

THE LIGHTNING ROD

Winter 2014 The Official Newsletter of the Texas Floodplain Management Association

Volume 19, Issue 4

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Looking Back on a TFMA Memory

As we approach the end of 2014 and start looking forward to bringing in another New Year, many of us tend to pause and reflect back on the year we are about to close out. 2014 was a very good year for TFMA, we continued to grow, completed two very successful conferences, provided numerous training opportunities across the state and continued to add to our growing list of Certified Floodplain Managers (CFM). I will address these numbers in a separate article, however it was not recent TFMA success that my mind focused on, but instead from out of the depths and dark recess of my brain, came a fond memory of TFMA's early history and I want to share that memory with you.

As most of you know, I started my floodplain management career in 1970 when I joined the staff of the then Texas Water Development Board. After a few years of under study, I became the State NFIP Coordinator for Texas. During my tenure in this position, I participated in a number of flood recovery efforts resulting from Presidential Disaster Declarations. One such flood occurred back on September 21, 1981 when the Elm Fork of the Trinity River flooded the City of Gainesville, Texas (Cooke County) and especially hard hit was the local zoo. The Frank Buck Zoo, named for famed zookeeper Frank Buck, lost more than forty animals that day. The one that garnered the most attention and love of the world was Gerry, the elephant. When first captured as a baby in Thailand in 1968, she was named Sissy. When she was sold to the Frank Buck Zoo, she was renamed Gerry II after the zoo's original elephant. Gerry managed to survive the flood, after being swept down river, by hanging onto tree limbs with her trunk sticking just above the surface of the raging floodwaters for 36 hours.

Shortly after the flood, I visited the disaster area and actually met Gerry. She was back in her cage and I was able to stroke her trunk a little through the bars and even fed her a carrot, her favorite food. I immediately fell in love with her and even more, I felt a deep connection to her will to survive a flood and her passion for life. This connection would influence some of the founding principles of TFMA just a few short years later. More on this to come, but first, let me share the local headlines and story line from the Gainesville Daily Register newspaper back in September 21, 1981.

GAINESVILLE DAILY REGISTER
September 22, 1981
"Elephant Found in Tree"
"Zoo Animals Couldn't find Ark"

Perhaps more than any other city, big flood in Gainesville looks like the Great Flood from the Bible. While two if every animal species could not be seen roaming the Gainesville countryside, there were plenty of wild animals from Gainesville's Frank Buck Zoon to be seen after the waters receded Tuesday night.

Among the survivors of the Tuesday's flood were Gerry II, the zoo's cantankerous elephant resident, as well as three bears, two camels, a longhorn steer, a llama, one eland, a bush cow, and a number of monkeys.

Less fortunate were a number of other animals, some of which can be found drowned, tangled in fences and gates on the zoo grounds. Many animals have not been found and are expected to be found dead in their cages which are still under water. While many of the animals did make it through the flood, the zoo itself is "completely demolished". Most of the fence that surrounds the zoo was knocked down by the waters, as were a number of the cages and buildings which house the animals.

The full extent of the damage and animal loss will not be known until the water which still lies 6 feet deep in the zoo grounds, has receded. That will have to wait until the waters of the Elm Creek have fallen enough to open a valve and let the water escape into the creek.

The animals were let out of their cages late Monday by Vince Reynolds, Park Superintendent and other city workers. Their efforts were hindered by the speed with which the water rose in the zoo. When Reynolds first arrived at the zoo, water was only 3 feet deep. However, after he returned with a boat at least 30 minutes later, the water had risen to the top of some of the cages, trapping the animals.

Perhaps Gerry II's escape was the most remarkable and most joyous aspect of the zoo's flooding. People around the city and county not to mention the nation, mourned the reported drowning of the elephant, but as the waters receded later Tuesday afternoon, rejoicing was heard from city officials and the lucky few who happened to be there to witness the discovery of the packeyderm.

Gerry's trunk and head was the first things to be sighted as the waters calmed. That is remarkable in itself as the waters in that section of the zoo was approximately 15 feet deep in places. So how did Gerry escape the rising waters of the Elm? According to Reynolds, Gerry was in his house with 9 feet of water slowly rising when she was released outside. When Gerry was found, she was wedged between a tree and a building.

