



THE IAFSM CURRENT

Illinois Association for
Floodplain and Stormwater Management

Fall 2013 Newsletter

Inspiring Stormwater Behavior Changes through Strategic Communications Planning

~Rebecca Bell, *Bluestem Communications*
(formerly *Biodiversity Project*)

From an early age, we learn to tailor words to fit our audience. We learn the vernacular of our peers and how to talk our parents into bending the rules. We learn that talking to teachers in the classroom is quite different from talking to teammates and coaches on the field. By matching our tone and our words to our audience, we increase the likelihood that we'll be understood and that we'll get what we want.



Stormwater professionals should likewise understand and consider the needs and values of their audiences in order to inspire homeowners, business owners and community groups to change behaviors to decrease stormwater pollution. Inspiring lasting behavior changes—from picking up pet waste and raking leaves properly to installing pervious pavers and using silt fencing—requires strategic thinking and planning. Planning tools, like those outlined in this article, can help stormwater professionals create compelling messages and effective materials.

Values-based communication

Values-based communications strategies create social change by building personal connections to an issue. Values are broad ideas and are deeply held: community pride, personal responsibility, each generation should have it better than the last, equality for all. When developing values-based messages and strategies, communications professionals consider an audience's values and try to relate the problem to those values through specifically chosen pathways. Values-based appeals speak to a person's emotions, hopes and fundamental beliefs.

By using some basic planning tools, values-based communications can move people toward sustainable decision-making. These tools support real-world communications practices and help communicators choose the most effective means for reaching an audience. Applying these tools while developing communication strategies can make or break efforts to change behaviors and promote sustainable decision-making.

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Developing a communications strategy

The goal of a communications strategy is to motivate a target audience to take some action or change a behavior. Behavior change campaigns are not about simply educating an audience, although education is usually a component of the campaign. In reality, educating people about an environmental issue seldom leads to behavior changes. In order for people to make real, lasting behavior changes, we must appeal to their values and beliefs and remove the barriers that might prevent them from making a change.

A communications strategy is a roadmap that outlines the specific goal of a campaign, what behaviors must be changed to reach that goal, who needs to make those changes (the audience), and how to inspire that change (what activities and tools to use to reach the audience). A complete communications strategy shows communicators how to reach goals. A communications strategy template leads communicators through the rigorous process of determining a campaign's **impact, objective, ask, audience, barriers, pathways, activities** and **message**.

These component parts of a communications strategy can be explained through a possible stormwater campaign scenario. Let's say that a popular community beach has been degraded by algal blooms caused by excess nitrogen and phosphorus in stormwater runoff. Town engineers want to reach families who enjoy and live near that beach and inspire them to change their lawn-care practices—especially leaf maintenance—to reduce this algal pollution.

In this scenario, the **impact** is the town's big, broad, long-term goal for its stormwater program. For this hypothetical scenario, the impact is to generally reduce algal blooms and bacterial pollution in Our Lake. Unlike the impact, an **objective** is short-term (one-two years), project related and measurable. Objectives are the stick by which you measure your campaign's success. For our hypothetical scenario, the objective could be to reduce levels of phosphorus and nitrogen in runoff by 15% by the end of an 18 month campaign.

To achieve this objective, we must **ask someone**—homeowners, politicians, chambers of commerce, restaurant owners, city councils, etc.—to do *something*. The ask tells our audience what to do, it is the behavior we want them to change or the action we want them to take. In the Our Lake scenario, we want our **audience**—in this case homeowners with property adjacent to Our Lake—to change lawn-care practices. Specifically, we want them to properly manage fall leaves so they do not end up decomposing in Our Lake. Let's say the municipality asks residents to bag their leaves for collection instead of blowing them into streets and gutters where they can be washed into Our Lake. The "ask" for this campaign would be to bag fall leaves according to the municipal collection guidelines.

