



Georgia Association of Floodplain Management

Chair - Terri L Turner, AICP, CFM **Vice Chair** - Tom McDonald, CFM
Secretary - Juanita Mikell **Treasurer** - Garrett Skinner, CFM

Awards Summary GAFM 2009 Annual Conference Columbus, GA

Distinguished Service Award

Mr. Collis O. Brown, the State Floodplain Management Coordinator, was honored at our 2009 Annual Conference in February with the Distinguished Service Award. This award recognizes a current or past member of GAFM who has been an outstanding influence on the credibility, responsiveness, and overall quality of the organization. The nominee should characterize the finest in selfless dedication to promoting and expanding recognition of GAFM as an organization of the highest quality. Mr. Brown more than meets this criteria and has been an integral part of GAFM from its beginnings. Without his participation in the organization, GAFM would be hard-pressed to match its current advocacy status for sound floodplain management, or its growing membership roll across the State of Georgia.

Mr. Brown charted the course for GAFM to be the success it is today by promoting the organization across the State and encouraging community officials and private sector individuals to participate in GAFM's membership, annual conferences and workshops. He provided access to legal assistance for development of GAFM's Constitution. Once GAFM was organized, he took the lead as the main point of contact coordinating the private sector to have a positive role in supporting GAFM, from both a monetary and educational basis. He continues to be a driving force in GAFM by promoting the organization across the state, and in his active participation in planning of the Annual and Regional conferences and workshops.

Outstanding Floodplain Manager

Ms. Terri L. Turner, the Assistant Zoning & Development Administrator for Augusta-Richmond County, was recognized at our 2009 Annual Conference in February as an Outstanding Floodplain Manager. This award recognizes the individual efforts of an outstanding floodplain manager in the State of Georgia. Those so recognized have demonstrated outstanding leadership in local floodplain management issues. Ms. Turner more than meets these criteria. She has been an integral part of the floodplain management

effort in the Augusta-Richmond County community, as evidenced by the supporting documentation received with her nomination.

Ms. Turner has shown excellent skills and expertise in serving as the Augusta-Richmond County Floodplain Manager for close to 12 years. She has improved their Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance and has designed and implemented Augusta's Flood Buy-Out Program. Her role in the adoption of a very restrictive Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance has had a positive influence on the citizens of Augusta-Richmond County. They have also benefitted greatly from her tireless efforts on their behalf in dealing with flood-damaged property. Ms. Turner's drive and desire can be summed up in one word: relentless. There are very few people with Ms. Turner's dedication to sound floodplain management and the willingness to support the cause of protecting life and property from flooding.

Program Award for Excellence in Floodplain Management

Two programs were recognized at our 2009 Annual Conference for Excellence in Floodplain Management: The Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority and the City of Griffin. The award recognizes county or municipal programs, or multiple-jurisdictional programs, demonstrating outstanding local commitment to sound floodplain management. The program must document improvement to one or more floodplain management outcomes compatible with recognized goals established by the GAFM, the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM), or the FEMA; it must contribute to knowledge, methods, technology or regulations; and it must show achievement of floodplain management objectives over a sufficient period of time. Both of these programs have more than met these criteria.

Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority

The Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority (WSA) took over stormwater management for both the City of Douglasville and Douglas County in 2004 and was established as a stormwater utility. Because of limited resources through the years, stormwater infrastructure had been neglected. Once established as a stormwater utility, WSA requested from both the City and County their infrastructure location maps and inventory. There were none. It very soon became apparent that there was a tremendous amount of work to be done.

A vital part of WSA's stormwater program is floodplain management, with the greatest improvement being the floodplain mapping effort. Prior to WSA's involvement, the only flood studies done in Douglas County had been done by FEMA, the most recent of which was dated 1984. Furthermore, the FIRMs were dated 1980-1984 and used even older street maps making them difficult to use. No County topographic maps were available, only the USGS Quadrangles with contour intervals of 20 ft. Evaluating extents and elevations of the 1% chance flood were difficult throughout the County. In 2004, WSA created a county-wide topographic map with 2-ft. contour intervals. In 2005, WSA inventoried all publicly-owned stormwater infrastructure including road culverts. Once this had been accomplished, WSA began conducting flood studies by initiating a proactive effort to map floodplains on all streams with drainage areas of 100 acres or more by 2012.

WSA has completed detailed flood studies in three drainage basins - 39% of the jurisdiction and 154 stream miles now have updated mapping. These studies have thus far identified 333 structures within the existing 1% chance floodplain. Many of these are homes were unknowingly built in unmapped flood hazard areas and only a fraction of these are protected by a flood insurance policy. WSA has notified

each of these owners of our findings and is funding the preparation of elevation certificates upon the consent of the owner having completed to date elevation certificates for 112 residential structures.

WSA has sought to remove houses from floodplains through FEMA Grant programs. The first FEMA grant was a 2007 PDM grant which funded the acquisition and demolition of six flood-prone properties. In addition, two houses have been removed from the 1% chance floodplain by increasing a road culvert capacity to pass the 1% chance event. Six additional houses have been approved by GEMA for HMGP grants funding under disaster declaration 1686. This application is currently under review by FEMA. They are currently working on a PDM grant application for 2009.

WSA also developed floodplain management regulations which have been adopted as Chapter 9 of the Authority's Rules and Regulations. The City and County adopted identical requirements as local ordinances.

WSA has installed a network of 17 automated rain gauges to continually transmit data to a main computer, thereby giving access to real-time data of rainfall accumulations and intensities. WSA plans to use the data as an early warning system to alert citizens of potential flooding. WSA already has in place an ultra high-speed emergency telephone notification system that can be used for timely citizen notifications.

Just five years ago, prior to the establishment of WSA as a stormwater utility, stormwater management practices in the County consisted of little more than repairing storm damage. Since the establishment of the stormwater utility, WSA has been able to commit significant resources to floodplain management. WSA is convinced the most effective way to mitigate flood hazards is to have accurate maps available, and to strictly enforce all rules and regulations. Great progress has been made to prevent future flood damage, however, there is still much to do to and WSA leading the way.

City of Griffin

The City of Griffin created the first stormwater utility in the State of Georgia and has recently celebrated its tenth anniversary of service. Griffin has been able to remain in compliance with the myriad of issues related to stormwater management through the creation of the Stormwater Utility. One of these issues is floodplain management. The City completed in 2003 complete detailed mapping of its floodplains, most of which had not been previously mapped by FEMA. The effort involved: data collection including surveyed cross-sections, formulating hydrologic/hydraulic models, drainage system evaluation, Capital Improvement Project (CIP) identification including mapping of 100-year floodplains and identification of parcels and structures within the floodplain, and comprehensive stormwater management reports. Thirty-three miles of streams were mapped within the 13 square mile City, resulting in one of the most comprehensive efforts in the Southeast U.S. for a community this size.

The City officially joined the Community Rating System (CRS) on October 1st, 2008 as a level seven (CRS-7) community. The City received substantial points in: Activity 430 - Higher Regulatory Standards, Activity 450 - Stormwater Management, Activity 320 - Map Information Service, and Activity 310 – Elevation Certificates. The Stormwater Department is currently working on submitting an updated application to increase the rating to a level six community by May 1, 2009.

The City also conducts a comprehensive public education program with stormwater videos provided to the local schools and a watershed management program taught year round in the schools. The City has an on-going “Stream Clean-Up” program as well which encourages local groups and organizations to get involved and volunteer remove tons of debris and trash from the City’s streams. The City sponsors a State recognized Erosion and Sediment Training Site on the Griffin Technical College Campus. The

State has renewed the City's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (NPDES MS4) storm water permit. The City anticipates participating in the Upper Flint River Council so that it may join in watershed management in the region and help to shape State Water Plan. Griffin continues its national leadership in stormwater management and is a worthy recipient of this Award.