Letter From the Chair

Welcome to the Pre-Conference issue of the FMA Newsletter. Our annual conference, to be held at the MontBleu Resort in South Lake Tahoe, September 4-7, will be another great event for all of us. Get your reservations and sign up right away so that you can be sure to be in attendance for the many policy discussions and technical sessions. This year’s conference will feature ten workshops, three fieldtrips, eight panel sessions, and fifteen technical sessions. In addition we will have our evening reception, plenary sessions, keynote luncheon, and dinner with entertainment. Our conferences are excellent opportunities to network with others who face the same challenges as you do, and at the same time learn from their experience. We also plan on having some fun and enjoying the beautiful Lake Tahoe scenery.

This conference will also mark the end of my second year as FMA Chair. I have enjoyed serving in this position and certainly appreciate the support of the rest of the Board of Directors and of course our very energetic Executive Director, Iovanka Todt.

Some random thoughts as I end my term:

♦ Even though it took the disaster of Katrina to bring it about, it’s good that flood management is once again high priority that has the support of both government and citizens.
♦ I am especially encouraged that more and more people in government are starting to realize that floodplain management is as important if not more important than flood management.
♦ Avoidance of flooding by keeping people out of floodplains may be harder in the short term, but it is much better in the long term than trying to control flooding. Gilbert F. White wrote in 1942, “Floods are acts of God, but flood losses are largely acts of men.”
♦ It has been my experience that when I try to think outside the box, someone stomps on me and throws me back in the box. That said, we must keep thinking outside the box as we work to better manage floodplains and their impacts on man as well as man’s impacts on them.
♦ We, our constituents, clients, and government officials need to eradicate the idea that 100-year protection from floods (as codified in the NFIP) is adequate.
♦ We also need to help everyone understand that having flood insurance does not “solve” a flooding problem. As our colleagues from the Netherlands (with their 1,250- to 10,000-year flood protection) say, “Flood prevention is better than flood mitigation.”

FMA is a great organization and I look forward to seeing all of you in a couple of weeks.

Eric Clyde
Collaborative Approaches to Integrated Floodplain Management
FMA Conference—Sept 4-7, 2007
South Lake Tahoe, Nevada

The Floodplain Management Association (FMA) Annual Conference is the premier conference bringing together over 350 attendees from all over the United States to discuss the latest in planning, programs, strategies, regulations and technologies in floodplain management. Don’t miss this year’s outstanding program, which includes three workshops on legal issues in floodplain management which are essential to every agency and organization involved in the floodplain. Visit www.floodplain.org to download the program at-a-glance, the full program and the registration information. This year, we look forward to a record number of attendees and unprecedented opportunities for discussions and networking.

FMA would also like to invite conference attendees to the following ice-breaker event the day before the Fall Conference at South Lake Tahoe:

**Mountain Bike the Flume Trail, 12:00 Noon, Monday, September 3, 2007**
This great ride begins at the Spooner Lake day use area in the Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park on the east side of Lake Tahoe. It climbs to near the Tahoe Rim and proceeds along an old water flume with fantastic views of Lake Tahoe. This is a strenuous ride, but it is well worth it. There are two options, one ride from Spooner Lake along the Flume Trail then descend to Sand harbor along the east shore of Lake Tahoe (about 13 miles) and grab a shuttle back to Spooner Lake ($10 or $12 cost). The second is a more strenuous, 23 mile loop which loops back to Spooner Lake near the Tahoe Rim. Information and maps are available at www.theflumetrail.com. We will meet in the parking lot at Spooner Lake at 12:00 Noon, Monday, September 3, 2007. Bring your own mountain bike, or rent one at the trailhead (www.theflumetrail.com). Bring your own water, food, cameras and enthusiasm. Car pooling to Spooner Lake is encouraged. Please RSVP to Tom Smythe at tom_s@co.lake.ca.us.

**NFIP Regulation Changes - Suggestions on the NFIP Floodplain Management Regulations**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is now soliciting comments on changes, clarifications, additions, or other modifications to the NFIP Regulations located in 44 CFR. The last revision to NFIP Regulations was more than a decade ago. When providing comments on the NFIP Regulations, you should think beyond what FEMA currently has in regulations and think about what changes are needed in order for the NFIP to be more effective and efficient.

