Flood Mitigation Policy Committee Annual Status Report

ROBYN FENNIG AND JOY DUPERAULT
Introduction

The Flood Mitigation Committee mission is to support all efforts to reduce losses from flooding. This work includes, or may touch upon review or engagement with, the following measures or concepts:

- Flood mitigation policies, programs and procedures;
- Flood mitigation grant or loan programs;
- Post-disaster flood mitigation opportunities within federal, state, or local systems;
- Building sciences discussions such as building codes and practices that strengthen the built environment;
- Impacts of mitigation actions on the affordability of federal flood insurance;
- Flood mitigation efforts or studies, including the potential impacts of climate change upon flood losses and local efforts to understand future losses; climate migration due to flooding;
- Flood mitigation planning efforts including awareness of mitigation implications for all vulnerable populations as well as for social equity and environmental justice issues;
- Flood mitigation measures such as acquisition, managed retreat (relocation), elevation, reconstruction and floodproofing.

The Flood Mitigation Committee has the following objectives:

- Promote flood hazard mitigation planning and implementation through mutual support, sharing best practices, and review of technical assistance products for dissemination.
- Center climate change and other future conditions impacts in flood mitigation discussions and planning considerations.
- Include and engage marginalized populations to seek understanding about social inequities, environmental justice issues and seek solutions that support fair, balanced flood mitigation actions that support diverse populations.
- Maintain strong partnerships with other national and federal agencies, as well as for-profit and non-profit groups, to enhance flood mitigation efforts and programs throughout the country when possible.
- Support the flood mitigation approaches and concepts set forth in ASFPM’s No Adverse Impact (NAI) initiative.
- Build committee membership through outreach, conference calls and project engagement.

Current Committee Co-Chairs

Robyn Fennig CFM, Assistant Director, Hazard Mitigation, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, State of California, Governor’s Office of Emergency Services, Sacramento, CA

Joy Duperault CFM, State NFIP Coordinator, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, Boston MA
Key Accomplishments

This year was a busy year in terms of new or proposed changes to federal regulations and policy for flood hazard mitigation. There was ample opportunity to provide comments individually, as part of an agency/organization, and in conjunction with the ASFPM Policy Team. Here is just a snapshot of the Mitigation Policy Committee’s workload in the past year:

- Planned a national ASFPM webinar for May 2024 on Planned Retreat with multiple stakeholders.
- Provided feedback/comments to ASFPM Policy team on:
  - Use of the National Risk Index for consideration of vulnerable populations
  - Designation of Community Disaster Resilience Zones for prioritization of state and territorial set-aside allocations for BRIC 2023 (FEMA policy)
  - OMB A-94 Guideline and Discount Rates for BCA for Federal Programs (OMB Circular)
  - Guidance for Assessing Changes in Environmental and Ecosystem Services in Benefit-Cost Analysis document (White House document)
- Socialized updates associated with the FEMA HMA Program and Policy Guide
- Advocated to change FMA Swift Current implementation shortfalls (e.g. properties impacted in a flooding disaster event that were declared substantially damaged before the date of a declaration were previously ineligible)
- Participated in a RAND Interview series about the challenges and opportunities of combining THIRA with State Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Coordinated/collaborated with the Social Justice Work Group, Climate Change Task Force and other committees on initiatives/webinars/meetings. Helped to facilitate a Climate Change Task Force webinar on 3/8/24.
- Participated regularly in the ASFPM Risk Rating 2.0 insurance meetings and the National Violations Tracker sub-committee.

Priorities

- Carry out Planned Retreat webinar to ASFPM membership in May 2024
- Continue to monitor HMA grant programs (BRIC, HMGP, FMA) for equitable distribution.
- Continue to monitor designations and changes to the Community Disaster Resilience Zones and use of National Risk Index to determine grant eligibility or prioritization.
- Continue to support requests for comments and input to new and proposed changes to existing federal mitigation programs.

Recommended Actions

- Plan and hold committee membership calls, presentations, and webinars.
- Attend Social Justice Working Group & Climate Change Task Force meetings as possible.
- Attend ASFPM-FEMA HMA calls.
- Collaborate with appropriate groups to push above priorities.