Mapping and Engineering Standards Committee

2025 ANNUAL STATUS REPORT

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Introduction

The primary mission of the Mapping and Engineering Standards Committee is to provide policy guidance and support for floodplain mapping and engineering issues aiming to reduce future losses, costs and human suffering caused by flooding. Historically, this committee has had major impacts on FEMA's Flood Mapping Program, requirements for map modernization, Risk MAP and the National Flood Mapping Program and addressing technical issues related to flood hazards such as levees and dams.

A subcommittee of Mapping and Engineering Standards focuses on the Cooperating Technical Partner program. This subcommittee is co-chaired by Joanna Rohlf with the Kansas Department of Agriculture and Dave Guignet with the Maryland Department of the Environment. The goal is to help identify mechanisms to measure successes and share best practices among mapping partners.

Key Accomplishments

The Mapping and Engineering Standards (M&ES) committee has accomplished the following:

Reviewed FEMA's 2024 Guidelines and Standards Update. FEMA maintains standards and guidance on an annual basis to support the National Flood Mapping Program. These updates are generally released in July for review and comment and go into effect by the end of the year. When the notices are received from FEMA, the M&ES Committee distributes the notice and solicits comments from its membership.

Participated in four FEMA Operating Partners meetings to resolve technical and policy issues related to the National Flood Mapping Program.

Participated in the Technical Mapping Advisory Council and provided input to FEMA regarding National Flood Mapping Program metrics, implementation, policies and products, including future conditions and the impacts of climate change, including how the program can improve equity.

The CTP subcommittee facilitated the exchange of information through the following webinars:

- Planning for Flood Resilience: Integrating Hazard Mitigation and Floodplain Management Planning – February 21, 2024
- FEMA 2D Modeling Integrated Planning Team – May 7, 2024
- FEMA Technical Mapping Advisory Council – September 12, 2024
- Dam Failure Inundation Mapping – November 6, 2024
- Future Conditions Flood Mapping 2025 Update – January 7, 2025

Recordings of past CTP webinars are available online through the CTP Information Exchange.

Challenges

- Cancellation of TMAC and FEMA Operating Partners meetings has limited opportunities for collaborative problem-solving, technical feedback, and engagement with FEMA Headquarters.
- Inconsistent guidance from FEMA Regions to state and local partners regarding programmatic requirements, future funding, and reimbursements.
- Significant delays in reimbursements have caused many CTPs to stop work resulting in delays in critical map updates.
- Ongoing uncertainty surrounding the availability, timing, and requirements of federal grant programs is making it difficult for communities and partners to plan and prioritize.
- Significant turnover among local, state, and federal partners has resulted in loss of institutional knowledge, inconsistent interpretation of program rules, and reduced capacity across the board.
- FEMA Headquarters having limited external communication has resulted in a decline in participation of federal partners in meetings, conferences, and collaborative projects has impacted coordination and information sharing.
- Lack of clear communication on the status of FEMA's Future of Flood Risk Data (FFRD) initiative.

Priorities

- Support continued and increased funding for the National Flood Mapping Program.
- Reestablish and Strengthen Communication and Collaboration with FEMA Headquarters.
- Advocate for Timely and Predictable Funding and Reimbursements.
- Push to restart partnership meetings, such as Operating Partners and TMAC, to improve the National Flood Mapping Program.
- Work with FEMA and Congress to encourage further development of the CTP program.
- Continue to offer information exchange webinars on issues related to CTPs.
- Work to further the guidance and standards regarding 2D Floodways and the overall floodway concept.
- Work with FEMA to support and inform the Future of Flood Risk Data.

Recommended Actions

- Advocate for continued and increased investment in the National Flood Mapping Program, emphasizing its importance for public safety, resilience planning, and local decision-making.
- Support the reactivation of TMAC to help shape national flood risk policy and guidance.

- Advocate for the reinstatement of FEMA Operating Partners meetings, which are critical for advancing committee goals, providing direct programmatic feedback to FEMA Headquarters, and addressing technical and policy issues raised by ASFPM membership.
- Organize and facilitate regular calls and outreach with CTP subcommittee and general committee membership. Coordination and collaboration with ASFPM Flood Science Center, FEMA CTP Program Coordinator, and FEMA CTP Community of Practice (CoP).
- Conceive, develop, and present webinars on topics relevant and beneficial to CTPs that support capacity building.
- Review ongoing federal policy and rulemaking activities, including proposed federal mapping appropriations and FEMA Guidelines and Standards updates. Coordinate with other ASFPM committees as appropriate. Provide input and comments on issues that are relevant to the committee mission.
- Prepare for the national policy meeting and lead discussions at the annual committee meeting. Prepare agenda lineup of topics and speakers; and prepare notes of annual committee meeting for distribution to the committee members and/or posting on the website. Lead discussions at the annual CTP subcommittee meeting and coordinate logistics on a CTP social event at the annual conference.
- Organize, facilitate and complete action items associated with quarterly group conference calls.
- Explore social media options for communicating with committee members and work to identify a committee member as a webmaster. Maintenance and update of the M&ES Committee ASFPM webpage.