

JUNE  
2013

# HIGH WATERS

*A Publication of the New Mexico Floodplain Managers Association*

## 2013 Fall Workshop –October 16 - 18, 2013 Hobbs, New Mexico

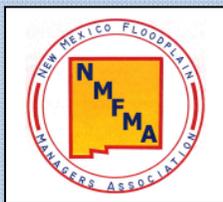
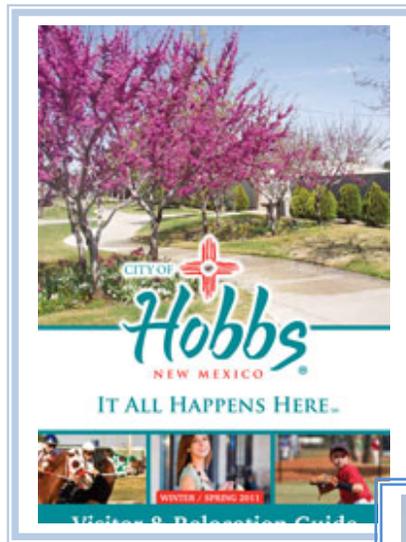
**MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND PLAN TO ATTEND THIS FALL**

Lorenzo Velasquez is the Conference Director [lvelasquez@leacounty.net](mailto:lvelasquez@leacounty.net) and Cassie Corley is the Program Director [ccorley@leacounty.net](mailto:ccorley@leacounty.net). More information about the program agenda will be available as soon as the program develops. If you are interested in making a presentation at the workshop, please contact Cassie.

Stay tuned. More information about registration, Hotel and agenda will be posted on the NMFMA web site and in the September Newsletter.

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## New Mexico Certified Floodplain Managers

**Grant Pinkerton, CFM**

**Chair, Certification Committee**

**575-937-1691**



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*If you would like to join the list of CFMs, visit the NMFMA web site at [www.nmfma.org](http://www.nmfma.org) for details."*

The purpose of the CFM exam is not necessarily to show that a person is an expert in all aspects of floods and other natural disasters. The exam is designed to determine whether a person has enough knowledge of floodplain management and the NFIP to be considered competent enough to perform the duties of a local floodplain manager. The exam is not a simple thing to pass. The categories of the questions on the exam include the overall context of floodplain management, floodplain mapping, NFIP regulatory standards, regulatory administrative procedures, flood insurance, flood hazard mitigation, and natural and beneficial functions. The exam questions are simply stated, but to get the right answers you must have a comprehensive understanding of these concepts, which is difficult to gain in just a few weeks or months.

Other state programs have developed a prerequisite for taking the CFM exam which includes prior experience in the field of floodplain management and taking classes or some other form of formal study related to floodplain management. The New Mexico CFM Program does not have prior requirements for taking the exam so we have a large number of people who apply for the exam before they have the chance to gain the knowledge necessary to pass the exam.

We have a legislative requirement in NM that each community with flood maps must have a CFM on board to administer their floodplain management ordinance and that seems to bring people in to take the exam prematurely. Administration of the local flood prevention ordinance is a requirement of FEMA, so a community with mapped flood hazard areas must have a floodplain manager administering the local ordinance. But it is OK if the floodplain manager takes a year or two to gain the knowledge and experience required to become certified. Check with Bill Borthwick, the State NFIP Coordinator here in NM to find out more about the requirements. Work with your local ordinance and maps and attend the NMFMA workshops that are held every Spring and Fall to become familiar with the concepts of floodplain management.

One of the best educational tools for learning about floodplain management is the FEMA E273 course, Managing Floodplain Development through the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA Region 6 tries to bring this 4 day course to New Mexico each year, but it is not always possible. A good substitute for the course is the FEMA 480 home study guide, which is essentially the same document used to teach the FEMA E273 course. The 480 can be downloaded from the ASFPM web site at

<http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuid=389&firstlevelmenuid=180&siteid=1> .

During your period of training for the exam, don't hesitate to contact other CFMs in your area for assistance with any questions you may have. There is a list of CFMs on our web site, and if you are an NMFMA member, you can look up contact information on the member listing.