ASFPM provided extensive comments to FEMA concerning regulation changes a number of years ago in FEMA’s Call for Issues. We also now have “National Flood Programs and Policies in Review - 2007”, which provides extensive comments dealing with NFIP regulation changes.
This document is available on the ASFPM website at http:// www.floods.org/PDF/ASFPM_NFPPR_2007.pdf

ASFPM will be providing comments to FEMA on regulation changes. However, it is very important that you at the local and state levels also share your ideas and thoughts concerning NFIP regulation changes with FEMA.

You need to provide your comments to FEMA by no later than September 20, 2007. You should send your comments to Mr. David Stearrett, Chief of the Floodplain Management Section at David.Stearrett@dhs.gov, or Ms. Lois Forster in the Floodplain Management Section at Lois.Forster@dhs.gov.

Flood Protection Agencies and Non-Profit Organizations

By:
R. Mitch Avalon, Deputy Chief Engineer
Contra Costa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District

Supporting NGO’s is a Strategic Business Decision

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) are essential partners in today’s world of water, watersheds and natural resources. And because of the critical role NGO’s play in providing community input, regional coordination and specialized staff, it is also essential for government agencies and Special Districts to work towards ensuring their long-term sustainability.

Though NGO’s vary greatly in the range of activities they conduct and the capacity they have to perform work, they all have one thing in common. They all have very well informed and dedicated staff. There are many NGO’s working in the watershed and creek arena who would love to partner with a Flood Control District or other government agency to improve the overall health of a watershed, riparian area, stream system, or a particular habitat. There are many watershed related NGO’s in every area. Just a sampling of NGO’s in Contra Costa County include several Friends of “Your” Creek and Watershed Councils, the Urban Creeks Council, the Natural Heritage Institute, four significant land trust organizations, the Watershed Project (formerly the Aquatic Outreach Institute), single project groups or groups representing specific creek reaches such as the Alhambra Valley Creek Coalition, educational groups such as the Environmental Studies Academy and many more.

NGO’s can assist a flood control district or other government agency to develop a successful project; a project that is more fundable, has more community support, and often has a quicker permitting process. NGO’s can assist an agency in several key project areas:

- Project planning/Community support
- Grant funding
- Implementation/Permitting
- Project monitoring/Adaptive management

Partnerships between agencies and NGO’s are an opportunity to bring government and the governed into a mutually beneficial relationship.

Why this is a Strategic Business Decision

There are many reasons why helping NGO’s thrive is a good business decision for agencies. We have all come to realize that in today’s environment it is almost impossible to plan, design and build a project on our own. Successful projects require multiple partners, multiple funding sources and extensive community and stakeholder outreach. Partnering with NGO’s can help us achieve our mission collectively and collaboratively.

Grants: Many watershed related grants require a project to be part of a Watershed Management Plan. In my experience, the most successful and sustainable Watershed Management Plans are those prepared by a stakeholder group with participation and support from local agencies. NGO’s can often represent a large segment of the stakeholders in a watershed. In our experience, a grant application submitted by a flood control agency is not as successful as a grant application submitted by a flood control agency and a NGO.

Integrated Regional Water Management Plans: A large portion of bond money in California will be funneled statewide through the Integrated Regional Water Management Plans. These plans require a fully integrated approach across all water resource service areas (waste water/reclaimed water, potable water supply/water quality, stormwater/flood control, watershed/habitat). The watershed/habitat water resource service area is the domain of many NGO’s, and receiving funding will require incorporating elements of their projects into your regional management plans and projects.

Bay Area Stream Goals: A group of watershed-minded folks in the Bay Area are working to develop regional and watershed level goals to improve the health of the stream system. The intent is for each watershed to ultimately have a set of goals and restoration templates by stream reach. This will provide agencies and NGO’s who work on restoration projects to follow a restoration template that will provide a sustainable stream system that balances the hydrological, ecological and geomorphological needs of the system. The project proposes a multi-step process to achieve these restoration templates and goals. The process includes developing information on the historical ecology of the particular watershed, identifying creek system problems, and identifying areas for restoration and preservation; all through an involved stakeholder process. The community’s socio-economic and recreational needs are also considered in the stakeholder process. It is recognized that a successful stakeholder process and sustainable implementation of the restoration goals would have to include local watershed groups and NGO’s.

Volunteer Coordination: Volunteers are a motivated, skilled (and free!) work force and resource. There are many volunteers in any
given watershed who want to help improve watershed health. NGO’s provide a comfortable organization for volunteers to work with. The NGO’s coordinate volunteer activities, provide training, recruitment and a local point for all volunteer efforts in a watershed. These volunteer efforts can greatly enhance an agency’s watershed program.

