LA flooding Disaster – 2016

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What made the LA flooding disaster unique?

- This was a rain event, impacting parishes and communities not normally affected by riverine flooding.
- A large number of impacted properties were uninsured or underinsured.
- Many of the impacted properties were located outside the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA).
- A number of properties may be determined to be substantially damaged and non-compliant with local floodplain management ordinances.
Best Practices/Lessons Learned

• Expedited SD Contract
• Establishing FRO office and JFO shortly after declaration
• NFIP Policy decisions such as Extending Grace Period and proof of loss deadlines, advanced payments
• Issued Fact Sheets on MHU and Temporary occupancy
• Expediting flood zone determinations
• Embedding staff in local permitting offices and Insurance staff in DRC’s.
Substantial Damage

- Expedited contracts
- On ground within 2 weeks following the declaration.
- Began work on 8/31 and completed inspections on 11/9
- 60,000 structures inspected, of which 8,400 were in SFHA and estimated to be above the 50% threshold for Substantial Damage
- Community must still make final determination
Permitting Temporary Occupancy of substantially damaged structures

- Ensure that the home is safe for habitation
- Issue permit for temporary occupancy
- Permit temporary repairs in order to make home safe and sanitary and follow up with permit for permanent repairs at a later date.
Placement of MHU’s in the floodplain

- May not be placed in coastal high hazard areas or the regulatory floodway.
- Elevated to the highest level practicable for the placement on blocks and anchored to prevent movement.
- Communities may issue permits for the placement of temporary housing units for up to six months with extensions not to exceed a cumulative total of 18 months.
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“Mapping mailbox process”

• Mitigation undertook a significant supportive role to ensure MHU’s were not placed in the floodway.

• In support of EO 11988 and the 8 Step Process, the Mitigation Branch provided flood determinations to EHP prior to MHU placement.
Challenges with higher standards

- Several CRS communities had higher standards in ordinance
  - Freeboard
  - 40% SD threshold
  - Elevation to Flood of record
  - Higher standards for homes outside of the SFHA
Lessons Learned

• Expedited SD Contract
• Created and distributed reference sheets on MHUs and SD data sources
• Embedding staff in local permitting offices
• Organization
• Public outreach
Substantial Damage

• Biggest issue: Fear
• It’s hard to mail letters when mailboxes have been washed away
Permitting Temporary Occupancy of substantially damaged structures

- Very few of these permits were issued
- Property owner had to sit down with building official in order to discuss one-on-one what their plans were
- Concerns that the owner would move back in and not mitigate at a later date
Questions?