## News from the NMFMA Conference Chair

**Mike Czosnek, CFM**  
**(575) 835-0240**  
[mczosnek@socorronm.gov](mailto:mczosnek@socorronm.gov)



On behalf of the Conference Committee I would like to offer up a big THANK YOU to Hoss Foster and Loretta Hatch. It became clear to me as we drew closer to the Spring Workshop/Conference that the Village of Los Lunas wasn't really set up for large conferences and meetings. Despite that, Hoss and Loretta were able to put together a pretty darn good workshop/conference. Again Thanks!

The Conference Committee would also like to offer up a big Thank You to all of our sponsors for helping make this workshop/conference a financial success. They are listed on the NMFMA web site home page.

The Conference Committee has the next three workshop/conference destinations etched in granite.

- Fall 2013 will be Oct. 15-18 in Hobbs, NM. Lorenzo Velasquez will be the Conference Director.
- Spring 2014 will be April 15-18, 2014 in Clovis, NM. Louis Gordon will be the Conference Director. We are also hoping to reach out to the Texas Floodplain Management Association (TFMA) and have them encourage their membership to attend this workshop. Members of TFMA will be permitted to register at our membership rate of \$125.00. We are also hoping to attract in excess of 10 exhibitors with a target of at least 20.
- Fall 2014 will be Oct. 14-17, 2014 in Elephant Butte, NM. Carlos Bustamante will be the Conference Director. We hope there will be some water in Elephant Butte reservoir by then.

In addition the Conference Committee is currently meeting to edit, update and if needed, rewrite the NMFMA Conference Manual. Once completed the first official copy will be sent to Lorenzo in Hobbs, although early reports seem to indicate he may not need too much help The Conference Manual will include past conference director reports. These reports will contain valuable information for future conference directors.

The Conference Committee is still seeking a location and Conference Director for the Spring 2015 Workshop/Conference. Anyone interested please check the website and contact the Conference Committee. The website contains valuable information such as, Conference Format, Duties of the Conference Director and duties of the Program Director.

## NEW MEXICO FAREWELL FROM DALE HOFF

I don't know what to say. I found out a couple weeks ago that I was going to be reassigned to my old area of North Central Texas. That produced a boat load (my favorite phrase) of uncomfortable feelings. Although it wasn't completely unexpected, a few of us were realigned to different geographic areas when 2 positions opened up.

In my just over 5 years in New Mexico, I met many good people who were of the type and style I found most comfortable. Since I am originally from southern Utah, I really felt at home around my New Mexico family. I learned a great deal and I hope I have left a few good things behind. I also made some life-long friends.

Mayra Diaz will be taking my place in addition to her other area – the Panhandle of Texas. I'm sure she will do a good job.

I don't want to say goodbye because every time I go to Utah, I have to (get to) drive through New Mexico. Every time I do that, I will remember my friends along the way. You can always reach me using the contact information I gave you. Please use it as I will never forget you.

Please take care my friends

Dale



## MITIGATION IDEAS

Excerpt from Page 4 of Publication:

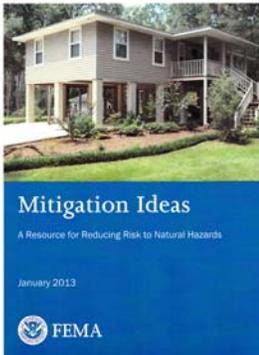
January 2013 FEMA released a new publication entitled, "Mitigation Ideas, A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards.

The purpose of the document is to provide a resource that communities can use to identify and evaluate a range of potential mitigation actions for reducing risk to natural hazards and disasters.

The focus of this document is mitigation, which is action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to hazards. Mitigation is different from preparedness, which is action taken to improve emergency response or operational preparedness.

