



# The Antediluvian

## Ohio's Floodplain Management Newsletter



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**MISSION STATEMENT:** The Mission of the Floodplain Management Program is to provide leadership to local governments, state agencies, and interested parties toward cooperative management of Ohio's floodplains to support the reduction of flood damage and the recognition of the floodplain's natural benefit. This mission will be accomplished through technical assistance, public awareness, education, and development/protection standards.

### Message from the OFMA Chair

BY MARY SAMPSEL, P.E.,  
OFMA CHAIR [REPRINT FROM *THE OHIO WATER TABLE* FALL 2004]

Many of us read about and watched the news broadcast of how Hurricane Ivan caused millions of dollars of damage in Florida and then headed north, causing damage in other states including Ohio. Washington County in Ohio was hit particularly hard, causing 900 structures in Marietta and 300 structures in the outlying areas to be flooded and damaged. I talked to Connie Hoblitzell, Washington County Flood Plain Manager, to find out what it was like to deal with a flood disaster of this magnitude.

One of the problems Connie found herself in was trying to get help to make the SDEs (substantial damage estimates) of the 1200 structures. A substantial damage estimate is the

evaluation of the damaged structure. If the amount of damage is greater than 50% of the structure's pre-flood value, then the structure will need to be elevated or otherwise floodproofed to comply with the National Flood Insurance Program, and state and local flood protection regulations. The purpose of making this evaluation is to keep structures from having repetitive losses. The NFIP was designed to allow for the correction of existing at-risk structures when they are either damaged or improved beyond the 50% market value threshold. Makes sense, doesn't it?

Traditionally, FEMA has not provided this kind of substantial damage determination support; however, following the Midwest floods of 1993 they did so briefly. Connie was left with trying to deal with a volume of inspections in short order with only local resources. FEMA attempts to distribute disaster assistance and flood insurance claims



within days or weeks of the event. This means people want to repair their homes and businesses as soon as the checks arrive. The substantial damage determinations and development permits must be done quickly to capitalize on the NFIP mitigation value. This left the local resources, Connie and staff, feeling overwhelmed.

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### Statewide Floodplain Conference on the Move

*Mark your calendars!* The 2005 Statewide Floodplain Management Conference is scheduled for Wednesday, August 31 – Thursday, September 1, 2005 and will be held at a **new location** - the Marriott North in Columbus. The planning committee is already preparing for next year's conference and has released a "Call for Abstracts" [see article page 3]. Please consider submitting an abstract - the planning committee is searching for dynamic, interesting, and educational content for the 2005 conference. We look forward to receiving your submission!

The Ohio Floodplain Management Association (OFMA) would like to recog-

nize professionals who have contributed to better floodplain management. We hope that you will take this opportunity to nominate someone you know [see article page 12].

OFMA is also offering ten scholarships for community officials to attend the conference [see article page 14]. Conference brochures will be mailed during May 2005.

All conference information will also be posted at: [www.dnr.state.oh.us/water/floodpln/](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/water/floodpln/). If you have any questions regarding the conference, please contact Alicia Silverio at 614-265-1006 or [alicia.silverio@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:alicia.silverio@dnr.state.oh.us).

We look forward to seeing you at the conference in August!



*(OFMA Chair continued from page 1)*

Because flooding is the most frequent natural hazard in Ohio, this problem had surfaced and a creative solution for helping to meet the demand for quick substantial damage determinations was shaping up. The Ohio Building Officials Association has been a strong partner with Ohio EMA and Ohio DNR to develop a group of trained code officials available for disaster response. Fortunately, the OBOA organization had a team of 22 inspectors that could go to the community to help out with the SDEs. Connie said the OBOA team was wonderful and without their assistance she would have been unable to make these assessments. Even with OBOA's help, however, Washington County was unable to evaluate all of the structures that may have been damaged.

FEMA was so eager to cut checks to the owners with claims (or damage) that there was a total lack of communication between the inspectors making the SDEs and the FEMA agent writing claim checks. This is a good example of how the improvements made by FEMA in distributing aid to those impacted by disasters more quickly need to be coordinated with the local process to assess damage and issue permits for actions in flood hazard areas. There are opportunities for better coordination between the assistance programs and the National Flood Insurance Program that will

ensure that as people repair and recover they will be less susceptible to future floods. Connie received letters, after the fact, from FEMA asking for reports on repetitive loss structures that she didn't even know about, because the property owners proceeded to make improvements with FEMA's money without the SDE inspection! Washington County is also finding out that the SDEs may not be reimbursable by FEMA. This support tallied \$27,000 for the inspector's time, lodging, meals and mileage that local communities will have to cover if disaster assistance will not reimburse them.

As an organization to promote better floodplain management, OFMA hopes our legislators and FEMA will make some policy changes.



- There should be better communication and support for the local community flood plain manager that is trying to mitigate repetitive loss structures. It makes no sense for FEMA to cut checks to property owners without some verification that the SDE is complete and

that the local floodplain manager has determined if improvements to elevate or floodproof are necessary.

- FEMA should pay for the SDE inspection service just as they do for other health and safety inspections and relief. Local communities lack the resources to make the SDE inspections by themselves for major disasters. It is unreasonable to assume that a local community can afford to absorb the expense of the SDE inspection cost. This is not an area that FEMA should try to cut corners to save money. A properly funded, thorough SDE inspection will actually save FEMA money in the long run by reducing the number of repetitive loss structures when local flood plain managers are able to enforce their regulations and force property owners to elevate or otherwise floodproof their structures.

- A policy change by FEMA to support enforcement and compliance with the flood damage reduction standards of the NFIP will help apply the mitigation elements of the NFIP. By determining which structures are subject to elevation, floodproofing or retrofitting as part of the recovery and repair process, FEMA will be helping the local community to use the NFIP to correct flood risk structures and avoid future flood damage.

## **Making Your Community Safer After the Flood— What Have You Done Since the Last Flood?**

BY CYNTHIA J. CRECELIUS,  
CFM—PROGRAM MANAGER  
DIVISION OF WATER

Flooding is the natural hazard that most often impacts Ohio communities, and has resulted in nearly \$160 million in damage since June 2003. In the last eighteen months, Ohio

has received six federal disaster declarations with only one (the power outage in September of 2003) not being the result of flooding. The communities impacted by these flood disasters stretch from the Ohio River to Lake Erie. The good news is that flooding is one natural hazard that has been

studied, mapped and a risk management strategy exists - the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Although the NFIP has federal oversight from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and technical assistance

*(Continued on page 4)*



# CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

## ***Floodplain Management in Ohio - Statewide Conference 2005*** **Ohio Floodplain Management Association (OFMA) 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference** **August 31- September 1, 2005** **Columbus**

**Abstract Submittal Information.** Anyone interested in making a presentation to the conference must submit an abstract. Abstracts will be reviewed by the Conference Planning Committee and selected based on content and relevance to the topic and area issues listed in the Call for Abstracts. **Submissions must be received by March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005** to be considered for presentation at the conference. Incomplete or late papers may be subject to automatic rejection.

### **Abstract Guidelines:**

- Submissions must be concise, limited to 500 words, and provide an accurate description of the policy, educational, scientific, engineering, or technological material to be presented at the conference.
- Abstracts must be accompanied by the Abstract Submittal Form, which can be obtained from the ODNR website at: [www.dnr.state.oh.us/water/floodpln/](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/water/floodpln/) under *New Program Items*.
- The Abstract Submittal Form must be completed and submitted to the Conference Chair along with the biographical sketch(s) of the author(s), and the abstract.
- Abstract should be submitted by email [alicia.silverio@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:alicia.silverio@dnr.state.oh.us) as a Microsoft Word® or Corel Word Perfect® attachment. (You will receive a return email to confirm that your submittal has been received.) If you do not have email or Internet access, or have other submittal questions, contact Conference Chair, Alicia Silverio at 614-265-1006.
- Author should select an Abstract Category under which the abstract is to be considered for presentation.

