



ASFPM Vice Chair Status Report 2019

Association of State Floodplain Managers

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May 13, 2019



As I wrap up my seventh year of service as a board member, I want to write directly to our members in this report. First and foremost, I must start with a big THANK YOU! We exist as an organization because of your support and engagement. It has been an honor and privilege to serve you as a regional representative and vice chair over these past many years, and without your feedback, engagement, suggestions and passions, I could not effectively represent your interests. Thank you also to the charitable supporters, vendors, agency and organizational partners, committee co-chairs, and executive office staff who make it possible for us to conduct business and serve our members. There are countless hours of volunteer time and effort invested into serving our membership and I am grateful to every individual, agency, partner, NGO and corporation that stands behind the entire operation.

ASPFM's mission is very simple; to reduce flood losses. Our website at www.floods.org will give you the full text of the mission, but that is really what it all the time and effort must really support. In the past two years we approached organizational challenges on two fronts: efficiency and effectiveness. The former is intended to ensure we are providing the highest service to our customers nationally and across the globe, and the latter to ensure we are providing the services needed rather than services perceived.

Organizational efficiency is a professional passion for me, so I am proud to share a few of the efforts we pursued to give you (our members) the best value for your membership and CFM fees:

- Updated the vintage *2012 ASFPM Strategic Plan* to act as a rudder for this organizational ship
- Reviewed overhead and operational costs to ensure EO operations are right-sized compared to similar non-profit national organizations
- Approved the purchase of a national headquarters building to streamline operational costs
- Created a regular policy update for directors, committee co-chairs, chapters, states and members to prevent duplication of messaging and allow more time for discussion during revolving meetings

Effectiveness can be difficult to measure, and this is the front where I spend the most mental and emotional energy. Winston Churchill famously stated, "However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results." Here is a small sampling of our efforts to be an effective organization over the past two years;

- Created the first *Annual Report* to members with a two-page infographic to show how funds are received and turned into action
- Reformatted committees to reflect current trends and needs expressed by membership, and to better align with national efforts with partner agencies
- Supported and led national efforts to update or revise practices in floodways, Approximate A Zones, erosion or fluvial hazard zones, and private flood insurance.

There is so much more work to be done, and since we always have more work than hands to do it, perhaps you the reader will understand why I treasure the efforts of all of our volunteers across the nation.

To our new leadership, whom I will not be able to meet in Cleveland this year, I wish to offer you this proxy congratulations and warm embrace! Congrats on your nomination and election to serve our members' interests and fiscal investment in an efficient and effective organization. Congrats on your

willingness to cast one of 19 votes as a director. Congrats also on dedicating your professional time to a mission that is bigger than all of us, and that we cannot complete without collective and tireless dedication. Most of all, let me clearly share with you the business I left incomplete as vice chair in the hopes that the next board can carry the baton across the finish line in my absence:

- Floodplain managers and infrastructure managers must come to the table in partnership. There is more work in floodways initiated by DOTs and most states than all other applicants combined. And more than half of all fatalities from flooding are the result of people drowning in their vehicles. We share a mission of life safety. Now let's bring our resources together to leverage opportunity!
- Floodway standards have not changed since inception nearly 50 years ago, but our tools to measure hazards against life safety and property are growing exponentially. I am pleased to be at the forefront of technological evolution using 2D hydraulic analysis to save lives and reduce public infrastructure costs. But until the standards to manage risk align with the technology used to measure and mitigate it, we will see an ever-growing gap in what can efficiently be constructed with public tax money.
- Fences need mending with partner organizations operating under missions parallel to our own. Just as one person cannot complete great things on their own, so an organization cannot be a singular voice of change and effectively create it on a national level. Our partners at ASFPM, APA, ASDSO, NASFMA and others are part of our national coalition to create real and lasting change. Let us strengthen our bonds over a table of mutual agreement and honor our differences as unique and beneficial NGOs!
- Finally, and most importantly, I believe every member in good standing wishing to volunteer in any capacity should have the right to do so, and that our Constitution is in need of revision. Currently our officer committee (chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer) positions are locked out to state employees only. State employee membership is 5% of our total membership (2017 data), and this should not be the case. Change is needed.

My lasting hope for ASFPM is to ensure we can weather the next storm, whether it is fiscal, social, environmental, or any group in combination. We are not just an EO, nor a board of directors, nor a collective of committees, nor a policy statement, nor a white paper. We at ASFPM are a worldwide membership with a singular purpose to reduce flood losses anchored entirely in the membership. I always encourage our volunteers to do three things: (1) place the members' needs first, (2) stick to the mission, and (3) speak your voice. If we don't continuously do these three things, we will not succeed in our mission, and all efforts will decay to entropy.

Thank you again, ASFPM members and volunteers, for your dedication, tenacity and passion for life safety and property protection in the face of growing natural disasters in the United States. You are running a marathon and I am running with you, and am most grateful to be counted among such capable and amazing peers. Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU!