



# ASFPM FOUNDATION

## ASSOCIATION OF STATE FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS

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### Mission Statement

The mission of the ASFPM Foundation is to be an incubator for research and education that promotes wise floodplain management.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT (LARRY OLINGER)

### FOCUSING ON THE FORUM

This is an exciting time as we prepare for the first annual Gilbert F. White National Flood Policy Annual Forum. This unique event will bring together leading experts in the field of flood policy and floodplain management to discuss **Reducing Flood Losses: Is the 1% chance (100 year) flood standard sufficient?** We will examine: (1) where we have been, (2) where we are, and (3) where we need to go on this key issue.

The U.S. and much of the developed world uses the 1% chance flood standard. Agencies like the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Tennessee Valley Authority, and others have used this standard for design of structural flood control projects for over 50 years. The National Flood Insurance Program and most all states and local governments use the 1% standard for mapping and managing flood hazard areas. Despite all the nation has done, flood losses have increased two and a half fold to over \$6 billion/year. In passing the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, Congress intended continuing studies of flood hazards to provide for a constant reappraisal of the program and its effect on land use requirements. The Forum will provide a means for reviewing this standard and documenting the opinions of top professionals in floodplain management.

By organizing this Forum in cooperation with the National Academies Disasters Roundtable, our Foundation is directly meeting our outreach goal and supporting our goal to promote research and education of the effectiveness of floodplain management programs and policies.

More than 40 papers on all aspects of this topic have been submitted with in-depth analyses of the 100-year flood standard in terms of its evolution, effectiveness, historical perspectives, and related topics addressing reduction of flood losses and protecting beneficial uses of floodplains. The papers address the history, technology, implementation options and the implications on policy--economic, environmental, social, and cultural.

### FORUM Final Report

After the Forum, the ASFPM Foundation will prepare a short, explicit report that:

- Assimilates papers and information from the Forum;
- Denotes issues that were raised (identify needed research topics and action items);
- Provides findings and next steps;
- Will be distributed to Congress, agencies, academia, and key organizations;
- Will be summarized and placed in newsletters, on the Foundation website, and used in policy discussions and presentations; and
- Presented at the 2005 ASFPM conference.

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## **BACKGROUND: ADOPTION AND REVIEW OF THE 100 YEAR FLOOD STANDARD**

Congress created the NFIP in 1968 with passage of the National Flood Insurance Act. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) began its administration of the NFIP by convening a group of experts to recommend the best standard for risk assessment and management purposes for this program. These experts recommended the 100-year or 1-percent-annual chance base flood standard which was subsequently adopted and enforced by the NFIP. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Tennessee Valley Authority were already using the 100-year flood level for nonstructural floodplain management studies, and this was part of the rationale for the recommendation by the experts. In addition, the 100-year flood level was selected because a flood of this magnitude and frequency represented a reasonable probability of occurrence and loss worth protecting against and an intermediate level that would alert planners and property owners to the effects of even greater flood levels (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], 1983).

In 1976, the Federal Insurance Administration (FIA) of HUD asked the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to determine whether the concept of expected probability should be applied as part of flood insurance studies for communities in riverine areas. This was requested because some agencies conducting flood insurance studies (FIS) used the concept of expected probability while others did not. The expected probability adjustment is intended to account for the uncertainty in short streamflow records and increases the estimate of the base flood discharge. The NAS recommended against use of the expected probability adjustment for several reasons. However, the NAS did recommend that FIA provide information to help assess the uncertainty in the flood discharges such as the standard error or the record length in the FIS report to maximize use of limited resources and help offset the need for future studies.

As part of the Presidential Task Force on Regulatory Relief, the Office of Management and Budget directed FEMA in August 1982 to review the use of the base or 100-year flood standard in the NFIP. The Task Force found that the 100-year base flood standard is strongly supported and is being applied successfully. Furthermore, no better alternatives have been identified and there is no evidence to justify the expenditure of funds that would be necessary to convert to another standard (FEMA, 1983).

Now more than 20 years later, the ASFPM Foundation is promoting a new evaluation of the 1-percent annual chance base flood standard. The Forum, scheduled for September

21-22, 2004, at the National Academies, Keck Center, is being organized by an ASFPM Foundation work group which includes Gerry Galloway, Doug Plasencia, Mike Armstrong, Larry Larson, and Diane Brown. The Forum Final Report and other products developed as a result of the Forum will be prepared by Jacki Monday and Ed Thomas. Later this quarter we will unveil a newly updated website, with this and other new information about the Foundation and our activities. Look for updates in October!

### **FORUM Sponsors**

None of this would be possible without the generous support of our sponsors who each gave a \$2,500 donation:

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Sponsorships in the amount of \$2,500 are still being accepted and include the option of sending a representative to this unique event.

Please contact Dale Lehman at (301) 670-3355 to become a Forum sponsor.

## **SECOND ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION A HUGE SUCCESS!**

This year's Silent Auction was held during the ASFPM's annual national conference May 16-21 at the Central Gulf Coast. Conference attendees bid on valuable goods and services donated by local businesses, ASFPM Chapters, the States, Corporate sponsors, and individuals. Thanks to all of you who participated in this event, we raised \$6,500 to support our educational and research activities.

## **FINAL NAI LEGAL PAPER 2004**

The final NAI legal paper has been completed and is on the ASFPM web site for your review. It was funded by \$5,000 from the ASFPM Foundation in the spring of 2003.

## FOUNDATION DONATIONS UPDATE

We thank everyone for their generous contributions. So far, we have raised more than \$42,000 in total pledges, \$6,500 from the Silent Auction, and our list of Forum Sponsors is still growing! Our donations goal for 2004 is \$100,000. Please contact us if you would like to make a donation!

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