



Community Rating System Task Force

Improving CRS Implementation and CRS Class Improvement

This paper is submitted to the CRS Task Force by Messrs. Bill Lesser and Al Goodman.

Desired Outcome: To develop ‘CRS Committees’ within the individual ASFPM State Chapters; which will then provide a conduit and/or means for community and State involvement to better deliver the CRS at the community level through the creation of ‘CRS User Groups’ within each State. Additionally, lead to mediums of promotion that empower, train, and build the skill and confidence levels of local floodplain managers.¹

Background

Insofar that we mitigation practitioners have learned from our past mistakes (and can often repeat them exactly), we propose a course of action which will make “field input” more prevalent within the Task Force. This will be accomplished through the strategy proposed in the ‘desired outcome’ statement listed above.

The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) provides a national voice for the 1,138 CRS member communities within the United States. In accordance with the ASFPM Chair and Vice Chair’s desire to provide more Associational focus to its 14,000 members and to its 29 state chapters, it is desirable to provide to ASFPM another tool or method in which to reach this stated goal. It is also within the best interests of the CRS Task Force to receive more input from the local CRS Community Coordinators in order to meet its stated strategic goals and objectives.

Our informal process of obtaining input for the CRS Task Force through responding to letters/messages, casual conversations, active listening sessions, and presentations with various groups has worked well in the past. However, this process can be improved upon.

The primary focus of the value of CRS User Groups has been to have a forum to clarify CRS program elements... to inspire CRS Class advancement... and to have a forum where individuals new to a CRS Coordinator role can gather their peers in a

¹ This initiative could appear to be an additional FEMA/ASFPM ‘Machiavellian Machination,’ but that is not our desire.

“comfort zone” to discern their job responsibilities. Several states have already established such User Groups, and they work very well.

The growth of ASFPM, the CFM program, and the Chapters are all about raising and responding to the growing professionalism of the nation’s floodplain managers. The Chapter CRS Committees and the User Groups follow this tradition.

Proposed Initiative

We propose to use the ten FEMA Regional CRS Coordinators and the 29 ASFPM State Chapters (in coordination with the ASFPM Executive Office) for the purposes of:

- Promoting the Community Rating System;
- Establishing mentoring opportunities;
- Hosting training;
- Creating a “climate of rivalries” to drive CRS advancement; and,
- Promoting the creation of and nurturing of State CRS User Groups.

Initial Contact with ASFPM Chapters

On May 26, 2010, a message was sent to the 29 ASFPM State Chapters asking that they consider the sponsorship of CRS User Groups to facilitate their community outreach activities, training, workshops, etc. and as a method to increase community CRS Classifications. Also requested was the consideration of the formation of a chapter CRS Committee to address issues within its respective state and to provide a conduit to funnel information to the CRS Task Force. Eight chapters sent a response to the email. Nothing was heard from the remaining 21 chapters.

The following is a list of the responding chapters and their comments:

- **Floodplain Management Association (CA, NV, and HI):** CRS Committee already exists; the chair is Maria Lorenzo-Lee of CA DWR.
- **Ohio Floodplain Management Association:** CRS Contact person is Alicia Silverio of Ohio DNR. Interested in User Groups.
- **Texas Floodplain Management Association:** CRS Contact person is Debbie Cahoon of TX Water Development Board. A CRS Users Group is formed called FAST (Floodplain Awareness Success in Texas). FAST has held two meetings, with mail-outs to 85 people. Requested a representative of ASFPM or Task Force to speak with the group.