### **Abstract Categories:**

#### **A. Lessons Learned**

Mitigation successes and failures  
Environmental impacts  
Dams, dikes, levees  
Watershed planning and management  
River operations  
Flood forecasting, warning and preparedness  
Flooding and floodplain management  
Effects of urbanization  
Riparian protection  
Cost / Benefit of mitigation

#### **B. No Adverse Impact at the local level**

Local cost of flood damage  
Future conditions hydrology  
Developing watersheds  
Going beyond the National Flood Insurance Program  
Disaster assistance  
Private property rights

#### **C. Community land use and mitigation planning**

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000  
Tools for planning and management  
Floodplain encroachment  
Riparian protection  
Risk assessment and vulnerability analysis  
Development review and permit process  
Legal and regulatory aspects  
Population growth  
Financing

#### **D. National Flood Insurance Program and Floodplain Management Issues**

Repetitive losses  
Compliance  
Regulations and policy  
Letters of Map Change  
Insurance

#### **E. Technology for map modernization**

Light Detection And Ranging (LIDAR)  
Digital mapping tools and products  
Global Positioning Systems  
Geographic Information Systems  
Databases  
World Wide Web/Internet distribution  
Computer modeling

#### **F. Floodplain Mapping**

Map Modernization  
Map revisions and amendments  
Cooperating Technical Partners  
Map Needs Update Support System (MNUSS)  
Coastal theory and mapping

#### **G. Public Policy**

Politics of risk reduction, economic efficiency and environmental enhancement  
Legislative initiatives  
Integrated water resource planning  
Inter-jurisdictional responsibilities and roles  
Preventive / corrective approaches  
Multiple-objective planning  
Cost-sharing in mitigation activities  
Infrastructure  
Coordination strategy  
Implementation strategy

*(Call for Abstracts continued from page 3)*

**Authors selected as Presenters:**

- will be notified of acceptance of the abstract for presentation by April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005.
- will use laptop computers and LCD projectors provided on-site, utilizing the Microsoft PowerPoint® program. Laser pointers will be available.
- provide a CD or disk containing the presentation to the Conference Chair by August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005. There will be no time lag between speakers due to the common problem of “swapping out” of personal equipment.

**Audience.** The Statewide Conference will offer three tracks to accommodate attendees and their various levels of floodplain management knowledge and experience. As the only floodplain management conference in Ohio, this annual event attracts a broad audience including local, state and federal government



officials, engineers, consultants, planners, related non-profit organizations, and involved citizens. Please develop your presentation using the sort of detailed and useful material that you would like to have presented to yourself. Not a “sales pitch” approach, but one that will interest the audience in such a way that “off-line” conversations and follow-up actions will result.

**Length and focus of presentation.** You will have approximately 40 minutes for your presentation unless otherwise indicated on the agenda. Please emphasize conclusions and recommendations in your presentation based upon

your professional experience(s).

**Travel arrangements.** You are responsible for your own hotel, air, and other travel arrangements. Please contact the Columbus Marriott North at 614-885-1885. Inform the Registration Desk that you are attending as part of “**Floodplain Management in Ohio - Statewide Conference 2005**”.

**Display materials and handouts.** All presenters are encouraged to provide the Conference Chair with handouts of the information presented during their presentation for inclusion in the Conference Binder. These handouts must be submitted to the Conference Chair by August 1st, 2005. Presenters may also bring books, reports, pamphlets, handouts, and other materials that may be of interest to the audience.

*(Continued on Back Cover)*

*(Making Your Community continued from page 2)*

from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water it is only effective if your community imposes local floodplain management regulations and land use controls daily to help save lives and property.

The National Flood Insurance Program provides an approach that helps local and state floodplain management programs to focus on reducing future flood risk and protecting the natural benefit and function of the floodplain by using land use and development standards. We know that administration and enforcement of floodplain management regulations are especially critical following a disaster event in order to stop the cycle of repetitive flood losses, and to comply with the National Flood Insurance Program criteria which ensures flood insurance and flood disaster assistance eligibility.

As a floodplain manager or elected local official you have no doubt witnessed some of the chaos and emotion following a flood in your community. There is “pressure” to rebuild immediately and to not inconvenience your citizens any more than “Mother Nature” already has. There can be lack of coordination between the federal, state, and local agencies that respond to floods. Especially, locally there will be competition and confusion over how to reallocate the resources and budget of your community. Misinformation about FEMA, flood insurance, flood hazard area development standards and disaster assistance will be everywhere!

Over the course of the last eighteen months the staff of the Floodplain Management Program have been out in the flooded communities and have answered hundreds of phone calls to our office. The recurring questions and issue for which our assistance is

sought can be summarized as “how do you (the elected official or floodplain manager) deal with the consequences of past decisions and possible predecessors who avoided actions to correct flooding problems?” In many cases the specifics are that flood hazard area permits have never been required, structures are in violation of the flood damage reduction regulations, substantial damage determinations have never been made in your community following other floods, and there is no permit or development review process to follow. There may not be “quick fixes” for these problems, but there are consistent and effective approaches that will make your community safer in future floods.

Our advice for an elected official is to take this opportunity to become knowledgeable about the

*(Continued on page 5)*

flood risk and problems in your community. Focus on the well being of the whole community as you repair and recover. For the local floodplain manager it is important to understand what the community floodplain regulations require and be prepared to implement them.

## **MAKING THE COMMUNITY SAFER AFTER THIS FLOOD...**

### *Substantial Damage Determinations and the Permit Process*

Before the repair or alteration following a flood or other disaster, the local floodplain administrator is required to determine whether damaged structures must be flood protected to comply with the local floodplain regulations for “substantially damaged” structures. Under the NFIP, “substantial damage” means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before damaged condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred.

Preliminary damage assessments compiled soon after disasters by county emergency management staff can be a good starting point for identifying the potentially substantially damaged structures. These assessments are used to determine county need for state and federal disaster assistance, and can be a screening tool to separate structures with minor damage from those with significant structural damage. The next step is to require applications for floodplain development permits that will verify whether a structure is substantially damaged. The floodplain administrator must confirm if a potentially substantially damaged structure exists by reviewing the property owner’s estimate of repair cost and market value of the building prior to the damage event. The floodplain administrator is responsible for notifying the prop-

erty owner of the flood protection elevation and construction standards contained in the local floodplain regulations. Structures sustaining “substantial damage” must be flood protected to at least the 100-year base flood elevation (also known as the 1% annual chance flood).

To assist with the overwhelming nature of completing hundreds of post-disaster substantial damage determinations, a cadre of Ohio Building Officials Association members have completed training and have responded to requests from communities in need. *See the article by Mary Sampsel, Ohio Floodplain Management Association Chair on the front page of this newsletter.* Currently, the reimbursement of this cost to local communities is not eligible under FEMA Public Assistance; however, following the most recent disaster in Ohio discussion about the possibility of changing the current policy has been initiated.

### *The Standards*

The lowest floor of a new or substantially damaged/improved residential structure located in the 1% annual chance floodplain must have its lowest floor elevated to or above the base flood elevation (100-year or 1% annual chance flood). A new or substantially damaged/improved nonresidential structure located in the 1% annual chance floodplain must have its lowest floor elevated to above the base floor elevation or must be flood proofed watertight to that level.

These standards are found in nearly all Ohio communities’ floodplain regulations. While there are other standards for development in local floodplain regulations, the above standards are the most frequently applicable following a disaster.

### *Mitigation in Post-Flood Situations*

Recent federal and state policies have promoted the concept of hazard “mitigation” – reducing the impact of a disaster, to end the repetitive loss cycle. Mitigating losses during the repair of substantially damaged structures is required under community regulations for NFIP-participating communities.

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMA) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Assistance Program (PDM) are all opportunities for your community to obtain funding that supports local projects and planning to reduce flood damage. The basic strategies utilized by these programs include: acquisition and relocation; open space land use; elevation or retrofitting of flood-prone structures; training for professionals and local officials in mitigation techniques; development of hazard mitigation plans; and minor structural flood control facilities. For more information on the mitigation programs contact: Ohio Emergency Management Agency, Mitigation Branch at 614-799-3530 or [www.state.oh.us/odps/division/ema](http://www.state.oh.us/odps/division/ema).

