



Mohave County Flood Control District

Arizona 2015 State Flood Risk Symposium

the results.....

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Let's get some ideas flowing....

- **The Symposium:** The Arizona Floodplain Management Association (AFMA), in coordination with the national Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) Foundation, hosted a one day symposium in the Phoenix area to discuss the many concerns about flooding in Arizona.



who should attend?

- **Our goal:** was to assemble a diverse group of individuals who would contribute toward productive discussions and potential solutions.
- Invitees included community staff responsible for managing floodplains within their cities and towns, emergency managers, scientists from the meteorology, engineering, geology and water resources fields, insurance, real estate, development and elected officials who are expected to fully comprehend the flooding issues in their communities. Media and outreach specialists who can craft clear and concise messages for the public, and representatives from FEMA were also invited.



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Our focus for the day highlighted four critical topics:

- Over the next 15 years, what are the things that state and local communities need to be working on in order to reduce the risk and damages of flooding and increase community resilience?
- In Arizona, should floodplain management be concerned with more than just the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)? (Future Development, Wildfires, Subsidence.)
- How can we improve the communication and understanding of flood risk to the public, elected officials, and the business community?
- The role of flood warning systems, weather forecasting, and the potential effects of climate change on local flooding now and in the future.



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a common thread emerges...

- Our four plenary speakers touched on this critical need for **partnerships** throughout their presentations.
- Beth Zimmerman, FEMA Headquarters, spoke of the necessity for not only resilience but planning for what takes place after an event. That kind of planning requires not only a multi-jurisdictional approach, which we are accustomed to, but a multi-faceted approach that brings varied groups to the table such as the real estate and development community, utility stakeholders and environmental sustainability groups.



new reality....

- Bill Wiley of Maricopa County touched on the need to develop partnerships that we may not have considered in the past and to search creatively for solutions that will stand the test of time. As Bill pointed out, our future challenges are likely to be a combination of increased population/urban growth, less precipitation but possibly higher intensity storms and, as always, limited resources.
- He stressed that our keys for success lie in planning for this “new reality,” engaging in proactive maintenance, leveraging technology, using outreach and partnerships and exploring multi-use opportunities.



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fire, debris flows, erosion....

- we cannot consider floodplain management from a singular cause and effect
- actively map and regulate the serious riverine erosion hazards that many of us have already experienced in our communities.
- potential impact that future development will have on our watersheds and the ever changing regulatory framework that we work within, such as the recent Executive Order 13690 (Jan 2015) and the impact that these changes may have on how we approach floodplain management..



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at first, insurance said homes were not flooded and were not going to cover, water did not go into house, house went into water...





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limited options....



- With existing homes, there are few options in this area
- Gaging, siren, flood response plan
- At the most...6 hour lead time



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how about that 4wd....





weather, climate...

- Daniel Henz, Maricopa County, gave us a recap of the historic rainfall events of the 2014 monsoon season during which the Phoenix metro area experienced rainfall intensities and totals that eclipsed previous records.
- He stopped short of making any predictions but made it clear that we could be experiencing a **new normal** and the ways in which we prepare for the future are critical to our communities.



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13 swift water rescues in one night..





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developed a response plan..





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our lead time in this area...20 minutes





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Hmmmm.....





to summarize.....

- The purpose of the symposium was not only to generate ideas and solutions from within our group of professionals and jurisdiction representatives but also to understand and include the many challenges and multi-faceted interests of all other potential stakeholders as well.
- Only by working in serious partnerships with all stakeholders do we stand a chance of being successful in managing our floodplains effectively.



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collaboration

.....it is clear that as the professionals who are considered “experts” in this field,

we need to continue to reach outside of our comfort zone and have sustainable floodplain management conversations with a very diverse group of stakeholders to achieve the goal of protecting our communities from flood related risk.



take away...

-take a moment to think about collaboration, partnering and sharing resources.
- Who can you work with?
- How can you make sure that all stakeholders are being supported?
- In addition to your projects and programs being successful, how can you develop a program to enhance and showcase other community interests as well?



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asfpm symposia background

- The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) Foundation has a strong presence in national discussions about flood risk. Over the past decade, the Foundation has sponsored four “Gilbert F. White National Flood Policy Forums,” in which groups of 100 national and international experts and leaders convened in Washington, D.C.
- The National Flood Policy Forums have focused on reducing flood losses, managing flood risks and floodplain resources, and the future of floodplain management. The goal of each forum was to facilitate discussion on flood risk, establish priorities for improving policy and program implementation, and to formulate recommendations and directions for the future.
- Based on the success of the national forums, the Foundation began promoting similar meetings at the state level. Over the past few years, Flood Risk Symposia have been held in Colorado, Florida, Georgia, and Texas. Arizona and Illinois



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Thank you!



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