Ideas for mitigation actions are presented for the following natural hazards:

- Drought
- Earthquake
- Erosion
- Extreme temperatures
- Flood
- Hail
- Landslide
- Sea level rise
- Severe winter weather
- Storm surge
- Subsidence
- Tornado
- Tsunami
- Wildfire



*Examples of mitigation actions are planning and zoning, floodplain protection, property acquisition and relocation, or public outreach projects.*

*Examples of preparedness actions are installing disaster warning systems, purchasing radio communications equipment, or conducting emergency response training.*

**To obtain a copy of this publication contact FEMA, Region 6, by calling 940-898-5065.**

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## From the Chair – Dave Turk, CFM

**Dave Turk, CFM**

**505-855-7543**



I will first extend my gratitude to those who contributed to my election as Chair of NMFMA. It is an honor to accept the roles and responsibilities associated with leading NMFMA - a respected voice in floodplain management practice and policy in New Mexico. I anticipate my 18 years of floodplain management experience will empower my ability to lead NMFMA, represent and support its members, and uphold NMFMA's mission to reduce the losses, costs, and human suffering caused by flooding; to educate New Mexicans about floods, floodplains and floodplain management; and to promote a balance between development and the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains.

I thank our esteemed immediate past Chair, Paul Dugie for his leadership, dedication, and commitment to NMFMA, its members, and communities and citizens of New Mexico. Paul will continue active participation on the Board as NMFMA Treasurer.

A bit about me...I moved to the Land of Enchantment from Virginia in 2005 to accept a position in floodplain management. My family and friends could not comprehend why I would leave the east coast to practice floodplain management in the desert southwest. They thought I would soon return to Virginia without a job, as I could not possibly have a career practicing floodplain management in New Mexico – after all “there is no rainfall in the desert”.

The truth is that I found that being a CFM in New Mexico has fulfilled a great need and has brought me a significant purpose in my profession. Flood hazard mitigation is greatly needed in New Mexico where the cycle of spring winds leads to summer fires followed by monsoonal flooding. Our collective experience, knowledge, and leadership as New Mexico CFMs are greatly needed to keep our homes and communities safe from flooding.

Recent policy and political demands associated with FEMA's Biggert Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 will only increase the demand of our expertise and experience in floodplain management. The political landscape this legislation creates calls for proactive floodplain management strategies, including those related to educating our communities on changes related to new policies and regulations. These strategies will enable us to keep New Mexican citizens apprised on this subject, eliminate misinformation, and include their voices in our strategic planning. Our website (<http://www.nmfma.org>) will soon have a section dedicated to the Biggert Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act, so that we can disseminate the latest information to our association and stakeholders.

The NMFMA Board is looking forward to important upcoming events such as: the ASFPM 37th Annual Conference (June 9 -14) and the NMFMA Fall Conference/Workshop (October 16 – 18). More information on these events and other information can be found on our website and we encourage member participation in these events.

NMFMA Board members are planning a board retreat in August 2013. We welcome your ideas on topics that you would like us to include in the Board's discussions at the retreat. Please submit your input to any of the Board members, whose contact information you may find at the NMFMA website ([http://www.nmfma.org/content.aspx?page\\_id=4&club\\_id=920799](http://www.nmfma.org/content.aspx?page_id=4&club_id=920799))

I look forward to working with you and I thank you for your commitment to leadership in floodplain management.

## Look for NEW pages on the NMFMA web site!!!!

Coming soon - when you go to the NMFMA web site you may find new pages with news from:

ASFPM – The latest information from ASFPM

State of NM – Information from Bill Borthwick and Wendy Blackwell

News and Current Events – articles and other information

And more!

If you come across an article, link, etc. that you want to share with the NMFMA membership, please send the information to Michele Truby-Tillen, CFM at [mtruby@sjcounty.net](mailto:mtruby@sjcounty.net). It will be placed on the new News and Current Events page.

Michele Truby-Tillen, CFM  
209 S Oliver – Aztec, NM 87410  
505-334-4719  
[mtruby@sjcounty.net](mailto:mtruby@sjcounty.net)



## In and Around New Mexico with the State NFIP Coordinator

**Bill Borthwick, CFM, State Floodplain Coordinator**  
**(505) 476-9617**  
Email: [william.borthwick@state.nm.us](mailto:william.borthwick@state.nm.us)

May 21, 2013 your State Floodplain Coordinator presented to the Silver Jackets stakeholders meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, that the New Mexico Drought is the worst in the United States. According to the Drought Monitor, the State of New Mexico obtained this number 1 ranking surpassing the State of Nebraska. The Drought is the worst since 1950s. The last 36 months was the 4th driest since record-keeping began in New Mexico more than a century ago. This has been the worst since the 1950s because New Mexico has suffered seven consecutive years.