## **DOING SOMETHING BEFORE THE NEXT FLOOD...**

### *Respond to the Community’s Flood Problems*

Provide leadership. Understand where the flooding occurred and why. Help identify how the community can avoid flood damage and still benefit from the floodplain value (recreation, water quality, flood storage). Develop goals that will keep the public safe and healthy. Identify specific technical and financial assistance that the local resources can’t provide. Know what your community is doing or has done to lessen the impact of future floods. Build relationships with other officials involved in the post-disaster recovery (County Emergency Management Agency, Building Officials, Health Department and City/County Engineer). Review the flood hazard maps and flood studies to make good risk assessment decisions.

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# Success Stories in Powhatan Point

## Increased Cost of Compliance Coverage (ICC) funds used

BY RAY O. KLINGBEIL, CFM  
ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST, DIVISION OF WATER

(Powhatan Point, Belmont County) A **Pre-FIRM** ranch home in this Ohio River village, suffered **substantial damage** after being flooded to a depth of 7 feet. The good news is the homeowner's flood insurance policy—along with the **Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC)** coverage rider—has provided the

**Pre-FIRM:** built before the initial Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) date.

means to survive the floods of 2004. In this case, survival means using the

money from both the flood insurance damage claim and ICC-funds to rebuild a new, fully compliant, flood-resistant home in compliance with the village's flood safety regulations.

With guidance from the local floodplain administrator, the proposed design will utilize the cinder-block walls of the existing structure to form an *Enclosure Below Lowest Floor* (as described in the village floodplain regulations). This enclosure can only be used for parking of vehicles, storage, and access to the new ranch home

being built above. Vents will be installed to allow water to flow in and out of the enclosure. When a future flood event of this magnitude occurs, the new structure should sustain minimal damage, if any, and the new, reduced flood insurance premium will be based on the elevation of the floor above the enclosure. ODNR, OEMA, and FEMA will also be tracking the progress of this recovery as a success story. We can all hope that *good news travels fast...*

**Substantial Damage:** >50% damage to the pre-flood value of the structure.

With more good news, a nearby manufactured home survived with only minor damage due to being anchored and elevated in compliance with local regulations.

The entire village is a success story in-progress. Powhatan Point's mayor, Tony Pratt and floodplain

manager, Danny Popp are addressing deficiencies in the village's floodplain management program. Danny's first assignment (year 2000) was not an easy one. Homes along the Ohio River had been built in violation of the local flood safety regulations. Village officials coordinated a range of owner-proposals, using ODNR's *Alternative Violation Remediation Process (AVRP)*—with FEMA approval—to mitigate the violations to the maximum extent possible. These efforts were successful and the village now enjoys an effective floodplain management program.

**Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC):** helps fund compliance with local flood safety regulations.

We will continue to follow and highlight success stories like these to provide useful examples of effective floodplain

management for communities around the state. We appreciate you letting us know when you have a success in your floodplain management program that would help others.

**7 Feet of Flooding + NFIP = Survival**



(Making Your Community continued from page 5)

Have the supplies you need to support public information requests about permit process, substantial damage determinations, and allowable repair, recovery and redevelopment activities.

### You Have a Role in Managing the Community's Floodplain

Elected officials and their designees (floodplain managers) have a responsibility to ensure the public health and safety. The flood hazard is a threat to your community's well being and sus-

tainability. You have an opportunity after this flood, and before the next one to help develop a successful local floodplain management program. Every community has limited resources, but you can still commit to



using what you have to help achieve reduced flood risk and protection of the floodplain's natural benefits. Involve your public in helping to solve the problems and balance their individual needs and desires with the overall growth, development and well being of the community.

If you need assistance with meeting the responsibilities of NFIP participation either after this flood or before the next flood happens, please contact our office at 614-265-6750 or through our web site at: [www.dnr.state.oh.us/water/floodpln/default.htm](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/water/floodpln/default.htm).

# The Flood of 04: Nobelists' Thinking on Public Flood Policy Not Much Heeded

BY LILLIAN THOMAS

[reprinted from an October 22, 2004 article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* with permission]

If government officials wanted to address the problems caused by major flooding, they would refuse to help its victims. That would be cruel and callous, not to mention politically suicidal. But in the long run, it would wring out people's determination to build, live and work in flood-prone areas. If the officials spent the money on long-term flood mitigation measures instead of short-term relief, they would be better serving society. But the only place that's likely to happen is in an economic model created by Finn E. Kydland of Carnegie Mellon University and Edward C. Prescott of Arizona State University, the two winners of the 2004 Nobel prize in economics. The pair won the prize, in part, for work that used floodplain management to show how government failure to stick to long-term rules and plans undermines stability. The work illustrates a real-world point brought home by last month's flooding across the state and the procession of politicians coming to the area to announce emergency flood relief funding.

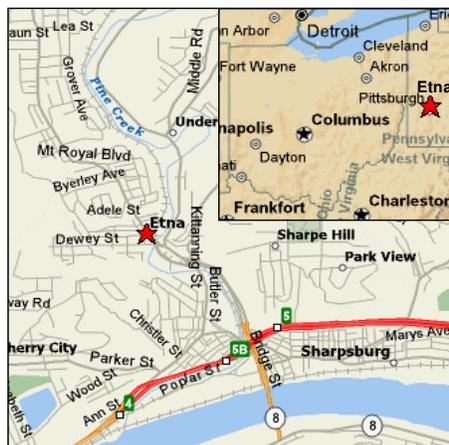
In 1986, a tractor-trailer that had washed downstream wedged against one of the low bridges that cross Pine Creek near Route 8 in Etna (Pennsylvania) and contributed to a devastating flood that killed six people and caused extensive property damage.

Officials knew even before that flood that debris got stuck under the bridges, turning them into dams and exacerbating flooding. They proposed to raise those bridges, along with other flood mitigation measures. It was never done, and the bridges once again contributed to disastrous flooding last month.

Yesterday, U.S. Labor Secretary

Elaine Chao used a flood-damaged Etna business as a backdrop for her announcement of a \$10.4 million National Emergency Grant that will be used to create 672 temporary jobs for unemployed workers in affected counties. The day before, Gov. Ed Rendell announced that the state will relieve municipalities of the \$3 million they would have been obligated to contribute to restoring municipal facilities.

No one is offering money to raise the Etna bridges. "We have programs in place for reaction to disasters," said Robert McCormick, state coordinator for Purdue University's Planning with Power Project, a program that links land-use planning and watershed management. "We haven't done a good job in developing regulations to prevent damage in first place." The urgency of a disaster prompts politicians to find money, particularly in an election year. "There are very profound incentives in the process. It's very appealing for a politician to come in with resources and money, to take on kind of a hero rescue role," said Roger Pielke, a professor of environmental science at the University of Colorado in Boulder who has studied disaster-related policy.



"We found in a study we did that in years when the president is running for re-election, there are twice as many federally declared flood disasters as in other years. That's obviously not because there are twice as many floods.

It's because presidents exercise their discretion to declare disasters more in those years." But rarely is the money slated for mitigation measures, since there is so much pressure to address the urgent immediate needs, Pielke said. The more effective officials are in erasing the damage done by flooding, the more they undermine their own long-term goal of managing flood-prone areas, since they make it possible for people to continue to live, work and build in floodplains. (The September flooding struck many areas that are not considered flood zones, officials noted, and thus should not be included in discussions of flood zone management.) Officials understand that people should be discouraged from building in floodplains and that development upstream contributes to more water flowing into downstream areas. But when faced with a desperate homeowner who has lost everything or a plan from a developer that will contribute to the community's financial well-being, they rarely make the decision that conforms with a sensible long-term strategy for managing a floodplain.

The government began to address flooding in a systematic way with the 1968 National Flood Insurance Act, said Eugene Dice, an attorney with Buchanan Ingersoll's Environmental Law Group. "That essentially said that if a community adopts regulations that meet the minimum standards, then they are eligible for flood insurance. It also provided that Congress will not give federally guaranteed loans or give money to build things in flood areas unless they comply with land use standards set out in the law."

