tool for logging Letters of Map Change throughout the basin. The TCRFC and LCRA are continually making updates and adjustments to TIMS to ensure that the geographic data is up-to-date and pertinent to the users. Recently, we replaced our road database with a new one that is searchable by address. To search by address, use the pinpoint tool on the tool bar that looks like this:  For assistance with TIMS refer to the help file provided on the Web page or contact Lochen Wood, LCRA, at (512) 473-3200, Ext. 2869.

### Second year for severe weather safety campaign

Once again this year, KXAN News 36 Chief Meteorologist Jim Spencer is teaming with LCRA, H-E-B Stores and Midland Radio Corporation to bring NOAA all-hazards alert radios to Central Texas. The all-hazards radios provide information on civil emergencies such as Amber alerts, chemical spills, severe weather announcements for tornadoes and flash flooding and much more. The NOAA all-hazards alert radios are available for purchase at participating H-E-B locations for the discounted price of \$29.99.



**Improved service notifies residents, business owners of floodgate operations**

LCRA has launched an improved automated system to notify property and business owners of floodgate operations. The Floodgate Operations Notification Service (FONS) enhances LCRA's flood management activities by notifying subscribers about potentially higher, faster flows of water from floodgate operations.

E-mail, land line and cell phone notifications are available for those who live or work downstream of one of the Highland Lakes dams. FONS uses advanced technology that is available through a new emergency notification system operated by the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG).

An online application is available on the LCRA Web site at [www.lcra.org](http://www.lcra.org).



*Mansfield Dam*

**Village of Briarcliff becomes the 54th member of the TCRFC**

The TCRFC is proud to announce its latest member. The Village of Briarcliff signed the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition Interlocal Agreement on May 31, 2006. Briarcliff is a community of about 900 people on the south shore of Lake Travis in Travis County.

**FLOODPLAIN MAPPING UPDATE**

Updating floodplain maps is a top priority for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Progress continues on remapping projects in Bastrop, Burnet, Fayette, Matagorda, Travis, Wharton and Williamson counties. Updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) and Flood Insurance Studies (FIS) are critical tools in the effort to protect lives and property in the lower Colorado River basin.

**BASTROP COUNTY**

FEMA finalized the maps in July 19, 2005, and issued a letter of final determination. The final maps became effective Jan. 19, 2006. However, the affected communities are still awaiting the delivery of the final Digital FIRMs (DFIRMs).

**BURNET COUNTY**

Burnet County will receive nine new map panels in conjunction with the Travis County mapping project to keep floodplain information consistent along Lake Travis. The review period is ongoing and will conclude Sept. 14, 2006. The map modernization project for the entirety of Burnet County is scheduled to begin in 2007.

**FAYETTE COUNTY**

A Letter of Final Determination was issued on April 17, 2006. From the date of the letter, communities have six months to adopt the maps by city ordinance or county court order. The final maps will be effective Oct. 17, 2006.

**MATAGORDA COUNTY**

The Matagorda County flood map scoping meeting was held April 12, 2006. In accordance with the scope of the study, the study contractor will utilize existing technical information and studies provided by the county, cities, LCRA and other agencies to update existing mapping information, perform re-delineations, and match to the topography to create the new maps.

**TRAVIS COUNTY**

FEMA delivered preliminary DFIRMs to Travis County communities in February 2006. Public notice about the maps and any new base flood elevations were published in June, starting a 90-day appeal period. Any appeals or protests to the FIRMs or FIS should be made through the local community to FEMA by Sept. 14, 2006.

**WHARTON COUNTY**

FEMA issued a Letter of Final Determination for the Wharton FIRMs and FIS on Oct. 5, 2005. The maps became effective on April 5, 2006. However, the communities are still awaiting the delivery of the final DFIRMs.

**WILLIAMSON COUNTY**

The final coordination meeting with the study contractor was held on May 16, 2006. Studies and preparation of preliminary maps should be completed by July 2006. FEMA expects to publish the preliminary FIRMs and FIS for Williamson County communities by fall 2006, with final maps published in summer 2007.



# Awards & Recognitions

## TCRFC recognized FPA and EMC of the Year

The Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition has given the Floodplain Administrator of the Year award to Joe Moser, CFM of the City of Brady, for his continued dedication to his program and for pursuing participation in the Community Rating System.

TCRFC also awarded the Emergency Management Coordinator of the Year to Daniel Zitterich, CFM, formerly representing Fayette County. Zitterich has recently taken a position with the State of Texas Governors Division of Emergency Management as a field operations administrator.



*Joe Mosier is presented the TCRFC Floodplain Manager of the Year Award by LCRA General Manager Joe Beal (L) and TCRFC Chair James Oakley (R) at the TCRFC Annual Meeting in April.*



*Danny Zitterich is presented the TCRFC Emergency Management Coordinator of the Year Award by Beal and Oakley.*

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