NFIP/CRS
UPDATE

October 2013

Silver Jackets bring Collaboration in Flood Hazard Reduction

The Silver Jackets is an innovative program that brings together federal, state, and frequently tribal and local agencies to learn from one another and apply their knowledge to reduce risk from floods and other hazards. Silver Jackets programs are organized at the state level by the local U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office. State agency staff, including the State Hazard Mitigation Officer and State NFIP Coordinator, come together on the Silver Jackets team with the federal family of agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and others. The team becomes a forum through which the state's flood risk management priorities can be addressed. So far, 40 states and the District of Columbia have active Silver Jackets teams.

> Through Silver Jackets teams, the federal family of agencies, states, and others become a forum for addressing flood risk management priorities in a collaborative way.

As CRS communities know, continuous collaboration among agencies and other entities is critical to successfully reducing the risk of damaging floods. No single agency at any level has all the answers, but often multiple programs can be leveraged to provide a cohesive solution.

Among the Silver Jackets program goals are to

- Create (or supplement) a mechanism to collaboratively identify, prioritize, and address flood risk management issues and implement solutions.
- Leverage information and resources so that states and their communities can benefit from such national programs as FEMA's Risk MAP, the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System, and the Corps' Levee Inventory and Assessment Initiative.
- Provide focused, coordinated hazard mitigation assistance to carry out high-priority actions such as those identified in state mitigation plans.
- Identify gaps among agency programs and/or barriers to implementation, such as conflicting policies or authorities, and suggest ways to resolve them.

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Silver Jackets (cont.)

Silver Jackets Website

The national Silver Jackets instructive website can be found at http://www.nfrmp.us/state/. Besides background information and a history of the program, it features lists of "best practices," mitigation success stories, a toolbox of techniques, advice on developing and maintaining an effective Silver Jackets team, and, best of all, lots of stories about how state, local, regional, and Silver Jackets people worked together to develop long-lasting solutions to flood risk problems. The website also has sources of more information, links to relevant entities, and back issues of *The Buzz*, the Silver Jackets quarterly newsletter. Also, to see if your state has a Silver Jackets team, you can go to this link on the site: http://www.nfrmp.us/state/state.cfm.

The Community Rating System + Silver Jackets

CRS representatives and staff have been interacting with the Silver Jackets to identify and capitalize on overlaps in the two programs and thereby improve local flood mitigation and benefit communities in other ways. There were presentations and discussion about the CRS at last year's Silver Jackets conference, articles about the CRS have appeared in Silver Jackets newsletters, and at least two webinars have been held during which federal partners were able to learn about the CRS and how it and other state and federal programs can complement each other. A one-hour webinar was recorded and can be accessed at https://fema.connectsolutions.com/p27992959/.

What's in a Name?

When responding to emergencies and disasters, different agencies traditionally wear different-colored jackets. For example, FEMA personnel wear dark blue and Corps personnel wear red. The name "Silver Jackets" is used to underscore the common mission of the diverse agencies involved.

SILVER JACKETS

You can Help the Silver Jackets and the CRS

A good way to help the Silver Jackets is by identifying specific examples of CRS communities that have received credit points for using products (evaluations, new data, reports, plans, maps, or others) prepared by federal agencies or in cooperation with federal agencies. For example, a community might have received credit under Activity 520, Acquisition and Relocation, for buildings or facilities that were acquired and/or relocated with federal funds. Or, credit under Activity 530, Flood Protection, might have been received for buildings retrofitted by or with financial or other assistance from a federal agency. If your community—or a community that you know of—has obtained CRS credit for initiatives or products like this, please let the CRS know by emailing NFIPCRS@iso.com. The CRS and Silver Jackets will incorporate these examples into future conferences, presentations, webinars, and other Silver Jackets work. ≡≡≡

CRS Grows; Community Classes Improve

New community classifications in the CRS became effective October 1st. There are now 1,273 communities participating in the CRS. The top tier of communities includes

Class 1
- Roseville, California

Class 2
- Tulsa Oklahoma
- King County, Washington
- Pierce County, Washington

Class 3
- Sacramento County, California

Class 4
- Maricopa County, Arizona
- Ft. Collins, Colorado
- Thurston County, Washington
- Louisville–Jefferson County, Kentucky
- Skagit County, Washington
- Snohomish County, Washington
- Charleston County, South Carolina