**Mitigation:** It is becoming increasingly difficult to find sites to mitigate our capital improvement projects and extensive maintenance projects. We have negotiated with some regulatory agencies to allow us to fund NGO projects as acceptable mitigation.

**Credibility:** Working with NGO’s in various watersheds improves the credibility and image of an agency with the community and regulatory agencies.

**True Partners:** Over time, in any successful partnership, each partner better understands the needs, interests, and constraints of their partner. The result is that often times a partner NGO will advocate for your agency unsolicited because they have become a true partner. You should be prepared to do the same for them.

**Extension of Staff:** Over time NGO’s can almost be viewed as an extension of your staff. Assuming there is a solid relationship and level of trust, NGO’s will work shoulder to shoulder with agency staff on common projects.

**Customer Service:** With NGO’s augmenting agency resources by assisting in community outreach and providing a network of eyes on the creeks, outfalls, erosion areas, etc, the agency can more effectively provide its core services to the community.

**Staff Development:** NGO’s often have a different perspective and approach to community outreach and project planning. Partnering with NGO’s provides an important learning opportunity for staff to expand their knowledge base in addressing project challenges.

**Challenges**

It sounds easy, just pick up the phone and call your local NGO and ask if they would like to partner on your next project. In fact, it can be that easy. But of course there can also be challenges to establishing sustainable partnerships with NGO’s.

**Funding:** We all have funding constraints and many demands on our limited resources. While lack of funding can be a deterrent to trying something new or a different business model, it can also be a strong motivator for trying something new or different.

**Culture:** The culture of some agencies will initially make it difficult to work with NGO’s in such a non-traditional manner. In other words, some agencies have an unwritten ethos that says “we have always done it this way, and we don’t want to change”. Working with a NGO may be outside their comfort zone and they may have to be brought into a working relationship incrementally.

**Legitimacy:** Some agencies may not view NGO’s as legitimate organizations that their agency should be partnering with. This may be due to agency staff not appreciating the expertise and abilities of NGO staff.

**Expanding Customer Base:** Partnering with NGO’s, or other organizations, can create additional coordination work for agency staff.

**Institutional Arrangements:** NGO’s have a different mindset than the array of consultants that agencies are used to working with. NGO’s may be less attuned to all the peculiar contracting and other institutional requirements that agencies have for partnering or contracting with another group. Conversely, NGO’s can mobilize more quickly on smaller projects without a cumbersome internal bureaucracy.

**Consistency in Purpose:** Close coordination is essential since multiple players in a project can lead to multiple visions and expectations of the end product. This can lead to inefficiencies and political turmoil.

**Some Solutions**

It’s not an easy nut to crack. Before you can partner with a NGO you must establish a relationship, and relationships take time and energy. For the last several years we have been working hard to change our culture and our approach to conducting business to be more inclusive in our decision making and more transparent in our operations. It is still a work in progress, however, the following are some of the things that we have tried and have worked for us:

**Resource Conservation District:** We have partnered with our local Resource Conservation District to assist NGO’s throughout our county. The Resource Conservation District has a tremendous amount of experience working with local creek and watershed groups in providing staff support for their meetings and activities. In Contra Costa County, upper watersheds are typically dominated by agricultural interests. The Resource Conservation District is especially good at establishing a degree of trust with ranchers and farmers within a Watershed Council or Friends of “Your” Creek group. The Resource Conservation District has obtained grants over the years to provide staff support for many of our watershed groups.

**Local Grants:** Two years ago in Contra Costa County, we allocated $100,000 per year for a three year period to fund a local grant program. We hired a NGO to manage the awarding, distribution, monitoring and coordination of the grant funds. The intent of the grants is to assist local creek and watershed groups (NGO’s) to implement projects and provide support for their organization. This program was well received and has been quite successful at supporting a diverse collection of projects and programs that benefit watershed interests in our county.

**Agency Support:** Each year we budget funds to pay for agency staff to support NGO efforts. For example, we often provide maps to creek and watershed groups for their specific projects. We also provide supplies or loan equipment such as GPS units. We also provide hydrological information for restoration and design work and information and guidance on regulatory permits. And we attend NGO meetings to educate community members on government processes, the history of our flood control projects and restoration efforts we have used, our latest projects, etc. These efforts are provided to NGO’s at no cost to them.

**Symposium:** Every four years the County sponsors a Contra Costa County Creek and Watershed Symposium. The Symposium is a conference-style, full day event with speakers, poster sessions and breakout groups. The Symposia are opportunities for NGO’s and government agencies to network as well as learn about the latest innovations in watershed health and creek restoration. The Symposia are put together by a planning group led by our County Community Development Department.