Now we must ask: *why* are they not already doing this? What **barriers** might prevent our audience from adopting this behavior? Sometimes the barrier might be obvious, but not always. We can determine barriers by brainstorming with peers, surveying audience members, holding focus groups or conducting opinion polls. In our hypothetical, Our Lake homeowners might be prevented from bagging their leaves for a wide variety of reasons. Maybe they don't have access to bags. Maybe they all use landscaping companies for their lawn care and the



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companies charge more to bag leaves. Maybe bagging leaves takes longer and they don't have time to waste on additional lawn care. Maybe they think it is more environmentally-friendly to rake leaves to piles than bagging them because the bags are made out of plastic. Maybe they don't know what they are supposed to do.

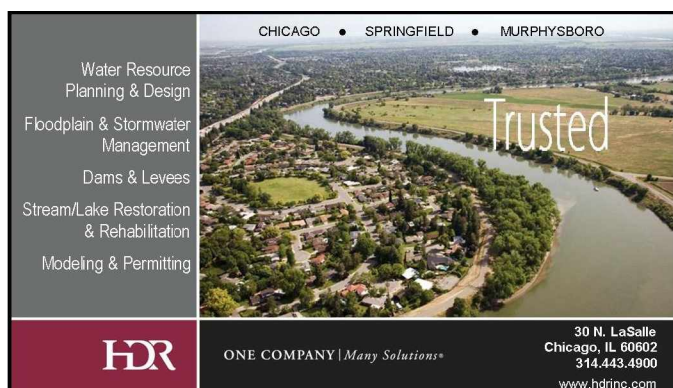
But we can only be certain about these barriers—and figure out the best ways to remove these barriers—by asking sample audience members. Informal conversations with audience members are sometimes the best, and cheapest, ways to find out this information. If our audience cites the cost of the bags as a barrier to adopting this behavior, then the campaign message and materials should include information on where to find cheap or free bags.

By knowing your audience, you can also determine their **pathways**: all the ways that they receive information. Audiences receive information from hundreds of pathways, but not all pathways might be accessible to you. For example, an audience might receive information from the radio on the morning commute, Facebook, evening news, Sunday newspapers, local business owners and church bulletins. Communicators have to choose the best pathway to distribute information to an audience, depending on a campaign's budget and the ultimate objective. While an audience may get a majority of their general information from blogs and Facebook, they are not necessarily trusted venues for a stormwater campaign.

Once we've determined the "ask", audience and potential barriers, we can determine the **activities** we will use to reach the audience and the **message** we will deliver to motivate behavior change. In our hypothetical situation, while we are asking sample members of the audience about barriers, perhaps we discover that there is one hardware store in town where most people buy lawn care products. One activity for reaching our audience could be posting flyers about bagging leaves in the hardware store. Or, perhaps we find out that most people attend the same Sunday church service. Then we could place an ad in the church's bulletin with information on proper leaf management. Knowing the target audience well helps communicators use limited resources to implement the campaign in places most likely to reach the audience.

Taking the time to develop a thorough communications strategy can add steps to the initial planning phase of a communications campaign. But the resulting strategy directs resources to the very heart of the problem, to the audiences who have the authority and potential to adopt the desired behavior changes. In our hypothetical situation, because we've taken the time to narrow our objectives, determine a specific ask and talk to audience members, we can easily determine winning strategies for reaching them. A thoughtful communications strategy increases the value and effectiveness of communications efforts. We can change human behaviors to significantly reduce runoff, but only if we use informed communications to ask the right audiences to make necessary changes.

Rebecca Bell is the Communications Director at the Biodiversity Project. Effective November 1, the Biodiversity Project will change names to Bluestem Communications. www.biodiversityproject.org and www.bluestemcommunications.org.



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FEMA “Success Stories” Now Online

After every disaster, FEMA Reservists write “success stories” from the event. FEMA has now posted them all on line. You can search for “Region V” or “Illinois” to read about some great successes in floodplain management and mitigation in our state. Within Region V, the lion’s share of the success stories are within Illinois, which is another testament to the great work done by our floodplain managers.


<https://www.ilis.dhs.gov/bestpracticeslist>

Streamlined BCA Policy released in time to impact FY13 HMA for Flood Acquisition and Elevation Projects

-ASFPM Member Alert email, August 2013

In mid-August, FEMA Headquarters released a new policy that will significantly streamline the time frame and paperwork for benefit-cost analyses for flood mitigation acquisition and elevation projects. This policy is a game changer not only for the FY13 Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant cycle (that includes the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program) but appears to be applicable to all FEMA hazard mitigation grants going forward.