But elephants don't climb trees you say? Well if you are in danger of being swept away in a flood, you may do some amazing things too. According to Reynolds, the elephant had been in the water for a total of 36 hours. She is now on dry land and in good shape."

Gerry became a local if not a national hero and icon for survival. Her image appeared on coffee cups and other souvenirs as well as "T-shirts". TFMA adopted the image below on our own shirts showing Gerry as our Official TFMA Mascot.



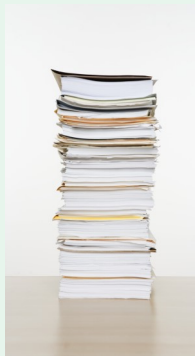
(Continued on page 2)



The Lightning Rod

Questions, items for publication and other editorial matters should be directed to:

TFMA Executive Office
P.O. Box 1237
Cedar Park, TX 78630
(512) 260-1366
TFMA1@att.net



**Deadline for
The Lightning Rod Spring
Issue is February 2, 2015**

From the ED

Continued from page 1

With this remarkable survival story in mind, now shift to 1988 at the first Texas Flash Flood Conference in Austin, Texas.

During this conference, it was voted on by participants to form the Texas Floodplain Management Association. I told the story of Gerry and suggested she become the Official Mascot of the newly formed Association. It was agreed on, but the story now took a strange turn. In the audience was Tom Watson, Emergency Management Coordinator for Gainesville and Cooke County. He confirmed the survival story but added something new. Tom stated that since the flood, Gerry had become more aggressive and harder to handle. She exhibited signs of anxiety and a real fear of water. She became very nervous and upset any time it rained and thundered. As you know, a packydemer never forgets and Gerry would forever remember her trauma from the 1981 flood. There was local concern that if a future flood caused the same conditions and Gerry had to be released again on her own, she might take out her aggression and fear on humans. So, as Tom stated, he was advised to amend his local emergency management plan to include the purchase of an elephant gun and if another flood came, Tom was to shoot the elephant. True? Well you decide.



But mother nature was not through with Gerry and that is the rest of the story. Another flood did hit Gainesville and the zoo in 1988 not long after our conference concluded in Austin. Almost immediately when the news about the flood hit, I started getting frantic calls from TFMA members all across the state, asking – Did Tom shoot the elephant? Well of course, the answer was NO to the relief of many who took Tom’s story as Texas truth. Gerry was in fact released and moved to a safe area and sheltered before flood waters could flood the zoo.

Sadly, Gerry’s story does not end happily ever after. Since the flood, Gerry has remained in the spotlight off and on. There was an attempt to breed her at the Fort Worth Zoo in the late 1980s, but she had trouble relating to other elephants and failed to conceive so it was back to the Frank Buck Zoo. In 1997, she crushed a zookeeper against the doorway of her barn enclosure at the Frank Buck zoo. While details around the death are still shrouded in mystery, zoo officials labeled her as a problem animal and shipped her off in the middle of the night to avoid protests from the community that had come to love her over the years. After leaving Gainesville, she was sent to Houston Zoo and then El Paso where she regained her original name. She made headlines again when video footage of her arrival at El Paso was leaked to media outlets. The footage showed zookeepers beating Gerry/Sissy with clubs for over an hour. The zookeepers never really explained why they did what they did to her. Thankfully, Gerry/Sissy was sent to an elephant sanctuary in Tennessee, where she resides at the present time. Gerry will turn 46 on Dec. 1, 2014. Thankfully, after such a traumatic struggle to survive, she will live the remainder of her life in peaceful tranquility.

How long could Sissy live? Some research indicates the average life span for African elephants in the wild is about 70 years. Not so good for captive elephants. Early research on captive elephants in European zoos revealed a median life span of 17 years for females. More recent research involving the Fort Worth zoo currently places the African elephant average life expectancy estimate in North America at 33.0 years, but this is likely to increase with more data, as it has over the past 10 years. So Sissy is an eloquent senior citizen. Let’s help her live out her remaining years.

To learn more about Sissy’s remarkable life and her peaceful retirement at the Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee, click on the link below. You can also learn how to donate to Gerry/Sissy’s keeping.

<http://www.elephants.com/sissy/sissyBio.php>

Perhaps it is time to renew TFMA’s commitment to our famous Mascot. We need to get her up on the TFMA website and encourage members to donate to her keeping. And maybe it is time to bring back the TFMA Mascot T-Shirts?

