



IN THIS ISSUE

Last month’s discussion focused on Activity 330: Flood Response Preparations, outreach projects that are developed before a flood, but only implemented during and after the flood occurs.

This month we examine how your community can earn up to 80 extra points for Activity 330 projects by including them in a Program for Public Information.

Also in this issue is an article on accreditation versus certification. Both accreditation and certification can enhance the knowledge and performance of local, state, federal and private-sector floodplain management professionals. State NFIP Coordinator, Michael Borengasser, discusses how accreditation and certification apply to floodplain managers in Arkansas, focusing on the value of and the steps needed to acquire each designation.

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PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

A Program for Public Information (PPI) is a committee-based approach to community outreach under the CRS.

Flood-related outreach activities coordinated through a PPI gain more CRS points than stand-alone outreach activity. Communities can receive up to 80 additional points for Outreach Projects (OP) and/or Flood Response Projects (FRP) developed under Activity 330 if these efforts are included in a PPI. For CRS credit, the PPI must be developed according to a seven-step process.

Step 1: Establish a PPI Committee

Communities wishing to develop a PPI must first identify at least five people to serve on the PPI committee. The committee members should be drawn from both inside and outside local government. Exact membership is determined by the community, but must:

- ◆ Include one or more representatives from the community’s floodplain management office;
- ◆ Include one or more representatives from the community’s public information office, if there is one; and
- ◆ Have at least half of its members from outside the local government

The PPI committee meets at least twice each year.



CRS note: Meeting at lunch time and providing food makes it easier for busy stakeholders to attend.

Meeting of the PPI Committee meeting, showing the stakeholder representations

Step 2: Assess Information Needs

The PPI committee will assess what outreach efforts are actually needed by community residents. They will accomplish this by identifying target areas and audiences. The committee will also be efficient, determining which existing outreach projects are already underway. The needs assessment can be prepared by community staff, but the PPI committee as a whole must review it.

Target areas are priority areas with concerns related to floods or floodplains. They can be neighborhoods, districts, or other parts of the community with similar flooding, building, and population characteristics. Example target areas include:

- ◆ Floodprone neighborhoods,
- ◆ Waterfront business district,
- ◆ Repetitive loss areas, or
- ◆ An area protected by a levee or subject to flooding by a dam failure.

There are three products from the target area assessment:

- ◆ A map showing one or more areas subject to different flooding conditions,
- ◆ A description of each area, and
- ◆ The number of buildings in each area.

In general, the target audiences are the residents who live in the target areas. **Target audiences** can also include other groups such as building contractors who need to know about mitigation measures and permit requirements.

A good PPI plan builds on what is already being done and **avoids duplication of efforts**. This includes ongoing CRS outreach projects as well as initiatives by other organizations.

To **determine what projects are already underway**, the PPI committee will contact departments, organizations, and agencies to such as:

- ◆ Community departments involved in flood protection, including public works, drainage, building, planning, and emergency management;
- ◆ Regional planning agencies;
- ◆ Regional sewer, flood control, or water management districts;
- ◆ The State NFIP Coordinator and State Risk MAP Coordinator; and
- ◆ Environmental and recreational organizations (e.g., Audubon Society, hunting clubs);

This job can be easier if these organizations are invited to be on the PPI committee.

Step 3: Formulate the Messages

For each target audience, the PPI committee identifies the best message, considering the hazards in the target area, the characteristics of the audience, and other factors as appropriate.

Specific guidance regarding messages and topics was provided in the December 2016 and January 2017 *CRS Updates*. In general, the messages either clearly states what the audience should do or provides some basic information regarding where to get more information.

Step 4: Identify PPI Outreach Projects

Once the needed messages and desired outcomes are agreed upon, the PPI committee considers which media would best convey the message(s) to the target audience(s). The PPI committee lists these projects in a document that identifies who will do the projects and when. The projects will then be implemented over the following year.

(Guidance for developing projects scored under Activity 330 as Outreach Projects (OP) and Flood Response Projects (FRP) was provided in the December 2016 and January 2017 *CRS Updates*.)

Step 5: Examine Other Initiatives

The PPI is not limited to only Outreach Projects (OP) and Flood Response Projects (FRP). It can incorporate all the activities a community pursues to inform and motivate people to protect life and property, buy flood insurance, and protect natural floodplain functions.

Extra CRS credit is provided if the PPI discusses other CRS activities that include public information outreach. These activities include:

- ◆ Activity 320 (Map Information Service)
- ◆ Activity 340 (Hazard Disclosure)
- ◆ Activity 350 (Flood Protection Information)
- ◆ Activity 360 (Flood Protection Assistance)
- ◆ Activity 370 (Flood Insurance Promotion)
- ◆ Activity 510 (Floodplain Management Planning)
- ◆ Activity 540 (Drainage System Maintenance)
- ◆ Activity 610 (Flood Warning and Response)
- ◆ Activity 620 (Levees), and
- ◆ Activity 630 (Dams)

Note that if a PPI only discusses Activity 330 Outreach Projects, approval of the PPI for bonus credit under Activity 330 it will not be affected. It

only means that there will be no bonus PPI credits for the other CRS activities.

STEP 6: Prepare the PPI Document

In order to receive CRS credit, the PPI committee will formally document the list of outreach activities, responsible parties, and implementation schedule.

This PPI plan must be adopted by the community, through either formal approval by the community's governing body or formal approval by the organization with the authority and funding to implement the PPI plan, such as a flood control district.