It is our understanding that the policy was released now to help ease the paperwork and effort burden for the FY13 HMA grant applications since the application period is short. The policy will eliminate the need for BCA on any buyout project valued under \$276,000 or elevation project under \$176,000. Please contact Ron Davis, Illinois State Hazard Mitigation Office at 217-782-8719 for additional information and state specific deadlines for the 2013 HMA Grant Application.



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No Adverse Impact (NAI) How-To Guides

~ASFPM Member Alert, August 2013

The long awaited and highly anticipated No Adverse Impact (NAI) How-To Guides are hot off the presses!

After two years in the making (one in planning and one in implementation) the first two NAI How-To Guides are available on the ASFPM website. The intent of these How to Guides is to expand on the knowledge base within the original No Adverse Impact Toolkit and to provide specific tools for incorporating NAI floodplain management into local regulations, ordinances, requirements, design, standards and practices.

Mitigation and Infrastructure are the first two (of eight - the seven original building blocks and legal) NAI building blocks to be published into How-To Guides. Each How to Guide features an introduction and background on NAI, five of the many NAI level tools that can be utilized under the particular building block being featured (Mitigation and Infrastructure), and a War Stories section of what worked, and in some cases, what didn't. There is tons more useful information within each of the two How to Guides, but I don't want to spoil the surprise. Go online and check them out for yourself!

The Guides ultimate goal is to have communities take a different approach - a NAI based approach - to managing all development in the community that can contribute to an increased flood risk and incorporate the NAI concept into all ongoing local community activities. These Guides identify just a few of the many ways a community can accomplish lessening flood risk within their community now and working toward reducing flood risk in the future.

The NAI How-To Guides can be found at: <http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuID=460>. For questions or comments please contact ASFPM Science Services at sciserv@floods.org.

Development on Australian Flood Plain to Have Lifeboats, Emergency Food

~Kim Stephens, *BrisbaneTimes.com.au*, July 19, 2013

A Gold Coast [Australia] developer will have to provide two lifeboats, a helipad, a three day food supply and a tractor at a residential estate it plans to build due to concerns over its placement on a flood plain.

The unusual conditions are expected to be imposed next week by Gold Coast City Council, which it says is unable to prevent the development.

The \$300 million dollar project will be known as Cypress Central and will feature eight buildings, the highest of which will be 19 storeys on 25 hectares.

Deputy mayor Donna Gates said despite widespread opposition to the residential plan, council would have no choice but to approve the proposal because a recent court ruling which allowed an adjacent development to go ahead set a legal precedent.

In a bid to ensure the safety of residents at the proposed 970-dwelling Carrara estate in the event of a flood the council decided to impose the strict, and rather unorthodox, protective measures, she said.

Read more:

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/development-on-gold-coast-flood-plain-to-have-lifeboats-emergency-food-20130719-2q9km.html#ixzz2ZnDwVK5y>





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From the Chair

~Loren Wobig, P.E., CFM, IDNR-OWR

The recent flooding and flood related deaths in Colorado are a stark reminder of the importance of sound floodplain and stormwater management every day in our communities in Illinois. Thank you to all the dedicated municipal professionals who strive to do what's right in floodplain and stormwater management often in the face of frustrated neighbors and political challenges. It is your wisdom, insight, determination and perseverance to promote flood damage reduction activities and enforce ordinance provisions to prevent future flood damages in your communities, that makes Illinois a national leader in floodplain and stormwater management.

Wisdom comes from learning new things and learning from your own experiences and the experiences of others in a similar position. The Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (IAFSM) annual conference provides an ideal venue for wisdom to flourish in the realm of floodplain and stormwater management. Again and again floodplain managers across the state have shared with me how much wisdom they have gained by sharing experiences, failures and successes at the 2-day conference.