Long Live TFMA & Sissy!

Roy D. Sedwick, CFM
TFMA Executive Director



New Website Delivers Digital Take on Texas Building Codes

The Texas *Leadership Toolkits* are now online at texasstate-collaborative.org, a new website where users can share, view and print the building code and weather analyses of Texas' most populous cities and counties. The popular toolkits offer a hyper-local look at severe weather history and building codes in a side by side format and an "Amendment Profile Layout" feature that highlights any strengthening or weakening amendments to the building code.



Roy Sedwick, CFM, Executive Director, Texas Floodplain Management Association observed, "The new TSC website looks great and I can't wait to link to this information on the Texas Floodplain Management Association website. Thanks for all the great work FLASH is doing in Texas."

Additional jurisdictions will be added throughout 2014 and 2015.



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TFMA Committee Corner

Call for Stormwater Subcommittee Members

Jill Trevino and Steve Eubanks, Committee Co-Chairs

It's hard to believe it was only a year ago that the Stormwater Task Force was kicking off at the Fall 2013 Conference. At that time, the Task Force had only one objective, which was to discuss and potentially develop a certification program related to water quality and TPDES permitting and enforcement. Since then, the Task Force has graduated to Committee status, incorporated seven subcommittees, and is working with the Conference Committee to establish a Stormwater Track at future conferences.

The overarching goal of the Stormwater Committee is to be a resource for stormwater-related topics in Texas. Subcommittees have now been created to provide the TFMA membership with information on industry topics that have an effect on our communities. We encourage any and all TFMA members to join these subcommittees if they are interested in contributing their knowledge and expertise in these fields. The following subcommittees, along with their chairs, have been created:

2D Modeling

- o Brenda Gasperich and Glen Taffinder
bgasperich@browngay.com
glen.taffinder@austintexas.gov

Low Impact Design

- o Ranjan Muttiah and Ben Pylant
ranjan.muttiah@fortworthtexas.gov
bpylant@halff.com

Stormwater Utilities

- o Misty Christian
misty.christian@kimley-horn.com

Water Quality Certification

- o David Zwernemann
dzwernemann@wilco.org

Alternative Funding

- o Jorge Morales
jorge.morales@austintexas.gov

Regulatory

- o Craig Maske
CMaske@idsengineeringgroup.com

Stream Restoration

- o Tami Norton
tnorton@sara-tx.org

Please contact the subcommittee chairs directly if you are interested in joining. If you'd like to join the overall Stormwater Committee or have ideas for additional subcommittees, please contact Committee Co-Chairs Steve Eubanks (Steven.Eubanks@fortworthtexas.gov) and Jill Trevino (Jill.Trevino@freese.com).

TFMA Website Pointers

Q: I need to renew my membership but I can't remember my password. Can I just create a new profile?

A: Whatever you do please DO NOT create a new profile. This will force the system to create a totally new profile that will not have your history. This causes much confusion in the TFMA office with duplications. If you can't remember your sign in information, simply call the TFMA office at 512-260-1366 and we'll email you reset instructions. TFMA is currently working with YourMembership to fix the error problem many have been receiving regarding the "Reset UN/PW Instructions Button" online. Thank you for your patience.

Q: Where do I find the 2015 TFMA Membership Application online for renewal?

A: TFMA is no longer using that form. Members are encouraged to sign in periodically to update or review their information especially when there is a job change. Please keep your contact information current.

Q: I am getting too many emails from TFMA alerting me that a member in my region has made a change on their profile. How do I stop these emails?

A: Simply sign in to your profile. Once you log in, look in the top center of the webpage and click "Preferences." There you'll be able uncheck what system generated emails you want and don't want.

GOT A QUESTION? Email us your questions and we'll email you solutions plus we'll post them on the newsletter to share with the membership. Chances are, they have the same questions too. Email us: tfma1@att.net.