A community's official designation of its CRS class comes in the form of a letter from FEMA. Sometimes those letters are delayed. To verify your CRS classification, check the CRS section of the *Flood Insurance Manual*, which tells insurance agents what premium discount to provide and when it takes effect. Find it at http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/34745. Scroll down and click on "Community Rating System (CRS) Section 19." ≡ ≡ ≡

October is Recert Month

Remember that October is the deadline for communities in the Community Rating System to submit their annual recertification package to their ISO/CRS Specialists. In August, you should have received from your ISO/CRS Specialist a detailed list of the activities for which you are receiving CRS credit. Don't forget that this year's recertification is based on the 2007 *Coordinator's Manual.*

With your recertification, be sure to include the following, if applicable to your community. Sometimes communities forget to attach

- Annual reports, including those done for a public information program strategy (OPS, Activity 330) and a mitigation or floodplain management plan (Activity 510).
- Copies of all the products sent out during the year under Activity 330 (Outreach Projects), including additional projects (OPA), projects done pursuant to a public information program strategy (OPS), and a project to the repetitive loss area (Section 503 of the *Coordinator's Manual*).
- Reports from the local emergency manager on the annual exercise or drill of the emergency response plan, lessons learned from implementing the plan in response to an emergency or disaster, and the updated list of critical facilities affected by flooding (Activity 610).

However, please do not attach or provide anything with your recertification form (AW-214) unless there is a statement on the form requiring you to include some documentation. If there is no such statement, all you need to do is initial that the particular activity is still being maintained.

If you submit your recertification electronically, feel free to do so via e-mail with attachments or by submitting information on a CD. Just make sure the documents are appropriately marked to correspond with the activities.

Wanted . . . Feedback on the CRS / FloodSmart Website

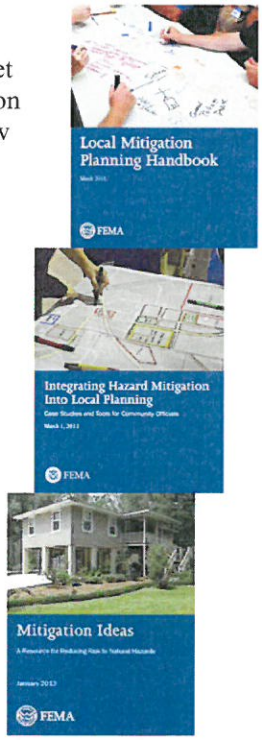
As noted in the last issue of this newsletter, the Community Rating System now has a presence on FEMA's FloodSmart website. The CRS pages on the site have been designed to explain, in plain language, what the CRS is, how it works, and why and how a community can join. CRS communities are encouraged to use this site as an easy means of getting elected officials, stakeholders, staff from other departments, and laypeople acquainted with the CRS and how it fits in with their own concerns and specialties. It is also a handy way for newly hired CRS Coordinators to begin learning about the program. The site has an easy-to-use menu, and features Frequently Asked Questions, ways communities benefit from the CRS, articles about local recipients of CRS awards, and more. Take a look, at http://j.mp/floodsmart-crs.

The CRS is very interested in improving the usefulness of this mechanism for expanding and clarifying awareness about the CRS. After you have reviewed the site, and/or heard from your colleagues and elected officials after they have used it, please send feedback to NFIPCRS@iso.com.

Remember that the extensive collection of more technical and credit-specific CRS documents and tools referenced in the *CRS Coordinator's Manual* is posted at www.CRSresources.org. The CRS pages on the FloodSmart website are geared toward users not already familiar with the CRS. ≡≡≡

Mitigation Planning Aids from FEMA

Three new publications about incorporating flood (and other hazard) mitigation into local planning have been released by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.



