

**DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
FLOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

September 19, 2012

The September 19, 2012 Flood Advisory Committee (FAC) meeting began at 10:00 AM at the Commission office (DRBC) in West Trenton, NJ. Tom Suro, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) chaired the meeting.

ACTION ITEM:

- The FAC is interested in focusing on flood mitigation/risk at the basin scale. Investigate/discuss ways that the FAC can be involved in the new Risk MAP process and use non-regulatory products to focus on areas of potential mitigation. A need exists for risk communication and mitigation planning in high risk areas of the Basin.

A. Introductions and Review of the Draft Minutes from the May 15, 2012 meeting: Minutes of the May 2012 meeting were approved with no corrections or changes noted. Minutes are posted to the DRBC web site. Tapes of meetings may be reviewed upon request.

B. Hydrologic Conditions Report: Laura Tessieri, DRBC

As of Sept 10th, the year-to-date precipitation for 2012 ranged from 28 inches (2.2 inches below normal) for the upper basin (above Montague) to 23.2 inches (7.3 inches below normal) for the lower basin (Wilmington). To date, for the month of September, streamflow both at Montague and Trenton gages were in the normal range for that time of year. Streamflow at Montague was 99% of normal as of September 10th and Trenton was 105% of normal.

DRBC directed releases from lower basin reservoirs August 28th – September 3rd to meet the Trenton target. 1,125 cfs–days (.727 BG) was released from Beltzville Reservoir during that time. As of September 14, 2012, the total storage for the NYC Delaware reservoirs was 181 BG; Cannonsville at 57%, Pepacton at 73% and Neversink at 67%.

As of September 9, 2012, the salt line (7-day average river mile location of 250 mg/l chlorides) was at river mile 77 which is two miles downstream of the normal position for this time of year.

C. Hydrologic Outlook: Gary Szatkowski, NWS Mt. Holly Weather Forecast Office

An extreme drought continues over a large part of the country. However, according to the US Drought monitor, drought conditions in our region have recently improved to near normal conditions. Streamflow has also improved in our region.

The majority of statistical models predict weak to moderate El Nino conditions through the remainder of 2012 with a return to ENSO-neutral conditions as we move into 2013. The three month outlook combines the effects of long-term trends, soil moisture, and when appropriate, El Nino–Southern Oscillation (ENSO). Warmer than normal temperatures are expected for Autumn 2012 continuing into Winter 2012-2013. There are no clear signals regarding precipitation.

D. Nominations for Vice Chair: federal member

Tom Suro nominated Gary Szatkowski (NWS) as the next Vice Chair. If anyone has other nominations, they can be made by email prior to the next meeting when a vote will be held.

E. September is National Preparedness Month: Robin Danforth, FEMA R3

National Preparedness Month (NPM) is held each September to encourage Americans to make sure they are prepared for disasters or emergencies in their homes, businesses, and communities. This year’s theme is “Pledge to Prepare–Awareness to Action.” We’re asking the public, individuals, business, and organizations to take specific action by doing the following: 1. Learn

about emergency hazards and their appropriate responses, 2. Make a communications plan, 3. build an emergency kit, and 4. Get involved in preparedness in their community.

F. Risk MAP Non-Regulatory Products & Datasets: Robin Danforth, FEMA R3 & Bob Schaefer, FEMA R2

In 2009, FEMA developed the Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) initiative. The goal of Risk MAP is to deliver, in collaboration with state, local, and Tribal entities, quality data that increases public awareness and leads to action that reduces risk to life and property. Risk MAP products will include the traditional regulatory products, as well as, non-regulatory flood risk products.

Regulatory Products include:

DFIRM Database

Flood Insurance Study (FIS)

Non-regulatory products will include (required):

- Changes since Last FIRM
- 1% Annual Chance Depth Grid
- Flood Risk Assessments (HAZUS Loss Analysis)
- Areas of Mitigation Interest

Coastal non-regulatory products can also include (optional):

- Coastal Increased Inundation Areas
- Coastal Wave Height Grid
- Primary Frontal Dune Erosion Areas
- Eroded Dune Peak

Links from the Non-Regulatory Products presentation:

Risk Assessment, Mapping and Planning Partners: www.RAMPP-team.com

FEMA: www.fema.gov

Floodsmart, the official site of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP):

www.floodsmart.gov

Hazus-MH software: <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/hazus/index.shtm>

Hazus User Groups: http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/hazus/hz_users.shtm#4

Action/Discussion Items:

1. Questions were raised as to the status of maps in their county. To check the latest status, visit www.RAMPP-team.com
2. Discussion was raised that the FAC has done a lot to implement the flood warning recommendations of the Interstate Flood Mitigation Task Force in past years. The FAC is very effective at getting multiple agencies to work together. It was brought up that the FAC might be interested in focusing now on flood mitigation/risk at the basin scale. Ideas included being involved in the new Risk MAP process and using new non-regulatory products to focus on areas of potential mitigation. A need exists for risk communication and mitigation planning in high risk areas of the Basin.

