

**Florida Floodplain Managers Association
2019 Annual Conferences
Abstracts**

Title: CRS credit for protecting natural floodplain functions

Length: 30 minutes

Subject: Community Rating System (CRS)

Target Audience: Local officials, CRS Coordinators

Presenter Name: French Wetmore, CFM
Consultant
French & Associates, Ltd.

Biography: French Wetmore is President of French & Associates, a floodplain management consulting firm in Steilacoom, Washington.

After graduating from Indiana University in 1968, French served in the Army for three years. He then received a Master’s in Public Administration from Syracuse University (1972) and worked as a city administrator for several Illinois communities. After some of them flooded, he became Chief of Local Floodplain Programs for the Illinois Division of Water Resources and State Flood Insurance Coordinator until 1988.

French was the lead consultant to FEMA and the Insurance Services Office on the Community Rating System from its inception in 1988 through 2014. He was the primary author of the CRS Coordinator’s Manual and numerous guides for communities on the CRS. He is still a consultant to the program.

French served as Chair of the Association of State Floodplain Managers (1985 – 1987) and President of the Certification Board of Regents (2001 – 2004).

Co-Presenter: None

Biography:

Abstract: CRS credit for protecting natural floodplain functions

The Community Rating System is a part of the National Flood Insurance Program. As such, it should focus on ways to reduce flood damage to insurable buildings. However, in 1993 Congress added a new goal to the program “to encourage adoption of more effective measures that protect natural and beneficial floodplain functions.” Since then, the CRS has given increased attention to protecting natural functions with more elements, credit points, and prerequisites.

Concurrently, floodplain managers have worked more and more with their counterparts in agencies that address stormwater management, water quality, public lands, environmental protection, and restoration of critical habitat. We have found that these other programs can help discourage floodplain development and protect riparian areas, i.e., they can be allies in our efforts to minimize damage-prone development in flood hazard areas.

This talk will review the elements that credit programs that protect natural floodplain functions, especially programs developed to protect threatened and endangered species

and restore their critical habitat. It will also identify other agencies that implement these programs and can help facilitate CRS credits.