- ***Local Mitigation Planning Handbook*** (2013. 162 pp.)
  http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7209
  The *Local Mitigation Planning Handbook* is the official guide for localities that are developing, updating, and implementing local mitigation plans to meet requirements set out in 44 *CFR* 201.6 for FEMA approval and for eligibility for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grants. It offers practical approaches, tools, worksheets and examples of how communities can plan to reduce long-term risk from natural hazards. The Handbook complements the 2011 *Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide* (http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=4859), which is the official guide for federal and state officials responsible for reviewing local mitigation plans.
- ***Integrating Hazard Mitigation into Local Planning*** (2013. 84 pp.)
  http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7130
  Integrating Hazard Mitigation into Local Planning highlights case studies and tools to help local officials incorporate risk reduction into existing local plans, policies, codes, and programs that affect community development or redevelopment patterns. Besides recommended procedures and techniques for building risk reduction into ongoing efforts, it gives ideas for overcoming possible impediments, and has several case studies to illustrate local successes.
- ***Mitigation Ideas: A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards*** (2013. 88 pp.)
  http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=6938)
  Mitigation Ideas offers a range of potential mitigation actions for reducing risk from drought, earthquake, erosion, extreme temperatures, flood, hail, landslide, lightning, sea level risk, wind, winter weather, storm surge, subsidence, tornados, tsunamis, and wildfires. ≡≡≡

More Dam Safety Information Sources

Communities that are now receiving—or are anticipating requesting—CRS credit under Activity 630 (Dams) will be glad to see these new publications about various aspects of the management of dams, their safety, inundation areas, and more.

From the Association of State Floodplain Managers comes ***A Strategy to Reduce the Risks and Impact of Dams on Floodplains*** (2013, 52 pp.), the report of a cooperative endeavor by the ASFPM Working Group on Dams, FEMA, and the 2012–2013 Dam Risk Reduction Advisory Committee. Its aim is to help floodplain management officials and communities better understand how dams affect floodplains, and the impacts dams may have on those communities. It analyzes the relationship of dams to the floodplain and recommends ways to better integrate the presence and function of dams into floodplain management and risk reduction. http://www.floods.org/ace-files/Projects/DamRiskReduction Strategy_20130722_FINAL.pdf.

The FEMA Library has four new publications on dam safety.

- ***Federal Guidelines for Emergency Action Planning for Dams*** (FEMA-P-64) (2013. 72 pp.). These guidelines, an update of the existing, 2004, document, help dam owners, in coordination with emergency management authorities, effectively develop and exercise emergency action plans (EAPs) for dams. http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/3357
- ***Inundation Guidelines*** (FEMA-P-946) (2013. 145 pp.). This document guides dam safety professionals in preparing studies that model inundation from dam breaches and also in producing maps that can be used for multiple purposes, including dam safety, hazard mitigation, consequence evaluation, and developing emergency action plans (EAPs). http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/34193
- ***National Dam Safety Program Strategic Plan*** (FEMA-P-916) (2013. 24 pp.). This strategic plan, which covers fiscal years 2012 through 2016, presents the goals and objectives established by FEMA and its partners in the National Dam Safety Program to reduce the hazards from dam failures and demonstrate the benefits of dams in the United States. http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/34179
- ***National Dam Safety Program Annual Year in Review 2012*** (FEMA B-821) (2013. 12 pp.). Progress made during 2012, along with important accomplishments, are detailed in this annual report, including assistance provided to states, research, training, and the alignment of the National Dam Safety Program with FEMA's emergency management and resilience frameworks. http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/34172 ≡≡≡

New Online

If you haven't checked the website at www.CRSresources.org lately, now would be a good time to take another look. New items are always being added. Among the recent additions are

- ***CRS Credit for Special Flood-related Inland Hazards***—a supplement to the 2013 *CRS Coordinator's Manual*, detailing credit available for management of ice jam flooding, flooding adjacent to closed basin lakes, mudflow hazards, flooding affected by land subsidence, and/or uncertain flow path flood hazards. www.CRSresources.org/manual/
- **State Uniform Minimum Credit Summaries**—a state-by-state list of the CRS credits available to communities in that state (Uniform Minimum Credit, or UMC) for certain state laws, regulations, and standards that support floodplain management and have proven effective in reducing flood damage. www.CRSresources.org/200-2 ≡≡≡

Training Opportunities

Workshops and Training on the CRS

- **The Community Rating System (E278)** (field-deployed course is designated as L278)

  Emergency Management Institute (Emmitsburg, Maryland) ..... April 7–10, 2014;
  ..... June 23–26, 2014; August 11–14, 2014

  This is the all-purpose training course for the CRS. It is taught at both the Emergency Management Institute (see below) and at sites throughout the country at the request of interested communities, groups, or states, pending available funding. It is based on the 2013 *CRS Coordinator's Manual.*

  - Attendees of previous E278 CRS courses may want to repeat this course. Therefore, restrictions on repeat attendance have been waived.
  - For continuing education credit for Certified Floodplain Managers, the ASFPM will award CECs earned at the E278 CRS course even if the CFM® attended the course when it was based on a previous *CRS Coordinator's Manual.*
  - No more than two persons per community may attend at one time.