Congratulations to our newest CFMs

Holly Ayoub – Halff, Associates
Travis Barnett – Parkhill, Smith and Cooper
Johnnie Beathard – Milam County
Derek Bohls – LJA Engineering
Victor Booth – LNC, Inc.
John Bourdeau – FEMA Region VI
Jose Jairo Calvillo – Mendez Engineering
Maria Christina Castanon – HNTB Corporation
Ann Colina – Pettitt Barraza, LLC
Bryce Cox – City of Schertz
Rajan Devkota – Pacheco Koch Consulting Engineers
Yvette Dodd – City of Corpus Christi
Fred Ehler – Self-Employed
Edward Fisher – City of Victoria
Daniel Franz – City of Pflugerville
Barry Fulfer – City of Grand Prairie
Amy Giannini – City of Pflugerville
Neil Goertz – Ft. Bend County Drainage District
Jaron Hogenson – City of Victoria
Noah Huntington – Furman Land Surveyors, Inc.
Sili Liu – CP&Y, Inc.
Gilbert Martinez – Texas General Land Office
Carey McBride – City of Brady
Richard Myrick – Baker-Aicklen & Associates
Earthea Nance – Texas Southern University
Anca Neagu – Killeen Engineering and Surveying
Amy Parish – THC, Inc.
Giancarlo Patino – City of Bee Cave
Jeff Pollok – TWDB
Rachel Pytcher – Halff Associates
Elizabeth Reinhardt – City of Gatesville
Elizabeth Robinson – City of Austin
Valerie Rocha – CoreLogic
Nicole Rockey – CP&Y, Inc.
Gloria Teague – INTERA, Inc.
Minh Tran – Williamson County
Joe Tucker – City of Odessa
David Urban – Baker Aicklen & Associates
Julie Xia – CP&Y, Inc.

To date, TFMA has certified 165 CFMs!! Great job everyone! A big thank you to the instructors for sharing their time and expertise. We wouldn't have a training or CFM program without YOU!



NOT certified? Visit our website at www.tfma.org to find out more or call the TFMA Executive Office at 512-260-1366 and we'll get you started. What are you waiting for? Get CERTIFIED today.

A Big Thank you!

TFMA would like to thank Thompson & Associates for their donation toward the purchase of a Floodplain Model. For their contribution, Thompson & Associates will have their name on a bronze plaque permanently affixed to the outside of the Stormwater Model as it travels around the state.

If your company would like to make a donation toward the purchase of a model, please contact Markie Casebier, markiec@att.net or call 512-260-1366 at the TFMA office.

HEAR YE, HEAR YE!!

It's election time for TFMA in 2015! Please consider running for a position on the TFMA Board or nominating someone to run. A call for nominations will be sent out shortly after the first of the year so be on the lookout and make your nominations.

Unlike previous years, all voting will be handled electronically through the website. More information will be coming about the new voting process. It's simple, easy and if Roy can do it.....!!



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Burton Johnson, PE, CFM at 713.954.5341 or BLJohnson@mbakercorp.com
Sarada Kalikivaya, PE, CFM at 940.783.4171 or SVKalikivaya@mbakercorp.com
www.mbakercorp.com

2015 TFMA\CFM Renewal is Upon YOU

Remember, the deadline for renewal is fast approaching—December 31st. If you're already completed your renewal—CONGRATS! If you have not, give us a call so that we can assist.

Steps for Adding your own CEC's to your TFMA profile:

1. Sign in to your profile at www.tfma.org
2. Once signed in, click on "Edit Bio" (Under Information and Settings)
3. Scroll to the bottom of your Bio page, you will see the title "Additional Information."
Here is where you will enter your CEC's.
4. Insert the amount of hours earned in the "CEC Value 2014" box (this is a number only field) – You will only be able to edit the current year.
5. Insert a short description of courses in the "CEC Courses 2014" Box. If listing more than one course, please list the hours beside each course.
Example: Floodplain Management 101 – 8 hours
TFMA Workshop A – 4 hours
6. When you are done entering your CEC courses, click on "Save Changes".
7. You should now see all of your CEC information on your profile!

You are responsible for entering your own CECs but you are still required to submit backup certificates, verification forms, etc. for what you've entered as ASFPM still requires TFMA to have "paper" copies of the backup material in your files.

If you have any questions or need assistance, contact Markie or Selina at the TFMA office at 512-260-1366 or via email at tfma1@att.net.

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Update your Information Online

Changed jobs? Have moved recently or your phone number and/or email address has changed? Haven't updated your information in a long time?

Well, that's been too long. It is that time of the year to not only renew your membership for 2015, it is also a good time to update your membership profile with any changes to you may have. Simply sign into your profile and click on the "Member Bio" and update your Information online.