In Pennsylvania, the Flood Plain Management Act adopted in 1978 made it mandatory for every municipality that has floodplains to comply with federal standards. But upstream development that contributes to downstream flooding continues. The increasingly dense development that creates large areas of impermeable surfaces (roads, parking lots, rooftops) means that even moder-

*(Continued on page 8)*

*(Nobelists' Thinking continued from page 7)*

ate flooding can be more damaging because there is no place for the water to go, McCormick said. When the overbuilding and lack of flood mitigation leads to property devastation, the government rushes in to help people get back to normal. If officials forced individuals to bear the financial burden of rebuilding in a floodplain, fewer homes would be built, Kydland and Prescott argued in one of their landmark papers. Since most people instinctively know that they will get help in the case of disaster, they go ahead and build, and rebuild, in floodplains. Pielke said the Federal Emergency Management Agency has recognized the problem and has taken measures, such as refusing to fund rebuilding of "repetitive loss" properties, to try to break the cycle. But it is still often difficult to get mitigation funding. In

a letter from Rendell to the state's congressional delegation released Wednesday, the governor made note of the fact that the federal government has cut the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, which provides federal matching grants following a major disaster declaration to help break the cycle of disasters with measures such as buying homes in flood-prone areas. In Etna, officials have struggled to get approval and funding for flood mitigation measures for years, said borough Manager Mary Ellen Ramage. "We've never stopped since the '86 flood," she said. A lifelong resident, she was assistant manager then and said she has stood on her borough's bridges more times than she cares to remember as workers attempted to remove debris piling up during floods.

The area did get funding for flood mitigation projects several years after the flood, and in 1994 there were plans to build retention ponds and raise the bridges. But the project collapsed over disputes over who would be responsible for the ponds, and the money that remained after other projects wasn't sufficient to raise the bridges. Even smaller projects, such as removing trees that were likely to contribute to the debris jam at the bridges, got locked up in bureaucracy and didn't happen. After marking trees three separate times, the borough finally got approval to remove them—the day after the September 9 flooding, Ramage said. Clean-up crews removed a number of marked trees from the debris jam after the flooding, she said. 

## Today's Flood Risk in Your Community & Planning for a Safer Future

### How the Structure Inventory Project can benefit your community

BY TIM BECK, GIS SPECIALIST  
DIVISION OF WATER

Flooding is the major natural hazard impacting Ohio statewide. Through emergency management and floodplain management there are opportunities to reduce flood disaster losses that occur every year. For many years, emergency managers and local floodplain managers in Ohio have been

identifying ways to help each other prepare, respond and recover from floods so that we are less susceptible to damage and death. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has emphasized the priority of mitigation planning by requiring state and local mitigation plans as a condition of federal disaster assistance.

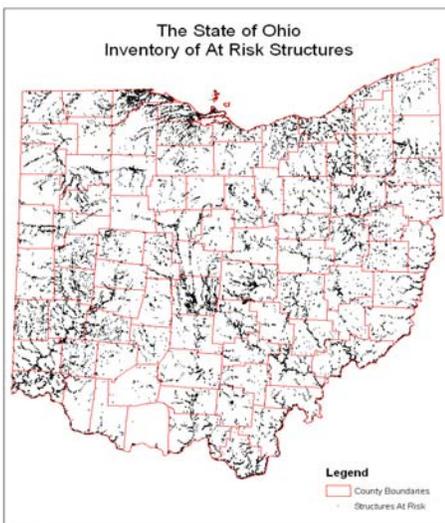
This criterion is contained in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, approved by Congress October 10, 2000.

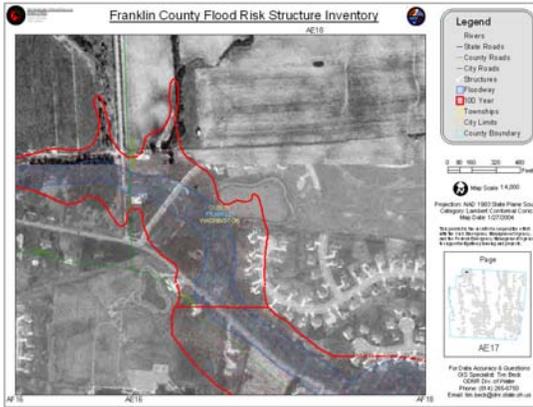
Under DMA2000, FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plans are a prerequisite for Stafford Act mitigation project grant eligibility. Under the new criteria, plans must address planning process, risk assessment, mitigation strategies and provide for plan maintenance. FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is administered in Ohio by the Ohio Emergency Management Agency and can provide up to 7.5 percent of the total federal disaster assistance in Presidentially declared disasters to local governments for hazard mitigation projects.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Water, Floodplain Management Program, has accepted a leadership role in building the technology to assist state agencies and local communities with basic flood hazard information and the potential impact to structures through Geographic Information System capability. The Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA) awarded the Division of Water, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding to continue a pilot project to identify structures that are in or adjacent to the federally identified 100-year floodplains in Ohio. Risk assessment is the fundamental step in mitigation planning. The goal of the Floodplain Management Program's project is to establish the baseline of statewide flood-risk structures that can be used by local communities and state agencies to make a comprehensive assessment.

This information will support sound loss estimates and help prioritize effective mitigation projects.

*(Continued on page 9)*





This screen capture represents an example of the maps created. The individual structures have been identified and the software allows for the information about each structure to be stored in a database. The PDF maps were created for communities without GIS, and can be printed on a standard inkjet printer. We chose 8.5x11 size to make them easier to print and use. The Index Map was made to 11x17 since it referenced the county information.

each structure. This attribute data is stored in a *Microsoft Access®* database to allow query and report capability. The information in the reports will assist communities in their vulnerability and comprehensive risk assessment effort to satisfy DMA2000 planning criteria.

*(Today's Flood Risk continued from page 8)*

The structure inventory was developed through a custom application designed for the Floodplain Management Program's Geographic Information Management System (FPGIMS). The integration of this new technology is allowing the Division of Water to link computer software, geographic information about floodplains, and descrip-

tive information (type of structure, size, damage history, and elevation data) to determine "What is at risk from flooding in Ohio?"

If your community has GIS capability, you can obtain the flood hazard area coverage and Structure Inventory Point coverage from the Department of Natural Resources Geographic Information System site at: [www.dnr.state.oh.us/gims/default.htm](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/gims/default.htm).

The Flood Insurance Rate Maps were used to capture the location and geography of the floodplains as mapped by FEMA. The map data was then used as an overlay with image data, Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quadrangle (DOQQ) aerial photographs, to allow Floodplain Management Program staff to identify structures as a point or a discrete location. The custom application has also been designed to capture attribute, or descriptive data about

The flood hazard data can be accessed by using the "Data Search and Metadata" pull-down. Se-

*(Continued on page 10)*



**The Structure Inventory Team was recently honored to receive both a Governor's Award and ODNR's Award Celebrating Excellence (ACE) in recognition of their work on this project**

**Left to Right:** Richard Bartz, Chief, DOW, ODNR; Dr. Sam Speck, Director, ODNR; Nancy Olson, Natural Hazards Specialist, FEMA Region V; Sima Merick, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, OEMA; Alicia Silverio, CFM, Environmental Specialist, DOW, ODNR; Christopher Thoms, CFM, Senior Environmental Specialist, DOW, ODNR; Paul Spahr, Geologist, DOW, ODNR; Ken Pendley, GIS Coordinator, DOW, ODNR; Governor Robert Taft; George Meyers, P.E., CFM, Floodplain Engineer, DOW, ODNR; Chad Berginnis, CFM, Supervisor, DOW, ODNR; Cynthia Crecelius, CFM, Program Manager, DOW, ODNR; Ray Klingbeil, CFM, Environmental Specialist, DOW, ODNR; Timothy Beck, GIS Specialist, DOW, ODNR; Steven Ferryman, CFM, Environmental Specialist, DOW, ODNR; Dale Shipley, Executive Director, OEMA.

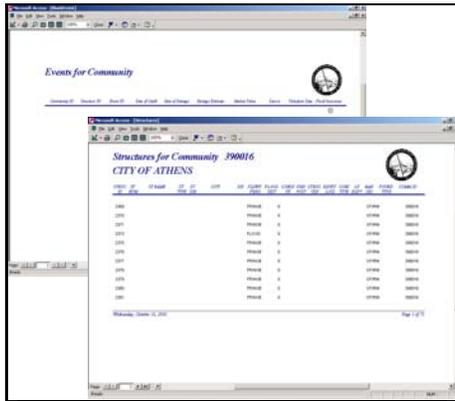
(Today's Flood Risk continued from page 9)  
lect your county. The four coverages concerning flood hazard information are the "Inventory of Structures at Risk of Flooding," "100-year Floodplains," "Other Flood Hazard Areas (500-year)," and "Floodway Areas." If you are interested in native format DOQQs, they are available from the United States Geological Survey (USGS): <http://geography.wr.usgs.gov/doq/>.