Water Managers are hoping for a robust summer rainy season to bail them out. Past decades a good summer monsoon season has followed a dry winter. Since 2000, four out of five years dry winters have been followed by a sub-par summer rains.

Dry soil moisture conditions rival the drought of the '50s. The pain is especially acute in eastern New Mexico. The dry soils have played havoc with spring runoff. For example, Pecos River mountain snow is already gone. Not one drop has made it to Santa Rosa Lake, the Pecos River's main reservoir. That pattern has been repeated elsewhere in the state; with snow disappearing but streams not rising in response as dry soils soak up the water.

Scarcity of water has brought Drought conditions "from bad to worse to worst." Legal battle has broken out between two groups of farmers who are entitled to water on the Pecos River. Credit water is owned by upstream users and therefore not available for downstream use.

### Eastern New Mexico



Continued on Page 9

## In an Around New Mexico with the State NFIP Coordinator – Continued from Page 8

Drought is also affecting the Rio Grande. Elephant Butte Reservoir capacity is 189,342 acre feet. The inflow of water in 2013 from runoff is 39% of normal. Consequences reservoir capacity is low. This means irrigation (water surface) deliveries down-stream to farmers will be drastically reduced. Most farmers turn to groundwater withdrawals.

### Elephant Butte Reservoir



**Elephant Butte Dam**



2011-2013 drought conditions have exacerbated low flows in the reservoir. Thus only 4% of the current storage capacity will be available for downstream use. Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) stopped taking surface water deliveries in the middle of March 2011. Texas Irrigation District and the City of El Paso, Texas stopped taking surface water deliveries a month earlier than normal.

New Mexico and Texas irrigation water is 178,000 acres. 60% of the irrigated land is in New Mexico and 40% irrigated lands are in Texas. In addition a Treaty with Mexico irrigates another 25,000 acres. So one can see, the Rio Grande River Basin demand for water is huge.

The lack of surface water causes issues for New Mexico. Farmers are forced to pump groundwater. Hatch Valley near Las Cruces, New Mexico is the heart of chile farming. Chile represents \$46 million annually. Groundwater has a high salt content- the result is both naturally occurring salts in the soil and minerals leached into the groundwater by years of irrigation. Farmers say "Salt is killing Hatch Valley"

What does this have to do with Floodplain Management? The answer may be that dry winds, parched soils, low water resources, and increased drought promulgate fire danger which makes a scenario for our main natural hazard: Flooding.

## GIS COMMITTEE REPORT

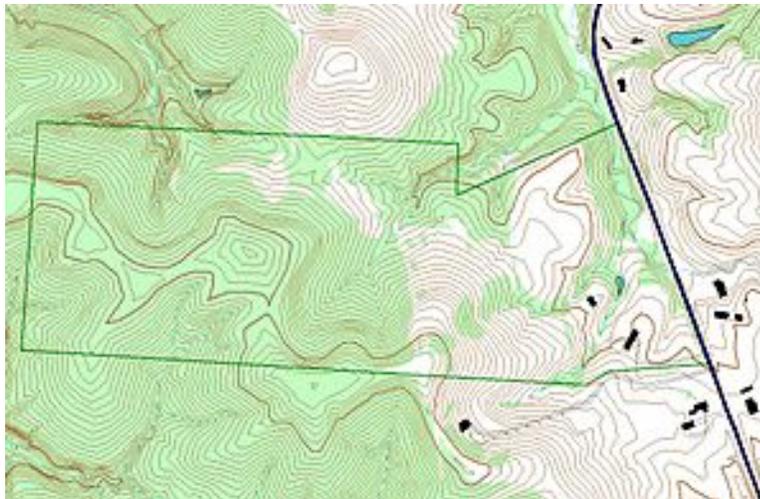
**GIS Committee – Eric Nemeth**  
**(505) 855-7417**  
[eric.nemeth@urs.com](mailto:eric.nemeth@urs.com)

As the newly appointed GIS Committee Chair, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tobias Finke for his years of service and all he has done to get the GIS Committee to where it is today. I look forward to building on the successes and continuing to better serve the GIS community in New Mexico.