If you have any questions or need assistance signing in, please contact the TFMA Executive Office at 512-260-1366 - we're here to help!

Reprinted from ASFPM: *The Insider* September 2014

ASFPM Develops Strategies for Using High Water Marks in Floodplain Mapping

~The silver bullet to ensure flood map accuracy~

By ASFPM Science Services Program Director Alan R. Lulloff, P.E., CFM

Flood hazard maps are one of the most valuable products the federal government provides to communities. However, instead of being welcomed as an important tool for community planning, the mandatory flood insurance requirements associated with the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area, mapping can create significant angst within a community. When owners of buildings within the mapped flood hazard area are required to purchase flood insurance, they often feel betrayed. “You gave me a permit to build here. Therefore, it should be safe. How can it be that I am now informed that my building is in a flood hazard area?”

This is a challenging enough situation. However, when there are instances that the new flood maps incorrectly show well-sited homes or businesses in the flood hazard area, it unfortunately shifts the focus from avoiding flood hazard areas or mitigating flood risks, to questioning the accuracy of the maps.

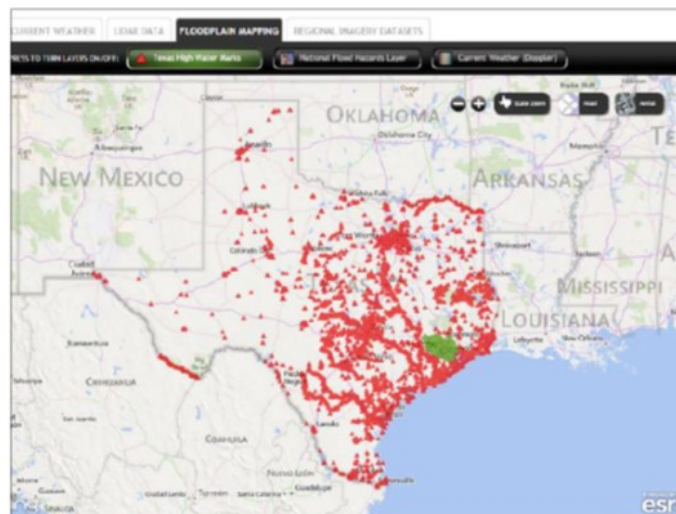
In folklore, a bullet cast from silver is often the only effective weapon against a werewolf, witch, or other monsters. In that context, a high water mark (HWM) is the “silver bullet” to deal with inaccurate flood hazard maps. ASFPM has developed guidance through its report, “Strategies to Establish Flood Frequencies Associated with Flood Event High Water Marks,” that helps enable the thousands of HWMs that have been collected over many decades across the nation to be the weapons that slay the inaccurate map dragon.

Streams gages and HWMs on streams with no gages document historic flood events. Floodplain engineering modeling that has been calibrated or validated against historic flood events can be deemed “accurate.” The reason it can be deemed accurate is that while the uncertainty can never be reduced to zero, it can be quantified. In instances where engineering models have not been calibrated or validated against historic flood events – the uncertainty is unknown. No accuracy “uncertainty” can be determined; therefore, these maps can then be appropriately deemed inaccurate.

An obstacle limiting the use of these “silver bullets” is that the SFHA map is intended to represent the 1 percent annual chance flood event. At stream gages the flood frequency associated with flood elevations is established by the US Geologic Survey. However, the frequency of the flood event that caused a HWM not near a gage is often unknown.

One of the goals of ASFPM’s study, published in June, was to document best practices in computing or estimating flood frequencies associated with documented flood events. Once the flood frequency associated with a flood event has been determined, HWMs established after the flood event can be used to calibrate/validate floodplain modeling.

Science Services staff interviewed personnel at agencies responsible for collecting HWM data across the country to identify best practices, but to also develop broad recommendations for policy that would make HWMs more useful and the collection of HWMs more consistent. One of the four recommendations includes establishing a “nationwide geospatial database for archiving high water mark data and making it available to the public,” using the Texas Highwater Mark Inventory as an excellent example. Through a collaboration with federal agencies, local governments and the private sector, the Texas floodplain management program has compiled a collection of more than 15,000 HWMs that are accessible via the Texas Natural Resource Information System (TNRIS).