- **Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management:** CRS Committee chair is Rodney Renkenberger of the Maumee River Basin Commission. Concerned with the state of Indiana not adopting the most recent IBC manual and limiting Indiana CRS communities to Class 8.
- **Colorado Association of Stormwater and Floodplain Managers:** CRS Committee Chair is Marsha Hilmes-Robinson of the city of Fort Collins. Information has been provided to the CRS Task Force on October 24, 2009. A Users Group has been in existence for several years.
- **Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association:** Tom Leatherbee is the Training Cadre for OFMA. He requests a presentation during the OFMA conference, September 20 -22 for CRS items. One day is entirely devoted to CRS.
- **Alabama Association of Floodplain Managers:** Buster Smith is the POC for training and requests a presentation at the annual conference.
- **Association of Floodplain Managers of Mississippi:** There exists a CRS User Group on the Gulf Coast, the CHOST (Coastal Hazard Outreach Strategy Team), which has a website. Jennifer Patin is the secretary. Recent activities have resulted in 100 of the 125 pts available for OPS and an additional 25 pts for verification of other hazards.

Existing User Groups

It appears that there are at least four CRS Coordinator User Groups active at this time. They are found within the states of Colorado, Mississippi, Texas, and Illinois. It is not known to the authors how these groups have effectively increased their CRS community scores. Perhaps ISO is in the position to answer that question.

Recommendations

We submit that: (1) the CRS Strategic Plan is a deliberate effort to think critically about the CRS and make long hoped-for adjustments; (2) that we should emphasize that the Class advancement process is multifaceted and that the ASFPM State Chapters and individual State User Groups can be an important part of that process; (3) that a mentoring process to the State Chapters and User Groups is a desirable action; and (4) that this initiative should lead to more CRS member communities.

- The CRS Task Force should establish an outreach effort to the ASFPM State Chapters and the individual State CRS User Groups. This can be as simple as participating in conference calls with the chapter CRS committees and User Groups. There are requests for training sessions or presentations at several

Chapter Conferences, but that may not be supportable by the Task Force due to travel expense constraints.

FEMA Regional CRS Coordinators

Region I	Elizabeth Rosario	(617) 832-4748
Region II	Rich Einhorn	(212) 680-8503
Region III	David Odegard, CFM	(215) 931-5506
Region IV	Janice Mitchell	(770) 220-5440
Region V	John Devine	(312) 408-5568
Region VI	Linda Delamare, CFM	(940) 898-5210
Region VII	Roger Benson	(816) 283-7031
Region VIII	Barb Fitzpatrick, CFM	(303) 235-4715
Region IX	Cynthia McKenzie	(510) 627-7190
Region X	Jeff Woodward, CFM	(425) 487-4664

ASFPM State Chapters

Alabama Association of Floodplain Managers	FEMA Region IV
Arizona Floodplain Management Association	FEMA Region IX
Arkansas Floodplain Management Association	FEMA Region VI
Colorado Association of Stormwater & Floodplain Mangers	FEMA Region VIII
Florida Floodplain Managers Association	FEMA Region IV
Floodplain Management Association (CA, NV & HI)	FEMA Region IX
Georgia Association of Floodplain Management	FEAM Region IV
Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Mgnt	FEMA Region V

Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Mgnt	FEMA Region V
Kentucky Association of Mitigation Managers	FEMA Region IV
Louisiana Floodplain Management Association	FEMA Region VI
Maryland Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Mangers	FEMA Region III
Michigan Stormwater-Floodplain Association	FEMA Region V
Minnesota Association of Floodplain Managers	FEMA Region V
Association of Floodplain Managers of Mississippi	FEMA Region IV
Missouri Floodplain and Stormwater Mangers Association	FEMA Region VII
Association of Montana Floodplain Mangers	FEMA Region VIII
Nebraska Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association	FEMA Region VII
New Jersey Association for Floodplain Management	FEMA Region II
New Mexico Floodplain Managers Association	FEMA Region VI
New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Assoc.	FEMA Region II
North Carolina Association of Floodplain Mangers	FEMA Region IV
Ohio Floodplain Management Association	FEMA Region V
Oklahoma Floodplain Mangers Association	FEMA Region VI
Rhode Island Flood Mitigation Association	FEMA Region I
South Carolina Association for Hazard Mitigation	FEMA Region IV
Texas Floodplain Management Association	FEMA Region VI
Virginia Floodplain Management Association	FEMA Region III
Wisconsin Assoc. for FP, Stormwater, and Coastal Mgnt	FEMA Region V