If your community is working on mitigation planning and has interest in flood hazard information and assisting the Floodplain Management Program in collecting attribute information please contact our office at (614) 265-6750.

Two types of reports concerning specific structure data and the history of events can be created. The information to support these reports is needed from local communities and counties.

Communities may either obtain a copy of the database and directly input information, or complete worksheets that will allow Division of Water staff to complete the database for those locations that do not have GIS or database capabilities.

The baseline flood risk information from this project will be very valuable to local communities and state agencies as vulnerability is assessed and alternatives for mitigation are identified. The Division of



Water staff are currently piloting the use of the structure inventory and testing the worksheets for collecting attribute information with several of the Appalachian Flood Risk Reduction Initiative (AFRRI) communities. So far the data has been well received, and it is believed that many communities will have considerable cost savings, since neither consultants nor their own staff will need to develop the structures-at-risk data. Some consultants have indicated that this may save several thousand dollars of labor costs in terms of assisting communities with their risk assessment. The Division of Water also hopes that this information may help the state in general to achieve its goal of an "enhanced" mitigation plan that will enable our communities to obtain more money from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

This fall ODNR provided CD's, to all NFIP participating communities

and county emergency management agencies, with the GIS data and images of the structure inventory for their respective counties. OEMA and FEMA-Region V have a complete set of the CD's as well. Also included in the CD was the latest copy of the Ohio Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning Book in Portable Digital Format (PDF).

Statewide data sets and the corresponding county information are on the CD in the folder labeled "Added ODNR GIS Data". It is important to note that you can only view the GIS data using a GIS software package like Arc-View® or Arc Map®. For communities that do not have GIS software or capability, the CD also contains the information in PDF or image format and we have provided the free Acrobat® software to allow viewing. Not only are the maps free to view, but also are printable on 8.5x11 printers.

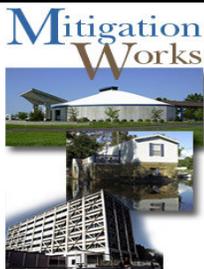
**For more information, please contact:**

ODNR , Division of Water  
2045 Morse Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43229-6693  
(614) 265-6250,  
Fax (614) 447-9503

**For GIS information, please contact:**

Tim Beck, GIS Specialist  
(614) 265-6722  
email: [tim.beck@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:tim.beck@dnr.state.oh.us)

**Funding for Flood Hazard Mitigation**



BY STEVE FERRYMAN, CFM,  
ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST,  
DIVISION OF WATER

Recent flood events have high-

lighted the importance of mitigation in an effective local floodplain management program. What is mitigation, especially as it relates to flooding? Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from hazards and their effects. Many Ohio communities have undertaken mitigation projects to elevate, retrofit, and/or acquire structures in flood-prone areas. The success of these projects has been proven in subse-

quent flood events. Examples of successful mitigation projects in Ohio can be found at: [www.fema.gov/regions/v/ss/ss\\_oh.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/regions/v/ss/ss_oh.shtm).

There have been six Presidential disaster declarations in Ohio for flooding since June 2003. These flood events remind everyone of that area of town, down by the creek that seems to flood every few years. Buildings in a community

(Continued on page 11)

(Funding continued from page 10)

that are frequently flooded pose serious health and safety threats to the owners and can significantly impact local resources (*i.e.*, first responders are put in harms way for conducting rescues, community infrastructure is damaged, cleanup costs are increased and tax/wage revenues are lost). This article describes several sources of funding that communities can use to reduce the flood risk to those structures, and increase community sustainability.

There are some commonalities in all of the mitigation grant programs described below. There is a 75% Federal and 25% non-Federal cost-share for these grants. The grant programs described below do not fund large structural flood control projects such as dams, levees, floodwalls etc. All applicants must be participating, and in good standing, in the National Flood Insurance Program if FEMA has mapped flood hazard areas in your community. You can check your communities NFIP status by visiting the Floodplain Management Program's website at: [www.dnr.state.oh.us/water/floodpln/](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/water/floodpln/).

### **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has just announced the availability of \$225 million for the FY 2005 Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program. The PDM program was developed to provide funds to states and communities for pre-disaster multi-hazard mitigation planning and the implementation of cost-effective mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. Examples of eligible flood related PDM projects include the elevation, acquisition, or relocation of flood-prone structures and minor flood control pro-

jects designed to protect critical facilities. Communities interested in PDM funding must apply through the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA) Mitigation Branch and should contact Sima Merick at (614) 799-3539. **PDM applications are due to the OEMA by December 31, 2004.**

Communities must have a FEMA-approved natural hazard mitigation plan by the date of the selection for grant award in order to receive PDM project grants. PDM grant award selection is anticipated to be May 1, 2005. Communities applying for PDM funding to develop mitigation plans that comply with the requirements of 44 CFR Part 201 do not have to have FEMA-approved natural hazard mitigation plans.

Applications submitted for PDM funding will be competing with communities across the country. PDM applications will be ranked by FEMA according to ten factors. The applications then move on to a National Evaluation panel that will score the applications based on additional pre-determined qualitative factors. FEMA will consider the National Evaluation Score during the grant award selection process.

Competitive applications will have a Benefit Cost Analysis with supporting documentation that demonstrates a benefit-cost ratio greater than 1.0. The application should clearly document the proposed projects engineering feasibility, impact on the environment, and any historic preservation issues. Communities with questions about the technical aspects of developing a PDM application can contact FEMA's Technical Assistance Helpline at 1-866-222-3580. Additional information about the PDM grant program can be found at [www.fema.gov/fima/pdm.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/fima/pdm.shtm).

### **Flood Mitigation Assistance**

The OEMA administers the Flood

Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program and anticipates that the State of Ohio will receive over \$178,000 for eligible grant projects. The goal of the FMA program is to reduce or eliminate insurance claims under the NFIP. FMA provides funding to communities for measures that reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to structures insurable under the NFIP. The State of Ohio is required to prioritize FMA project grant applications that include repetitive loss properties (structures having one or more flood insurance claim). A community must also have a FEMA-approved flood mitigation plan, or multi-hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for FMA funds. Examples of eligible FMA projects include: the elevation, acquisition, and relocation of NFIP-insured structures. Interested applicants should contact Rachael Evans of the OEMA Mitigation Branch at (614) 799-3532. **Applications are due by January 31, 2005.**

### **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program**

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding is only available following a disaster event that results in a presidential declaration. The amount of money available to communities is 7.5% of the total federal disaster cost (excluding any associated administrative costs). The purpose of the program is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable the implementation of mitigation measures during the disaster recovery period. Communities must have a FEMA-approved natural hazard mitigation plan to receive HMGP funding for any disaster declared after November 1, 2004. Examples of projects eligible for HMGP funding include the acquisition, relocation, demolition or retrofitting of flood-prone structures. The HMGP pre-application deadline for recently declared disasters in Ohio has expired. 

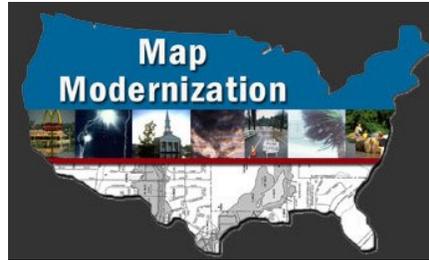
# Map Modernization Issues: Multi-Hazard Mapping Implementation Plan Tool

BY GEORGE MEYERS, P.E.,  
CFM, FLOODPLAIN ENGINEER,  
DIVISION OF WATER

By now most of you have heard about FEMA's Map Modernization plan. Map Modernization is FEMA's five-year initiative to transform the Nation's flood maps into more reliable, easier to use, readily available products. Through Map Modernization all of the FEMA flood maps will be converted to a digital countywide format. Because the new maps will be digitally based they will be easier to distribute and update and can easily be incorporated into communities' geographic information systems (GIS). The new countywide format should eliminate the problems of gaps in coverage resulting from annexation and inconsistencies in flood hazard boundaries and elevations at community boundaries.