Everyone has wisdom to share. Recently you received a Call for Presentations for the 2014 IAFSM Conference coming this March in Rosemont, Illinois. Please consider sharing your wisdom with other floodplain and stormwater managers in Illinois and submit a presentation abstract today. To help get your creative presentation ideas flowing, please consider some of the topics requested at the conference by your colleagues. These topics include: ancient stormwater engineering techniques, levee maintenance challenges, improving rainfall forecasts, legislative impacts, better community outreach, damage determinations, rapid deployment flood prevention products, mapping challenges and solutions, erosion protection and GIS apps to name a few. Share what you know, learn what you don't.

Vendor Product Information and Exhibitors Sought

In the January 2014 newsletter, we would like to highlight vendor products that could be useful or helpful to our members. If you are a vendor and would like your product information included, please send a short product description to Jennifer Maercklein at jmaercklein@v3co.com before Friday, December 20, 2013. The information should be no longer than 3 lines of text (Times New Roman, 11 pt font) including a website or contact person. Vendor products will be featured in the order they are received. This section of the January 2014 Newsletter will be limited to the first 20 vendors who respond. IAFSM reserves the right to edit all submissions.

Beginning with the 2014 Annual Conference, vendors who choose to exhibit at the conference will receive a new benefit: a description of their product in the fall newsletter. The fall newsletter is published approximately six months after the spring conference, which provides vendor exposure to our membership twice each year. The "Vendor Products" section of the Fall 2014 newsletter will be limited to vendors who support IAFSM as Exhibitors at the Annual Conference.

For more information, see the Call For Exhibitors on our website. <http://www.illinoisfloods.org> and click on the Call for Speakers and Exhibitors on the right side, under Latest News.

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Conference Venue Survey: Thank You to our Members

~Lillian Prince, P.E., CFM, IAFSM Vice President and Conference Planning Chair

Thank You to those members who took the time to respond to a survey that IAFSM emailed out in May, requesting feedback on a preferred venue location for our next few Annual Conferences.

The email explained that venue costs in the Chicagoland area have doubled and are still on the rise, and our conference size is quickly outgrowing the InterContinental Chicago O'Hare. It is proving extremely difficult to find a new venue in the area and keep our cost down. Registration cost in Chicagoland might soon become just as expensive as registration cost plus hotel stay in central Illinois.

The reason for this difficulty is that many Chicagoland area hotels that are large enough for our conference also demand a guarantee for a large number of hotel room nights. Because a large portion of the membership commutes to and from the conference each day when the conference is located in the Chicagoland area, we are unable to meet the hotel room requirements of most Chicagoland hotels. Such hotel requirements have greatly limited the venue options in the Chicagoland area in the past.

228 people responded to our survey. In summary, 86% said the Bloomington-Normal Marriott location would be suitable to them, personally, regardless of their employer's budget. 75% said that if the conference location were to require travel (overnight stay) for them each year 2015-2017, they know or assume that the employer could budget for their travel expenses. 71% said that additionally 2018 travel would be accommodated.

We also received a good number of suggestions for venues and other potential ways to cut costs on the conference, and we will explore these options. Additional volunteers for the conference committee came forward as well.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to provide IAFSM this information! Your input is very carefully considered and appreciated! To provide additional information or volunteer for the conference, contact LBP.iafsm@gmail.com.

New Email Address for IAFSM

Please note that IAFSM has a new email address: IAFSM@illinoisfloods.org. Please make note of this change, and modify your email and spam settings to designate this address as a "safe sender" so you do not miss important communications from us.



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Call for Speakers: 2014 Annual Conference

SPEAKERS: IAFSM invites speakers from municipal, public and private sectors to present information on floodplain and stormwater management topics at our 2014 Annual Conference on March 12-13, 2014 at the InterContinental Chicago-O'Hare hotel in Rosemont.

Based on suggestions from the membership, IAFSM intends for the 2014 IAFSM Annual Conference to again provide more focused/in-depth education and training in the principle committee disciplines of IAFSM including Floodplain Management, Stormwater Management, Mitigation, Wetlands, CRS, and Legislation. To that end, a portion of the 2014 Conference Breakout Sessions will be dedicated to specific core topics developed by IAFSM Technical Committees potentially based on presentation abstracts submitted by the membership. For example, the Stormwater Committee might dedicate an entire session to training or issues on a specific kind of BMP measure. Remaining Conference Breakout Sessions will still be dedicated to topics completely based on presentation abstracts submitted by the membership as part of this call for speakers.