G. Delaware Bay Coastal Flood Risk Study: Matt Shultz & Jeff Gangai, RAMPP

The Pennsylvania Silver Jackets (PA SJ)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has initiated a coastal analysis and mapping study to produce updated Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) for coastal counties within Region II and III. This includes counties that border the Delaware Bay. The updated coastal flood study is needed to obtain a better estimate of coastal flood hazards and risk as the current, or effective, Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are outdated. The Coastal base

flood elevation on the FIRM includes 4 components: 1. Storm surge Stillwater elevation (SWEL), 2 Amount of wave setup, 3. Wave height above storm surge (Stillwater) elevation – determined from the new storm surge model and 4. Wave run-up above storm surge elevation (where present).

For more information on the Coastal study, including timelines, visit:

Region II Coastal Website: www.Region2Coastal.com

Region III Coastal Website: www.R3Coastal.com

Action/Discussion Items:

1. A question was raised about additional building standards in the coastal AE Zone. Although it is not a federal requirement, it is strongly recommended that communities consider adopting higher standards similar to the standards that are in the V Zone since there is a lot of wave action that can be sustained to structures in that AE Zone.
2. The importance of identifying critical infrastructure at risk, such as the Philadelphia airport, was raised.
3. Sea level rise is not included in the new study. Depth grids and inundation mapping may help communities evaluate their future risk.
4. Risk communication is an ongoing need, both to the public and emergency managers/township officials.

H. Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012: Laura Tessieri, DRBC

The Flood Insurance Reform Act, passed as the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 as part of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (H.R. 4348), reauthorizes the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) until September 30, 2017 and includes several reforms and changes, a number of which are already generating questions as to intent, interpretation and implementation.

The change that will get the most attention are the phasing out of subsidies for Pre-FIRM commercial properties, Severe Repetitive Loss structures, structures with cumulative NFIP payments equaling or exceeding fair market value, substantially damaged structures, and for new and lapsed policies. Second (vacation/investment) properties will also lose subsidies – this happened earlier in a NFIP extension bill.

Another provision will allow insurance premium rates increases of 20 percent annually (previously capped at 10 percent), allow for deductibles, and require that premiums be calculated based upon “average historical loss year,” including catastrophic loss years.

Other provisions:

- Require the creation of a Reserve Fund
- Require the development of a plan for repaying debt owed to the U.S. Treasury
- Establish a Technical Mapping Advisory Council (TMAC) to provide recommendations to FEMA about how to consider the impacts of sea-level rise in flood insurance rate maps (FIRMs), among other things.
- Amend the Mitigation Grant Assistance Program to allow FEMA to pay for 100 percent of eligible costs to fund the acquisition or relocation of severe repetitive loss structures, even where they do not meet cost-effectiveness requirements.

Link to Bill: Flood Insurance language contained in Division F, Title 2.

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112hr4348enr/pdf/BILLS-112hr4348enr.pdf#512>

**I. NJAFM Conference: October 2-3, 2012, Somerset, NJ
PAFPM Fall Meeting: October 23-24, 2012 Wilkes-Barre, PA**

Both the New Jersey Association of Floodplain Managers, www.njafm.org and the Pennsylvania Association of Floodplain Managers, www.pafpm.org, are holding conferences in October 2012. Please check these and also the New York State Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association, <http://ny.floods.org>, website for future training opportunities.

J. Opportunity for Public and Interested Party Comments

None offered.

K. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Flood Advisory Committee (FAC) was scheduled for Wednesday, November 28, 2012 at 10:00am in the DRBC Goddard Conference Room.

**FLOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING ATTENDANCE**

September 19, 2012

NAME	AGENCY
BURD, David	Local Emergency Management: Lambertville, NJ
CAPECCI, Don	PPL Generation
DANFORTH, Robin	FEMA Region III
DEANGELO, Jim	Michael Baker Corporation
GAUL, Andrew	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP)
GARLITS, Skip	
GRIGGS, Pat	FEMA Region II
HOGAN, Laurie	National Weather Service (NWS)
Miller, Audrey	New Jersey Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness (NJOHSP)
MILLER, Jason	United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Philadelphia District
OLIVIO, Dana	New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP)
ROLAND, Mark	United States Geological Survey (USGS) - PA
RUGGERI, Joseph	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)
RUPERT, Clarke	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
SHAEFER, Robert	FEMA Region II
SCHULTZ, Matt	Risk Assessment, Mapping, and Planning Partners (RAMPP)
SCORDATO, John	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)
SURO, Thomas	United States Geological Survey (USGS) - NY
SZATKOWSKI, Gary	National Weather Service (NWS)
TESSIERI, Laura	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
THARP, Diane	The North Delaware River Watershed Conservancy (NorDel)
TUDOR, Robert	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
WESTFALL, Greg	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) - NJ
WHITE, Kirk	United States Geological Survey (USGS) - PA
WILLIAMS, David	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)

WNEK, Patti	National Weather Service (NWS)
WO, Jeremy	The North Delaware River Watershed Conservancy (NorDel)
Zigon-Richardson Valerie	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)