As you can no doubt imagine, updating the flood maps for the entire country will not be an easy task. To help manage the Map Modernization effort FEMA has developed their Multi-Year Flood Hazard Identification Plan (MHIP). The MHIP details the five-year schedule and budget, based on proposed funding, for developing the updated flood hazard data and maps. It identifies funding and scheduling for flood studies and map updates at the county level. It presents key performance indicators that FEMA will use to track the progress of Map Modernization annually.

Although the ultimate goal of Map Modernization is to improve the quality and reliability of the Nation's FIRMs, the reality is that the funding proposed is only a fraction of the cost estimated to meet



Ohio's map update needs. As such, FEMA is relying heavily on county, community, and state partnerships to assist in updating the FIRMs. Where communities have aerial mapping or photographs accurately showing the location of roads, streams, and buildings FEMA will use that information for the base-map of the FIRM. If a community has topographic (*e.g.* elevation contour) data more detailed than what was used to create the community's current FIRM, FEMA may re-delineate the floodplains to more accurately follow the ground contour. If communities have conducted detailed flood studies, FEMA will try to incorporate the results into the new maps. Furthermore for communities that are able to assist in the remapping effort, FEMA may have limited funding available to communities, on a cost share basis, through FEMA's Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) program.



In planned support of Map Modernization, the ODNR, Floodplain Management Program is expanding our current efforts as the State Coordinator for the NFIP. In addition, we have entered into a CTP agreement with FEMA. Through these agreements, we are working with FEMA to define the role that the ODNR, Floodplain Management Program will play as Map

Modernization evolves. Two key areas where we are focusing our efforts are:

- 1) assisting FEMA in developing CTPs and coordinating mapping partnerships with local communities; and
- 2) assisting communities in adopting the new maps and meeting their ordinance update requirements which will be required as the new maps become available.

We will also be providing limited engineering and technical support by conducting new flood studies, assisting with project scoping, and assisting with map production.

The MHIP can be viewed on FEMA's web site at the following link: [www.fema.gov/flm/mh\\_main.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/flm/mh_main.shtm). Comments on the MHIP can be submitted directly to FEMA through the same link. Communities may use the preliminary schedule to help plan for future work such as building code updates, flood risk determinations, and floodplain management. The specific timing and funding levels in the MHIP for individual communities is not fixed. FEMA will update the MHIP annually to reflect input from the communities and other mapping partners. Factors that communities have some control over that may help move them up in prioritization include: participation in the CTP program, availability of countywide aerial imagery, and availability of countywide topographic (elevation) data.

For more information about Map Modernization and how it will affect your community please contact George Meyers at the ODNR, Floodplain Management Program at (614) 265-6635.





# Development Review Procedures for Enforcement of Local Floodplain Management Regulations

BY CYNTHIA J. CRECELIUS,  
CFM—PROGRAM MANAGER  
DIVISION OF WATER

agreements identify other officials' involvement in local floodplain management. If other officials are involved in the review and issuance of permits in your community, **it is the ultimate responsibility of the local floodplain administrator to review all development to determine if the proposed action meets the local floodplain management regulations.**



July 2003 Flood Village of Willshire, Van Wert County



September 2004 Flood City of Marietta, Washington County

The following steps identify a model approach for review of development, enforcement of flood damage reduction standards, and effective record-keeping. The official responsible for each step is the “floodplain manager” allowing for adjustment based upon the administrative choice of your community. (As mentioned above if multiple officials participate there should still be a primary contact for oversight of the floodplain management effort.)

“floodplain manager” to determine the 100-year floodplain area and determine if the development is subject to the floodplain management regulations.

If it is determined that the activity is not located within an identified 100-year floodplain, the remaining steps are not required.

2. The “floodplain manager” reviews the completed application and supporting materials (e.g. site topography, scale plans, location and dimension of structures, elevation of grade and structure floor level, proposed location of fill, excavation, storage of equipment or materials, drainage facilities, etc.) to determine what specific floodplain management regulations will apply.
3. The “floodplain manager” determines if the action is a substantial improvement /damage to existing structure, new construction, residential or commercial development, located in a floodway or fringe area, alters an existing watercourse, or nonstructural activity. This information determines which floodplain management regulations apply to the proposed de-

One responsibility of a community participating in the National Flood Insurance Program is to develop an administrative system that provides for development review and the issue of permits for development located within 100-year floodplains.

**Development** as defined in the floodplain management regulations, refers to any manmade change to the floodplain. This includes new development, substantial improvement/damage to existing structures, and nonstructural actions (e.g. filling, grading, storage of equipment and material). Thinking of development in this way expands beyond the scope of a building permit to include alterations of the landscape. The reason for this expanded approach is because many of these nonstructural actions can impact the severity and location of flooding.

The regulations adopted by the community for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program will identify the local official (position) responsible for the oversight and enforcement of the regulations. This is the position responsible for the permit process and related records unless administrative

1. A SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION shall be obtained from the “floodplain manager” before construction or development begins within any identified 100-year floodplain. The current effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps and Flood Insurance Study (if available) information will be used by the



House built over an Enclosure Below Lowest Floor Washington County

(Continued on page 14)

(Development Review continued from page 13)  
velopment.

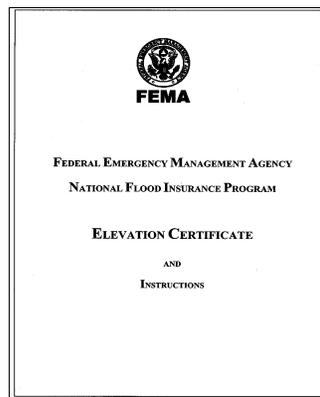
- 5. The “floodplain manager” must approve or deny the issuance of a permit to develop in the 100-year floodplain. **This decision is based upon whether the activity satisfies the local floodplain management regulations for the development action.** (e.g. Residential development must be elevated so lowest floor is at or above the 100-year elevation, floodway activities must demonstrate a no impact on water surface elevations of the 100-year flood, substantial damage/improvement must be flood protected if the value is 50% or greater of market value.)
- 6. If the permit is denied, the “floodplain manager” should provide a written explanation of the regulation requirements that the proposed activity does not satisfy. The applicant for the permit should also be informed of the variance and appeal procedures for the decision to deny a permit.
- 7. The “floodplain manager” should establish for each valid permit, the development standards applicable to the action in a permit file, obtain evidence of compliance and maintain records to support effective administration of the regulations (e.g. as-built elevations of lowest floor or flood-



September 2004 Flood  
City of Marietta, Washington County

proofed level, engineering analysis for floodway actions, and maintenance information for alteration of watercourse, map revision request where appropriate).

- 8. The “floodplain manager” must maintain as-built elevations for the lowest floor of residential structures (new and substantial improvements), as-built lowest floor or certified floodproofed elevation for nonresidential structures (new and substantial improvements). This should be done by using the current FEMA *Elevation Certificate* or



*Floodproofing Certificate* as appropriate. For floodway developments, the engineering analysis showing no impact from the development on the 100-year water surface elevation must be maintained.

Only a professional ENGINEER or ARCHITECT can certify that a

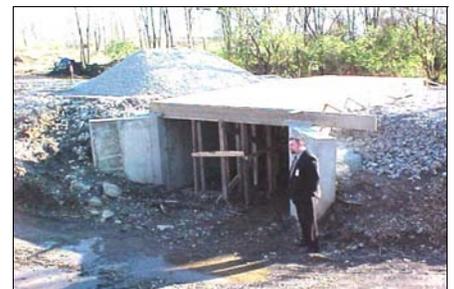
structure is properly anchored and/or floodproofed. Hydrologic and hydraulic analysis to determine floodway encroachment should only be performed by qualified Professional Engineer.

- 9. If an applicant requests a variance or appeals a decision to deny a permit to develop in the 100-year floodplain, the “floodplain manager” must notify the applicant that if a variance is granted the structure will have an increased flood risk. This results in increased flood insurance premiums for any structure with a lowest floor or floodproofed level below the 100-year flood elevation. Variances granted by the community should be documented. This can be accomplished by using the model *VARIANCE AND APPEAL RECORD*.
- 10. When a “floodplain manager” becomes aware of development (structural or nonstructural) which is occurring in the floodplain without a permit or that is not consistent with approved development plans, a remedial action is required.