In the coming months, look for an updated NMFMA GIS Committee webpage that contains useful information, beneficial links, and interesting tidbits. The idea is to promote data sharing and provide guidance, resources, and best practices to GIS users and those interested in GIS. As we move forward, the GIS Committee would like to explore the possibility of either providing or connecting people to basic, intermediate, and advanced GIS training. Various training is held around the state that we may be able to participate in if it is better known and we can get the word out. Please let me know if you hear of any such training.

Keep in mind, too, that the next NMFMA Spring Conference is gearing up to be GIS heavy. So, bring us your ideas for presentations or workshops. This will be a great way to learn about GIS technologies, share ideas, and get people thinking about how to apply GIS to their line of work for increased efficiency.

If you have questions, would like to be part of the GIS Committee, or have any ideas to further the GIS practice in New Mexico, don't hesitate to contact me anytime by email ([eric.nemeth@urs.com](mailto:eric.nemeth@urs.com)) or phone (505.855.7417). Thank you!



### 2013 WORKSHOP AWARDS



FLOODPLAIN MANAGER OF THE YEAR  
JD Padilla, CFM  
FPA for City of Las Cruces

CONGRATULATIONS



FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT AWARD  
Dave Turk, Rigel Rucker & Tom Johnson  
Presented to URS for continuing support to NMFMA as well as outstanding dedication and achievements displayed in floodplain management to better serve the citizens of NM.

## 2013 WORKSHOP AWARDS



CONGRATULATIONS

LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD  
Yvette Fazekas  
In recognition for continuing support and  
outstanding dedication to NMFMA

Thank you so much for your  
outstanding service on the  
Board of Directors. You are  
toasting the incoming Officers,  
right?



SERVICE AWARDS for  
Paul Dugie, Rigel Ruker, Mike Czosnek, and Curtis  
Cherne for their outstanding service as members of  
the NMFMA Board of Directors  
(Curtis Cherne was not present for the photo)

### NMFMA Application for Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Affiliation:**

- Local Government
- State Government
- Federal Government
- Private
- Academic
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Nature of Duties**

- Administrative
- Engineering
- Planning
- Insurance
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues for one Calendar Year**

- Individual Membership \$35.00
  - New Member
  - Renewal

**MAKE CHECK OUT TO NMFMA**

**Send to: NMFMA Executive Office**  
**P.O. Box 3964**  
**Roswell, NM 88202**

**I am interested in the following:**

- Dam Safety
- Flood Data
- Structural Flood Control
- Litigation/Legal Issues
- Wetland Issues
- AO/AH Flooding
- Crawl Spaces
- Flood Warning & Responses
- GIS Issues
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**I am interested in the following Committees:**

- Certification
- Conference
- Floodplain Management
- Legislative
- Membership
- Nomination
- Training/Education
- Technical



## Purpose of the New Mexico Floodplain Managers Association

### ***A Publication of the New Mexico Floodplain Managers Association***

NMFMA  
P.O. Box 3924  
Roswell, New Mexico 88202  
  
(575) 937-1691

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We're on the Web!

See us at:  
[www.nmfma.org](http://www.nmfma.org)



1. To promote public awareness of proper floodplain management.
2. To promote the professional status of floodplain management and secure all benefits resulting there from;
3. To promote a liaison between individuals concerns with proper floodplain management and to encourage the exchange of ideas;
4. To keep individuals concerned with proper floodplain management well informed through education and professional seminars and to provide a method for dissemination of information, both general and technical;
5. To inform concerned individuals of pending floodplain legislation and other related management matters, and;
6. To study and support legislation pertinent and necessary to the effective implementation of floodplain management matters.

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