Above is a screen shot of the Texas Highwater Mark Inventory from the Texas Natural Resources Information System. ASFPM is recommending a similar national program.

2014: The Year in Review

TFMA Training - Over 20 classes were held in 2014 all over the state.



January 2014: North Texas Region 4 & 10 Luncheon in Grapevine - *top*



June 2014: the Inaugural Region 6 Luncheon in San Antonio - *on the right*

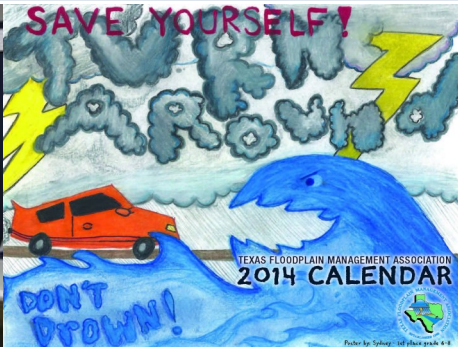


Training in San Antonio in December

2014 TFMA Conferences - Irving and San Antonio - Reached close to 1,000 members combined.



TFMA's Outreach Program - TFMA continues to spread the word about the dangers of flooding and flood awareness through community fairs and schools.



What's in store for 2015?



27th Annual TFMA Spring Conference

April 14 - 17, 2015

Dallas, Texas

Defining the Culture of Floodplain Management

TFMA has scheduled the Annual Spring Conference for April 14-17, 2015 in Dallas. This very educational and informative conference will offer attendees the opportunity to choose from over 24 hours of continuing education with technical sessions carefully crafted to suit your needs in a variety of learning formats.

The TFMA Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday along with the popular Early Bird Workshops. The opening Plenary Session scheduled for Wednesday, April 15 will open with The J. Mike Howard Lectureship presented by David R. Maidment, Ph.D. His presentation is entitled: *"Floodplain Mapping and Flood Forecasting Technology - Into the Future."*

After a long day on Wednesday, all full conference attendees are invited to attend the Welcoming Banquet with this year's theme is "Casino Royale." After being treated to a full dinner buffet, attendees will hit the tables for chances to win some great prizes. Attendees can try their skills at Texas Hold 'Em, Blackjack, roulette and more. A great way to start the conference!

Thursday will be filled with concurrent sessions with topics to suit everybody's needs and interests and will include the Awards and Membership Luncheon. The conference will also offer you the opportunity to continue your networking with the Closing Reception and Silent Auction.

The exhibit hall will open on Wednesday morning through Thursday night. Exhibitors will be there to showcase their products and services. The closing Plenary Session will be held on Friday morning through noon.

The headquarters hotel is The Westin Park Central deep in the heart of Dallas. TFMA has negotiated a fantastic rate of \$125 single/double. To make your hotel reservations, call The Westin Park Central at 972-385-3000 and tell reservations your are with the TFMA Annual Spring Conference in order to get this special rate. You can also make your reservation online by [click here](#) or you can copy and paste the following URL on your browser:

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=1409255451&key=185C5C>

Cutoff date for reservations is March 31 or once the block is full, whichever comes first.

TFMA has also negotiated special parking rates as follows:

\$7.00/day for Day Guests

\$14/day for Overnight Guests

Online Registration opens January 1!

Contribute to the 3rd Annual Silent Auction

Calling all the TFMA talented members who would like to contribute their wonderful works of art to the auction!

Please contact the TFMA office at 512-260-1366 and let us know what you'll be contributing. Last year, a few of you donated great items that were quickly snatched up, so start that project today!

Maximize contact with your target market with opportunities to educate and inform potential clients in the public and private sector of the services, equipment, software/hardware products, project and data management services your company provides. Reinforce your existing relationships and meet a new, larger and more diverse customer base. Promote your emerging technologies and applications and discover what others are doing when you directly interact with the leaders in application, innovation, development, and execution of Floodplain Management.

Corporations, government agencies, and non-profit organizations involved in all facets of floodplain management are encouraged to exhibit. The exhibit show will be in a highly visible area in close proximity to the General Sessions with refreshment breaks taking place within the exhibit area. Plenty of exhibit breaks and social activities have been planned to maximize exposure to your organization and its products. Our attendees have said over and over again, that a big part of this conference is learning about your company and its products.

Who Attends?