The “floodplain manager” should consult with the community’s legal counsel, since legal action and penalties may result from violations.



September 2004 Flood  
City of Marietta, Washington County



Box Culvert in Floodway  
City of Bellefontaine,  
Logan County

## OFMA Recognition Awards 2004

BY CYNTHIA J. CRECELIUS,  
CFM—PROGRAM MANAGER  
DIVISION OF WATER

Once again, OFMA's annual awards were presented at the State-wide Floodplain Management Conference. OFMA is honored to have this opportunity to recognize Ohio's floodplain management leaders.

### Floodplain Administrator of the Year

The *Floodplain Administrator of*



*the Year* award is designed to honor an individual whose contributions have resulted in an outstanding local program or activity for comprehensive floodplain management. The recipients of this award are role models and an inspiration to other local officials.

Our 2004 recipient has been responsible for floodplain management at the local level since 2000. During his service he has weathered nine

floods. He has become one of the "most proficient users of FEMA's Residential Substantial Damage Estimator" and has mastered the disaster response duties of a local floodplain manager.

Under his leadership, his community was one of the first to adopt the higher standards model regulations for reducing future flood risk and for completing a hazard mitigation plan that is compliant with the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

Please join me in congratulating,

(Continued on page 16)

## OFMA Scholarships Available to Local Floodplain Managers

BY ALICIA A. SILVERIO, CFM,  
ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST,  
DIVISION OF WATER

Many local officials have expressed concern that with budgets shrinking and more competition for local funds, they will not be able to attend the annual statewide floodplain management conference. The Ohio Floodplain Management Association's (OFMA) mission and objectives are focused on promoting the education and development of local floodplain management. The annual conference is an opportunity to provide education / training, flood risk awareness, and an exchange of information. Your concerns have been heard and for this reason, the Executive Board of OFMA has approved the granting of scholarships for the 2004 statewide floodplain management conference to be held August 25-26, 2004 in Columbus.

The current scholarship proposal is for ten (10) scholarships in 2004. Four (4) will be awarded to the recipients of OFMA awards for:

- ◆ *Outstanding Floodplain Administrator of the Year;*
- ◆ *Innovation in Floodplain Management;*

- ◆ *Most Valuable Contribution to Floodplain Management;* and
- ◆ *Distinguished Member Service.*

The additional six (6) scholarships will be awarded to attendees at-large. Attendees-at large must meet the following criteria:

- No Certified Floodplain Managers
- No federal or state agency representatives
- No consultants or other private entities
- Only one (1) scholarship per local government

All scholarship recipients must agree to the following terms:

1. Attendance at the full conference
2. Participation in one (1) of the following:
  - Host a local floodplain management workshop, supported by OFMA and ODNR within one year of the 2004 statewide conference; or
  - Participate on the conference planning committee for the 2005 statewide conference; or
  - Participate in a panel discussion with other recipients at the 2005 statewide conference – to discuss floodplain

management experiences and how the knowledge acquired at the conference factored into local floodplain management responsibilities.

Applicant's must apply on their local government's letterhead and indicate the need for this scholarship.

**Applications must be submitted by July 16, 2004 to the address provided below.**

The Scholarship Committee will recommend to the OFMA Executive Board the first six (6) acceptable applicants for receipt of the 2005 scholarships by July 30, 2005. The recipients will be awarded the full amount of the conference registration. All scholarship recipients attending the conference will be responsible for any other cost associated with attending the conference. Questions regarding the scholarship program and applications should be directed to:

PAUL PLUMMER  
OFMA – Scholarship Committee  
16459 Nottingham Drive  
Wapakoneta, OH 45895  
419-738-6817  
[pplummer@who.rr.com](mailto:pplummer@who.rr.com)



**Keith Putnam**

**Keith Putnam**, Director of the Ross County Building Department as the Floodplain Administrator of 2004.

**Award for Innovation in Floodplain Management**

This award recognizes those who have developed and applied an approach that is “outside of the box.”

- Reducing flood damage
- Protecting floodplain resources
- Balancing communities economic needs with hazard area risks

This year’s recipient has demonstrated their innovation by incorporating floodplains, wetlands and stormwater management into their environmental planning efforts.

Using environmental planning as their crosscutting theme, they have addressed multiple goals, used technical assistance, education, and partnerships to help make their communities less susceptible to flood damage. They work closely with their elected officials and economic development decision-makers to balance the need for development, while managing the natural hazard risk.

**The Environmental Planning Section of the Licking County Planning Commission** is involved in all the usual floodplain management activities (flood zone determinations, development review



Flanked by Cindy Crecelius & Ray Sebastian, **Jim Mickey** accepted the Award for Innovation in Floodplain Management

and permitting, enforcement) but they haven’t stopped there! With their support and encouragement, Licking County has completed multi-jurisdictional natural hazard mitigation plan. The County participated in FEMA’s Project Impact that was designed to build partnerships and engage the private sector in activities that will make the community more sustainable. As a Community Rating System Community they are pursuing activities that go above and beyond the NFIP and have attained a rating that provides all flood insurance policy holders with a 10% premium discount. The County is also an active Cooperating Technical Partner in FEMA’s map modernization effort. They plan to add nearly 50 miles of additional flood hazard information and complete the digital conversion of current information in the next two years [see related article page 12].

With an eye to the future, the Licking County Planning Commission is promoting “future conditions hydrology” as a mapping consideration. This will allow the citizens and development community to understand the impact of the current land use decisions when combined with expected growth and development. Floodplain management in Licking County is not done in a vacuum; the Planning Commission integrates their flood damage reduction goals with farmland preser-

vation, watershed and stormwater management, emergency management and environmental quality in general.

Congratulations to the Licking County Planning Commission’s Environmental Planning Section for taking their effort outside of the box.

**Peter G. Finke Award for Most Valuable Contribution to Floodplain Management**

This award is established as a tribute to Peter G. Finke in his distinguished service and leadership of the Ohio Floodplain Management Program for three decades. Peter utilized collaboration and creativity throughout his career and drew strength from his personal dedication to create a statewide floodplain management program that improves the quality of life for Ohioans present and future.

There was not a 2004 recipient, but we look forward to recognizing future contributors as floodplain management in Ohio continues to evolve.

**Jerry J. Oney Distinguished Member Service Award**

The success of any professional organization is rooted in the dedication and capabilities of its members. This award is intended to recognize members whose outstanding contributions have furthered the OFMA goals and objectives.

This year we are recognizing two members for their distinguished service.

During the past year the first recipient issued 183 floodplain development permits; conducted 54 floodplain site visits; completed 179 permit inspections; prepared 48 violation letters; and made 399 flood zone determinations! Now as if these numbers alone aren’t enough

(Continued on page 17)

(OFMA Awards continued from page 16)  
to keep one busy he also...

- Participated in Appalachian Flood Risk Reduction Initiative planning meetings and reviews
- Serves on the OFMA Board helping to plan and implement the conference
- Maintains his Certified Floodplain Manager status and continues to grow his education and expertise in floodplain management.

OFMA presents **Joe Black**, Lawrence County Floodplain Administrator with a Distinguished Member Service Award.



**Joseph Black**



**Christopher Thoms**

For our second recipient, this past year is something he might like to forget. We would be here well beyond the lunch hour if we tried to recount the activities, partnerships, administrative support and all-round "can do" approach that he takes daily.

For his leadership in conference planning and implementation in addition to his Senior Planner duties at the ODNR, Division of Water, OFMA is happy to present **Christopher Thoms**, CFM with the Distinguished Member Service Award. Our thanks for his archaic work ethic.

Remember, to nominate one of your fellow floodplain management professionals for 2005, contact:

Cindy Crecelius, OFMA  
Awards Coordinator  
[cindy.crecelius@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:cindy.crecelius@dnr.state.oh.us)  
ODNR, Division of Water  
2045 Morse Rd (B-2)  
Columbus, Ohio 43229

**R  
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CALL**



BY CHRISTOPHER M. THOMS, CFM,  
SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST,  
DIVISION OF WATER

As 2004 draws to a close, the Floodplain Management Program staff extend our good wishes to all the citizens we serve as well as the floodplain managers and professionals we work with throughout the year.