  Prerequisite: To enroll in the CRS course, you must be a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM®), or have completed the National Flood Insurance Program course listed below (E273), or be a full-time floodplain manager with more than two years of experience specifically related to floodplain management.

- **HAZUS-MH for Flood** (E172) .....December 2–5, 2013; April 21–24, 2014

- **Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts** (E194) .....August 25–28, 2014

- **Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP** (E273).... March 17–20, 2014;
  ..... May 5–8, 2014; June 16–19, 2014; September 15-18, 2014

  E273 is also field deployed periodically. Contact your State NFIP Coordinator for more information (see http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuID=274).

- **Retrofitting Floodprone Residential Buildings** (E279) ..... April 14–17, 2014

- **Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts II** (E282) ..... April 14–17, 2014

- **Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts III** (E284) .....July 21–24, 2014

- **Residential Coastal Construction** (E386) ..... August 18–21, 2014

CRS communities can receive CRS credit points after their staff members complete certain training sessions. Under Section 432.o, regulations administration (RA) of the *Coordinator's Manual,* five points are provided for each member of a community's floodplain permit staff who graduates from courses E194, E273, E278, E282, E284, or E386 (up to 25 points). Graduating from E279 is worth five points under Activity 360 (Flood Protection Assistance).

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Training Opportunities (cont.)

Webinars

"RiskMAP and CRS Synergy for Local Officials" is a recorded, one-hour webinar that introduces FEMA's Community Rating System and Risk MAP initiative and shows how communities can use both to improve their floodplain management programs. Class materials, including the handouts, the presentation slides, and a summary of the Q & A are available for download at http://www.starr-team.com/starr/Training_Materials/Risk_MAP-CRS_Synergy. The recorded webinar can be accessed at http://j.mp/starr-recorded-training.

The CRS offers other webinars and workshops to help communities with their CRS requirements. If you are interested in having a webinar on the new *Coordinator's Manual*, the FEMA Elevation Certificate, or any other activity, contact your ISO/CRS Specialist.

About the Emergency Management Institute

FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI), located in Emmitsburg, Maryland, offers training on many topics related to floodplain management, mitigation, and construction, including the basic CRS course (E278). These are oriented to local building, zoning, planning, and engineering officials. Tuition is free for state and local government officials, travel stipends are available, and lodging on campus is free. Free transportation is provided from the airport to the campus and back to the airport. The only out-of-pocket expense is a meal ticket, which is all-you-can-eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Go to the EMI website for specific details at http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/NETC_Welcome_Package.pdf. The application to attend can be found at http://training.fema.gov/Apply/, or call EMI at 1-800-238-3358 or (301) 447-1035. Signed applications should be submitted through the state's Emergency Management Training Officer.

Bring the CRS to Your Hometown

In 2014 the CRS expects to conduct the field-deployed CRS course (L278, the same as the Emergency Management Institute's E278, but tailored to local conditions), depending on funding availability. The new *CRS Coordinator's Manual* and increased interest by non-CRS communities is generating a growing demand for CRS training. A schedule of CRS-related webinars should be available in mid November. If a state, CRS Users Group, or organization would like to host a course or discuss CRS training opportunities, a representative should contact its FEMA Regional CRS Coordinator. Their contact information is available at www.CRSresources.org/100.

Statement of Purpose

The *NFIP/CRS Update* is a publication of the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System. It provides local officials and others interested in the CRS with news they can use.

The *NFIP/CRS Update* is produced in alternate months. It is distributed electronically, at no cost, to local and state officials, consultants, and other interested persons. Communities are encouraged to copy and/or circulate the *Update* and to reprint its articles in their own local, state, or regional newsletters. No special permission is needed.

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