Flood hazard specialists from local, state and federal governments, mortgage/insurance and research communities, associated individuals in flood zone determination, engineering, hydraulic forecasting, emergency response, water resources, geographic information systems and other Floodplain administrators, Floodplain engineers, and Stormwater Managers and their personnel. Over 500 attendees participated at the conference in Irving last spring.

Benefits of Exhibiting:

- ◆ Meet new prospects and generate leads.
- ◆ Promote your company image and maximize market exposure.
- ◆ Discuss the needs of your clients in a friendly yet professional environment.
- ◆ Build long-lasting business relationships all under one roof.

For exhibitor application contact the TFMA office at 512-260-1366 or email tfma1@att.net.

TFMA 27th Annual Spring Conference Sponsorship Opportunities

Looking to expand your company's exposure with TFMA? Want to thank your clients for supporting your company or needing to reach new prospects? Then look no further, become an official Conference Sponsor of the 27th Annual TFMA Spring Conference. There will be various levels of straight sponsorships to specialty sponsorship opportunities.

Want to really stand out in the crowd? Become a sponsor of the TFMA Casino Royale Evening Banquet or the popular lanyards to start.

Many opportunities to show your support of the largest conference in the industry in Texas. This is one you can't afford to miss out on.

For more information, contact the TFMA office at 512-260-1366 or via email at tfma1@att.net.

2014 TFMA Conference Supporters

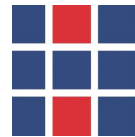
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selina_mirza@att.net

TFMA Committee Corner - Floodplain Mapping Standards

By: Wes Birdwell, PE, Chair

I used to say that there are two surprises in the flood business. One is to wake up one morning and step out of bed into knee deep water. The other is to get a letter from your bank telling you that you need to buy expensive flood insurance. Neither surprise is pleasant. One of TFMA's primary roles should be to help our communities update their floodplain maps. Many of our communities have maps that probably more resemble cave drawings than useful information. Texas is growing, and new neighborhoods are springing up every day in areas where there is little or no accurate floodplain data.



My home basin, the Colorado river, is less than 10% mapped, and it is one of the fastest growing areas in Texas. The recent "Halloween Flood" in 2013 on Onion Creek in southeast Travis County washed through homes who didn't know they were in a floodplain. I have seen this happen over and over again over the last 40 years. Let's do something about it.

Texas needs to map its floodplains ahead of development, not behind it. Our friends at FEMA and at the TWDB are tremendous resources, and I know they'll help us.

I was asked to help form a new committee in our organization to focus on this need. If you are interested, please email me at wbirdwell@halff.com.

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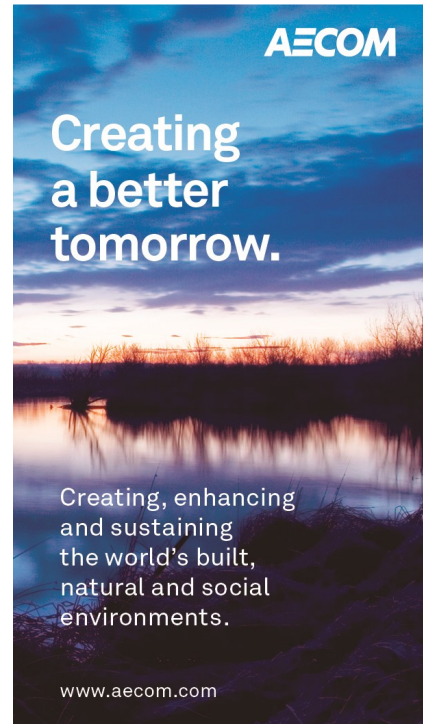
Upcoming TFMA Training Schedule

TFMA has already started to plan Training for 2015. It is going to be an exciting, aggressive training schedule so no CFM is left behind! Here are a few of the courses already planned:

Cedar Park – February 23 – 27, 2015 – Advanced Course
Houston – June, 2015 – E-273
Amarillo – July 20 – 24, 2015 – E-273
Arlington – December, 2015 – E-273

This is just a sample of the class schedule for 2015. Visit the website frequently as new training classes will be posted online.

Want to host a class in your Region? Contact the TFMA office and we'll get you started. We would love to help make it happen!



Don't forget to visit the TFMA Career Center at www.tfma.org. You will be required to sign into your profile in order to access the career center. A valuable tool for Members Only!

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