In November, we welcomed three new

members to our staff, Kimberly Bitters, Jonathon Sorg, and Cathy Williams. We invite you to get to know them better, both through this article and through the coming years as we work together to strengthen floodplain management throughout Ohio.

(Continued on page 18)



**Left to Right** (Back Row): Ray Klingbeil, CFM, Environmental Specialist, Chad Berginnis, CFM, Supervisor, Cynthia Crecelius, CFM, Program Manager, Cathy Williams, Administrative Assistant, Kimberly Bitters, Environmental Specialist, Alicia Silverio, CFM, Environmental Specialist, Christopher Thoms, CFM, Senior Environmental Specialist,

(Front Row) George Meyers, P.E., CFM, Floodplain Engineer, Jonathon Sorg, Environmental Specialist, Steven Ferryman, CFM, Environmental Specialist, and Timothy Beck, GIS Specialist.

(Roll Call continued from page 17)

Greetings! My name is **Kimberly Bitters**, and I began working as an Environmental Specialist in the ODNR Division of Water, Floodplain Management on November 1, 2004.

In 1999, I received a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science with an emphasis in Ecology from Bowling Green State University. Outside of the classroom, I spent time volunteering with the Nature Conservancy and Toledo MetroParks on ecological restoration projects including controlled burns, seed gatherings, and community education projects. In addition, I pursued independent research studying agnostic behaviors in crayfish.

In June 2004, I received a Master of City and Regional Planning degree with a specialization in Environmental Planning from The Ohio State University. While studying at OSU, I worked with the Gahanna Development and Zoning Department. My Gahanna experience included Economic Development, Community Development, Zoning, and Environmental Planning. As part of my graduate work, I researched Ohio township zoning as it relates to Farmland Preservation and exurban development.

I am excited to join the Floodplain Management staff, and I look forward to working with Ohio communities in the wise use of our natural resources.



**Kimberly Bitters**



**Johnathan Sorg**

Hello! My name is **Jonathan Sorg**, and I am one of the newest members of the Floodplain Management group in the Division of Water. I graduated from Wilmington College in 2002 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Mathematics. Currently, I am finishing the research requirements for a Master of Environmental Sciences from Miami University. In terms of work experience, one requirement for my Master's program was the completion of a Public Service Project. Specifically, I collaborated with a group of graduate students to recommend alternative land use plans for a 100-acre well field that were economically, environmentally, politically, and socially feasible. These plans comprised an initial attempt to curb excess city (Hamilton, Ohio) expenditures.

I have a diverse background in environmental remediation and recovery as well. Working in the Environmental Restoration Department at Battelle, I helped develop a novel way to remove organic contaminants from groundwater via organo-modification of clay particles. I also worked at the Fernald Closure Project (near Hamilton, Ohio) analyzing areas of potential radiological contamination in order to recommend further cleanup actions. Most recently, I aided environmental lawyers with a massive PCB case based in the "Keystone State" that dealt with Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) issues.

So, I am relatively new to the FEMA and NFIP world, but I have been working diligently to familiarize myself with regulations and program requirements. I eagerly look forward to working with a diverse crowd of conservationists, helping governments and agencies with their floodplain management needs.



**Cathy Williams**

Hello. My name is **Cathy Williams** and I am the new Administrative Assistant replacing Ella Hardman. I have been employed by the State of Ohio for over eight years and transferred to this position from the Division of Wildlife. Currently I attend Columbus State Community College, majoring in architecture.

On a personal note, I would say one of my greatest achievements was to design and physically build my home. Now, between a fulltime job, attending classes, and maintaining my home, I enjoy landscaping (getting those hands dirty, as Rebecca would say).

In closing, I would like to thank the Floodplain Management Program staff for such a warm welcome to their award winning team. To each of them and all of you...



Happy Holidays!



## ASFPM Promotes Online Courses

*Attention: Certified Floodplain Managers looking for CECs*

The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) has approved a series of online courses. Topics include: buyouts projects, Community Rating System (CRS) outreach, flood elevation determinations, flood vents,

floodproofing, geographic information system (GIS) basics, aspects of hydraulics, and runoff analyses.

You can view this list of online courses at: [www.floods.org/](http://www.floods.org/Certification/redvec.asp)



[Certification/redvec.asp](http://www.floods.org/Certification/redvec.asp). ASFPM-approved continuing education credits (CEC)s are listed with each course title. Course descriptions, objectives, registration, and purchasing instructions can be viewed by clicking on each title. You must register with *RedVector.com*® before you can take courses and receive CEC-credit.

## Workshop Watch



BY CHRISTOPHER M. THOMS, CFM,  
SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST,  
DIVISION OF WATER

Starting the new year off on the right foot, floodplain administrators of Northwest Ohio will be gathering for the first **Flood Loss Reduction Workshop** of 2005. On January 12<sup>th</sup>, Lucas County's Chief building official, John Walters, will host ODNR's basic "how-to" training for floodplain officials. The session is scheduled to run from 10 AM to 3 PM with a working lunch (provided) with RSVP. For more information and the location of this or any of our upcoming workshops, contact our office at (614) 265-6750.

In 2004, ODNR—in partnership with the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA) and the Ohio Building Officials Association (OBOA)—conducted several **Substantial Damage Assessment Seminars** for Ohio building officials.

These presentations are intended to prepare those building officials to assist—at the request of local floodplain administrators—with the required post-disaster damage determinations.

The first deployment occurred in late September 2004 [see related article page 1]. Twenty-five building officials from across the state gathered in the City of Marietta to lend a hand with the hundreds of flood-damaged structures. Both floodplain administrators (Washington County's Connie Hoblitzell and Marietta's Wayne Rinehart) were ready with maps, community forms, and ID badges. County officials undertook to house, feed, and fuel these guest inspectors.

ODNR-staff provided an on-site review of the process. OBOA officials matched the pairs who went out with specific directions and returned after compiling invaluable information.

These teams worked long days without complaint. Each night we regrouped to discuss what had been done, what remained to be done, and

what could be improved. We echo the thanks of both Connie and Wayne to all those involved in this deployment.

This fundamental flood safety data enabled local officials to provide informed, timely service to their community as they recover from widespread flood damage. By having and utilizing this data to implement local flood safety standards, flood risk can be reduced, flood protection can be improved, and this *informed* recovery can truly be a smarter recovery.



**REMEMBER: Most FIRMs may now be viewed and portions (called *FIRMettes*) may be printed out at: [www.fema.gov/fima/](http://www.fema.gov/fima/)**

## Floodplain Management Training Available

FEMA offers on-campus & correspondence courses through their **Emergency Management Institute (EMI)** in Emmitsburg, MD.

For information or a course catalog describing EMI's Floodplain Management Courses visit: [www.training.fema.gov](http://www.training.fema.gov) or call: **800-238-3358**.

Mortgage lenders and insurance agents can learn about federal flood insurance at **Lender & Agent Seminars**. Locations and dates currently scheduled for 2005 include:

Richfield on 3/15,	Mansfield on 4/26,	Cambridge on 4/27,
Columbus on 4/28,	Cincinnati on 5/18,	Zanesville on 11/1,
Dayton on 11/2, and	Toledo on 11/3.	

For the latest information on these and other seminars call Rich Slevin, Regional Marketing Manager for the NFIP at: **630-577-1407**

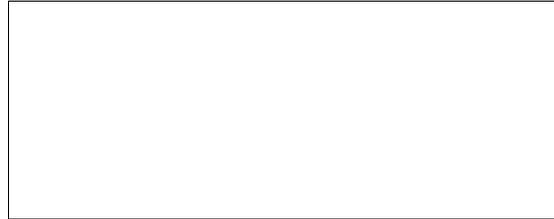


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(Call for Abstracts continued from page 5) **Conference Planning Committee:**

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**Important Dates in 2005**



March 1<sup>st</sup> Deadline for abstract submission    April 1<sup>st</sup> Notification of Acceptance    June 1<sup>st</sup> Awards nominations due  
 June 15<sup>th</sup> Scholarship applications due    August 1<sup>st</sup> Presentations and handouts due  
 August 31<sup>st</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup> **Floodplain Management in Ohio - Statewide Conference 2005**