**Watershed Forum:** The Contra Costa Watershed Forum was established to provide a venue for creek and watershed groups and other
interested agencies and parties to exchange information and lessons learned on a regular basis. The Forum meets every other month for 2.5 hours. The beginning of the agenda is set aside for a “roundtable” discussion where participants introduce themselves and have the opportunity to provide a brief update of their activities. There are also presentations made on significant restoration projects and project development throughout the County.

**Fiscal Agent:** Sometimes NGO’s do not qualify to receive some grant or mitigation funds. In those instances we have been able to partner with the NGO and funding entity to have the grant funds pass through our agency to the NGO. For example, Caltrans recently wanted to satisfy a mitigation requirement by funding a NGO restoration project. The funding requirements precluded the money from going to a NGO. We agreed to act as the fiscal agent for the NGO and take in the funds for their project.

**Recognizing Success:** We recently began an awards program through our Contra Costa Watershed Forum to recognize individuals in the NGO and local community that have done outstanding work in their watershed. This provides inspiration to others working in watersheds, as well as drawing the attention of the media, elected officials, and funders to the work we do in our area.

**Restoration and Planning Tools:** We provide as many resources as we can to assist NGO’s in maintaining their organizations. These include lending equipment such as GPS units and providing how-to manuals on establishing and maintaining a watershed council. Three years ago our Community Development Department, through the Watershed Forum, produced a Countywide Watershed Atlas, which has a wealth of information that NGO’s can utilize. The Atlas includes information in each watershed on land use, demographics, hydrology, ecology and other watershed related information.

**Lobbying:** There are always opportunities for your agency to lend support for grants or legislation that will help fund NGO operations or NGO projects. If we lobby for our projects we can lobby for NGO projects. If our project is a partnership with a NGO, then we should clearly say so. We can also impress on our local elected officials the important role NGO’s play in our community-based planning process.

**Political Processes and Programs:** Our Board of Supervisor’s formed a Fish and Wildlife Committee to advise them on wildlife and habitat issues. The committee is funded through Fish and Game fines. The fines generate enough revenue to fund a small annual grant program for NGO projects. We also need to work with the NGO’s, and in some cases coach them, on the importance of and nuances of political processes. When to involve elected officials, and the protocol of working with local government staff, councils, and boards.

**Contra Costa Watershed Forum**

Of all the efforts we have undertaken to help support our NGO community, the most effective and important has been the Contra Costa Watershed Forum, so it is worthwhile to describe our Watershed Forum in more detail.

The Watershed Forum was an outgrowth of our first Creek and Watershed Symposium held on April 7, 1999, which attracted approximately 300 attendees. There was an incredible amount of energy and desire to move multiple issues forward in improving creeks and watersheds. The group which planned and organized the symposium recommended establishing a standing committee, comprised of a broad spectrum of interests, to continue to discuss creek and watershed issues. This standing committee, which became the Contra Costa Watershed Forum, would share information amongst participants, improve coordination throughout the County, and develop new ideas and approaches to creek and watershed problems while fostering consensus around these issues.

The County Board of Supervisors formally recognized the Contra Costa Watershed Forum and authorized the Community Development Department and the Public Works Department to provide support to the Forum. However, the Forum is not a Board formed committee, and therefore has an independent status. The Forum is an open committee of local government representatives, non-profit creek and environmental education organizations, special districts, community groups, environmental regulatory agencies, and anyone else interested in creek and watershed issues. Meetings are held every other month and are open to anyone who wishes to attend. There is no defined membership and the Forum has no “legal” authority. The Forum agenda is generated by an Executive Committee, an open membership committee, generally three weeks before the regular meetings. Staffing of the Forum is provided by the County’s Community Development Department.

The overarching mission of the Forum is to identify common principles among parties involved in creek and watershed issues and promote actions that transform those principles into multi-objective enhancements of creeks and watersheds throughout the County. Due to its informal yet effective approach, the Forum is very well attended and very highly regarded throughout the County. Efforts to emulate our Forum have begun in neighboring counties such as Alameda County and Napa County. Below is a brief list of accomplishments the Contra Costa Watershed Forum has achieved over the last several years:

- **Quadrennial Symposium:** Hosts a countywide, all day symposium on creek and watershed issues every four years. Held in 1999, and 2003, each has attracted over 300 attendees. The next Symposium is in November 2007.
- **Mini Symposia:** Smaller versions of the Countywide Symposium held bi-annually in three sub-regions of the county. Each symposium is held at night and focuses on issues specific to that sub-region of the County.
- **Watershed Atlas:** Produced an award winning Watershed Atlas as a resource for all participants and interested parties throughout the county.
- **Website:** Developed a website for the Forum (www.cocowaterweb.org) which provides information for those that cannot attend the regular meetings.
- **Volunteer Data Collection:** Developed a program for community based volunteer data collection using GPS units in creeks throughout the county. Two graduate students led a cadre of volunteers in several watersheds collecting data on plant communities, outfalls into the creeks, erosion areas, barriers, etc, and prepared a summary report of the data. The program was so successful it has been extended with grant funding for several years now.
- **Benthic Macrouvertebrate Study:** Developed a grant and partner funded program to collect samples of macroinvertebrates (bugs) in creeks to assess water quality. Started out at a few sites in 2001 and has now been expanded to 50 sites throughout the county. This project has logged over 6,000 volunteer hours. This data is used in our County’s clean water (NPDES)
An Example Project

So how does all this really work in the real world on a real project? The following are two examples. The first example is a short description of a very complex project that outlines the important role that NGO's can play in an agency project.

Project Planning/Community Support: The County could not afford the entire drainage project so grant funds were needed. To make the project competitive for grant funding and leverage existing funds, community interest and habitat restoration, the Friends of Alhambra Creek volunteered to restore a meadow in the upper watershed that was a source of sedimentation. This meadow was on National Park Service property and part of the John Muir Historic Site. Several property owners along Alhambra Creek objected to the project. They were concerned about storm flows discharging from the proposed drainage pipe into the creek. The Friends of Alhambra Creek, Alhambra Creek Watershed Council and County staff met with the property owners and walked the creek. Afterwards everyone agreed to work together on a subsequent project to restore the creek banks along the private parcels. This subsequent restoration effort has led to the formation of the Alhambra Valley Creek Coalition, which is a project-specific group focused on restoring a one mile section of Alhambra Creek.

Grant Funding: The Friends of Alhambra Creek applied for the project grant, which included some drainage work and the meadow restoration. The grant received funding from the State but the Friends of Alhambra Creek could not meet all State requirements for receiving the funds. The County then became the fiscal agent for the grant funds.

Implementation/Permitting: The meadow restoration work was constructed on Park Service property and the outfall pipe into Alhambra Creek crossed the Park Service property where John Muir’s grave site is located. The project team included the National Park Service, Resource Conservation District, Friends of Alhambra Creek, Alhambra Creek Watershed Council, Contra Costa County, City of Martinez, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The team approach allowed us to move through the CEQA/NEPA process and secure permits with the regulatory agencies quicker than if it was simply a county project.

Project Monitoring/Adaptive Management: The Strentzel Meadow restoration resulted in a meandering channel through the meadow within a broad floodplain. Large storm flows spill out of the low flow channel and drop sediment onto the floodplain before collecting in a ditch and pipe system down to Alhambra Creek. On New Years Eve 2005, a severe storm hit the watershed washing debris down to the trash rack at the pipe entrance. This resulted in flows spilling over a small levee and flooding a portion of the downstream neighborhood.

The team met after the storm to evaluate the performance of the project. After several months of work, the team developed a plan to correct the deficiencies and still meet the project criteria. As a result, we are now working on capturing debris further upstream of the trash rack in a manner that meets the aesthetic values of the Park Service.

The second example concerns the disposition of a piece of surplus property. The Flood Control District owned 36 acres adjacent to a detention basin. The 36 acres was used to place fill from the basin construction and was no longer needed. The Flood Control District decided to subdivide the property to maximize the proceeds from the sale of the property. The property was a choice parcel, with views of the Ygnacio Valley below. It was also in the viewshed of Mount Diablo and situated at the entrance to Mount Diablo State Park, the most prominent park in our county. The property was located in the unincorporated county. After several years of processing a development application, the neighborhoods had organized and formalized a group opposing the project and solidified their position to keep the property in open space. At that point it also became clear that a tentative subdivision map would not likely be approved on the property.

A local NGO, a land trust, stepped in and in over the course of several years was able to broker a deal between the Flood Control District, the community group, the neighboring city and the Regional Park District. The end result was the purchase of a conservation easement over the property in favor of the Park District. The NGO was an essential partner during the negotiations, as the community group did not trust the Flood Control District but did trust the NGO. The NGO understood the Flood Control District’s needs and was able to explain this to the community group allowing the negotiations to move forward. Through a collaborative effort with the NGO, the Flood Control District received cash for the easement and the right to deposit sediment and spoils from our maintenance projects in the watershed. The community group preserved their viewshed, the Park District expanded their holdings and the City secured the right to construct a staging area and equestrian facility on a portion of the property. A win-win for everyone.