The PPI committee also produces an annual evaluation report examining the effectiveness of the PPI plan.

The PPI plan and the evaluation report together represent the PPI document. The plan and the evaluation report can be one or two stand-alone documents or sections in a floodplain management or hazard mitigation plan. There is no need for long, formal publications.

Step 7: Implement, Monitor, and Evaluate

The PPI committee will meet at least annually to monitor implementation of the outreach projects. The committee assesses whether the desired outcomes were achieved and what, if anything, should be changed. This work is described in the evaluation report discussed in Step 6. It is included in the annual CRS recertification.

Receiving CRS Credit

It is important to understand that the PPI credit comes in the form of bonus points added to outreach projects and other CRS public information activities. The bonus provides a 40% increase in credit under Activity 330 for Outreach Project (OP) and/or Flood Response Preparations projects (FRP) that are listed in the PPI plan. Other activities receive different increases in credit.

ACCREDITATION VS CERTIFICATION

By Michael Borengasser, CFM, State NFIP Coordinator

What is the difference between an “Accredited” floodplain administrator and a “Certified” floodplain manager?

Accreditation

Arkansas Act 745 of 2003 (A.C.A. § 15-24-109) established “Accreditation of floodplain administrators.” The Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC) established “Rules Governing the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission’s Floodplain Administrator Accreditation Program, Title 18”, effective date November 29, 2003. These rules can be viewed and downloaded from the ANRC website at www.anrc.arkansas.gov.

Under the floodplain administrator accreditation program:

1. Each community which has adopted floodplain management regulations (generally through participation in NFIP) must designate a person to serve as floodplain administrator.

The floodplain administrator may serve one or more communities and be either full-time or part-time, or contracted.

2. The floodplain administrator is required to undergo 8 hours of annual continuing education.
3. The community is required to provide an annual administrative fee of \$20 per year (\$35 for the first year).

Once the floodplain administrator has provided evidence of continuing education and the community has provided the annual renewal fee, the floodplain administrator is accredited. Accreditation is valid from July 1st to June 30th. Continuing education and renewal fees are due before July 1st of each year.

ANRC provides ten to twelve free day-long workshops around the State each year (see Page 4). Other training may be substituted in the form of pre-approved workshops and conferences.

Certification



Certification is for floodplain administrators and other individuals who are interested in achieving a higher level of professional recognition. It entails submitting an exam application, paying an application fee, and passing a 120-question exam. An applicant who successfully passes the exam becomes a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM[®]). CFM[®] is a registered trademark of the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM). In Arkansas, the CFM[®] program is administered by the Arkansas Floodplain Management Association (AFMA).

CFMs are recognized nationally and include local officials as well as private sector engineers, surveyors, planners, and other professionals involved in the floodplain management profession.

For more information on the State Floodplain Administrator Accreditation program, go to www.floodplain.ar.gov. For information on the Certified Floodplain Manager program, go to www.arkansasfloods.org.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Are you the designated floodplain administrator for your community? If so, you should know that under Arkansas law, you are required to complete eight hours of training approved by the ANRC prior to June 30, 2017.

Some of your options for training include:

- Twelve one-day ANRC accreditation workshops;
- The *Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP* course;
- Emergency Management Institute (EMI) floodplain management courses; and
- STARR Webinars.

These options are explored in more detail below.

ANRC Floodplain Management Training

This year, ANRC will offer twelve one-day floodplain management workshops. The workshops are offered in various locations throughout Arkansas and cover a variety of topics. A registration form is attached to this newsletter for your use. Please note that class size for each ANRC workshop is limited. To register for one of the ANRC workshops, email or mail the attached form and mail in the appropriate fee.

NFIP Floodplain Management Course

ANRC, with the assistance of the Arkansas Floodplain Management Association and the support of FEMA, is sponsoring a four-day course on the NFIP and floodplain management. The course will be held in Conway at the Country Inn and Suites on March 13-16, 2017. This course focuses on the knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage development within flood-prone areas.

Additional information about the class and course registration [is available online](#). Questions can also be forwarded to Michael Borengasser, CFM, State NFIP Coordinator, at the ANRC. His phone number and email address are 501-682-3969 and michael.borengasser@arkansas.gov.

EMI Courses

CRS and floodplain management courses are offered throughout the year at the FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI). The courses are free, and travel expenses are covered for those accepted to the EMI. [Click here](#) for course information and schedules (download the schedule and search for by course ID). Upcoming sessions include:

- ◆ National Flood Insurance Program/Community Rating System (E0278) March 20-23, 2017
- ◆ Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts II (E0282) (April 24–27, 2017)
- ◆ Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts III (E0284) July 24–27, 2017

STARR Webinar Series

The STARR Webinar Series provides free online training opportunities, including basic introductory sessions and more advanced topics. Most webinars average an hour in length. February and March 2017 webinars include:

- ◆ *Repetitive Loss Properties and the CRS* Wednesday, February 22, 2017, 12 noon CST (1 hour)
- ◆ *NFIP Basics* Thursday, February 23, 2017, 12 noon CST (1 hour)
- ◆ *Floodplain Development Permit Review* Thursday, March 2, 2017, 11 AM CST (1 hour)
- ◆ *Inspecting Floodplain Development* Thursday, March 2, 2017, 12:30 PM CST (1.5 hours)
- ◆ *How to Review a "No-Rise" Certification* March 30, 2017, 12 noon CST (1 hour)

Please visit the webinar website for a full list of courses. To register for a webinar, click [here](#).

NEXT MONTH: Stakeholder Delivery.