Summary

We need to recognize that many Non-Governmental Organizations have the same interests we have, but not the same resources. Many barely survive from grant to grant. Non-Governmental Organizations can play an important role in an agency’s overall approach to conducting business within creeks and watersheds. The degree of effectiveness, however, will be measured by how successful the relationships are and the level of support we can provide in the form
California Floodplain Managers, Plan Ahead

By: Eran Goudes, FloodSmart Campaign

More and more, California’s floodplain managers operate under public scrutiny. Citizens, community groups, water management authorities and elected officials increasingly are turning to floodplain managers as authorities on any number of potentially controversial topics—from how new flood hazard maps affect flood risk to the integrity of local levees to the need for and availability of flood insurance. With the onset of California’s rainy season this fall, the increased risk of flooding associated with recent wildfires, and planned levee upgrades through the Central Valley and the San Joaquin delta, questions are sure to escalate. Communications before the next flood occurs can help community members better understand their flood risk and take steps to protect lives and property.

California’s Flood Risks

Rainy Season. The heavy rains that usually begin in late October and extend through the winter rainy season bring the majority of yearly rainfall to the region. Each year during the fall/winter rainy season, Californians face the risk of flooding and mudflows that can damage homes and businesses. It’s not too early to begin thinking about proactive outreach to your community to help them prepare for financially dangerous weather-related events in the near future. Community meetings and local media could help carry the message.

Wildfires. Already in California this year, there have been over 3,000 wildfires destroying over 33,000 acres of land (source: National Interagency Fire Center). The charred and denuded ground that results from summer’s extensive wildfires makes certain areas unable to absorb water, and therefore especially susceptible to flooding, mudflows, mudslides and landslides. Properties that were directly affected by the fires, as well as those located below or downstream of the burned areas, will all be at risk of severe flooding once the winter rainy season commences. Yet few of these property owners typically carry flood insurance. Again, proactive outreach at the start of flood season can help reduce the chances of financial losses and citizen outrage when flooding occurs.

Levee Systems. No levee provides full protection from flooding and increased rains during the fall through winter months can weaken the ability of levee systems to effectively contain rising waters. When levees fail, they fail catastrophically—but the citizens living behind levees are often unaware of the full extent of their flood risk. FEMA is now including warnings about the risks behind levees on all flood maps. Your residents need to be aware of the risks as well, and understand that even if flood insurance is not a requirement, it is available and offers financial protection from flooding.

Role of Floodplain Managers

As a floodplain manager, you can help reduce community vulnerability by sharing information about flood risks and flood insurance. Your role in educating the public prepares communities for flood disasters and helps them recover. Now is the time to join forces with local insurance agents and elected officials and begin notifying your community about the risks of flooding and the rewards of flood insurance. These efforts strengthen the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and help maintain its ability to support the work of floodplain managers.

NFIP Resources to Support Floodplain Managers. The NFIP provides a wealth of information that can strengthen your residents’ and business owners’ understanding of flood-related issues, including how to prepare for floods, how to obtain financial protection against flood damage and what to do after a flood disaster. Feel free to utilize these materials when reaching out to your community.

Visit www.FloodSmart.gov to learn how to prepare for floods, how to purchase a flood insurance policy, and what the benefits are of protecting home and property against flooding.

Visit www.fema.gov/business/nfip/hillsbo1.shtml and download a Map Change Toolkit of customizable templates that will help you communicate the effect of map changes on residents being mapped into or out of the floodplain.

Access the FloodSmart campaign’s comprehensive Flood Outreach Toolkit to help you answer tough flood-related questions. The kit contains materials such as fact sheets on flood insurance, preparedness topics, and the implications of local map changes. Please e-mail info@femafloodsmart.com to request a copy of the CD.

Access resources on levees from the NFIP, fact sheets on living behind levees, and answers to frequently asked questions via www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/fhm/lv_intro.shtml.

Upcoming Floodplain Management Association Conference

Please also be sure to attend FloodSmart’s sessions at the FMA 2007 Annual Conference, September 4th through 7th, 2007 at the MontBleu Resort & Casino, in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. All of the above-mentioned resources will be available as well as a preview of the new levee materials currently in development.