New for 2014! The best presentation(s) will be acknowledged and awarded.

TOURS: Does your community have a floodplain, stormwater, mitigation, or wetland project in the vicinity of the conference hotel you would like to show to other floodplain managers? IAFSM is again planning to offer Technical Field Tours of interesting project sites in the area. Please submit nominations for potential tour sites.

For more information, click on "Call for Speakers" under the "Latest IAFSM News" heading on the right side of our home page at <http://www.illinoisfloods.org/index.html>.

Abstracts and Tour Ideas are due by 5:00 PM Monday, October 21, 2013. Please email Lillian Prince, Conference Chair at LBP.iafsm@gmail.com.

We Invite You to be a Conference Sponsor

IAFSM's 2014 Annual Conference will be held March 12-13, 2014 at the InterContinental Hotel Chicago O'Hare. The Conference provides a forum for professionals involved in floodplain and stormwater management throughout the state to meet and share their knowledge and experience. We invite you to be a Conference sponsor for 2014! All sponsors will be recognized in the conference program, at plenary sessions and luncheons through a variety of media, and in this newsletter.

BONUS: Commit to being a sponsor by January 3, 2014 and your firm's logo and name will be included in the conference brochure.

Sponsor registration information can be found at <http://www.illinoisfloods.org/index.html>



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CEC Education & Training Opportunities

Looking for training opportunities? The following opportunities are coming up in the next few months. If you are looking for credits, be sure to review the material and confirm they meet the appropriate requirements.

IAFSM Sponsored Training Opportunities:

We are busy working on our Annual Conference, so no IAFSM training events are planned at this time. See our website at www.illinoisfloods.org for updates later this fall.

Additional Training Opportunities:

- EMI provides a wide range of training opportunities and upcoming training includes Managing Floodplain Development (10/21), ArcGIS for Emergency Managers (10/21), Recovery from Disaster (11/18) and HEC-HMS (1/13)
 - EMI courses are free for local and state government employees. Learn more at the EMI website.
 - <http://training.fema.gov/EMI/>
- Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Effective Communication, Champaign, Illinois, 11/13.
 - <http://iema.illinois.gov/Training/OnlineReg/classes.asp>

Webinars/ Online:

- Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) Inspection and Maintenance of Wetlands, October 16th, free with \$60 membership.
 - <http://aswm.org/component/content/article/119-aswm-webinarscalls/3348-upcoming-members-wetland-webinar-series>
- ASFPM, Nonstructural Flood Proofing Techniques for At-Risk Development, October 23rd , \$40 for members, \$70 for non-members.
 - <http://www.floods.org/n-calendar/dayevents.asp?id=4009&type=12&date=10/23/2013>
- Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) Wetland Link International, October 29th, free.
 - <http://wli.wwt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/WLI-N-America-webinar-final1.pdf>
- ASDSO-Identifying Hazards and Improving Public Safety at Low Head Dams. November 12th. \$95.
 - <http://eo2.commpartners.com/users/asdso/session.php?id=11067>
- Center for Watershed Protection, Stormwater utilities, November 20th, \$149 non-member.
 - <http://cwp.org/stormwater-utilities-reckoning-the-cost-side-of-the-equation>

Out of state annual conferences:

- Wisconsin association for Floodplain Stormwater and Coastal Management Conference, Appleton, WI, October 30-November 1st.
 - <http://www.wafscm.org/annual-conference/>
- Upper Midwest Stream Restoration Symposium, February 23-26, 2014, La Crosse, Wisconsin. Abstracts for oral presentations due October 18, 2013.
 - <http://www.prrsum.org>

Important Stuff We Tell You in Every Newsletter...

Save the Dates! 2014 and 2015 Conferences

The 2014 Annual Conference will be held March 12-13, 2014 at the InterContinental Chicago-O'Hare hotel in Rosemont.

The 2015 Annual Conference will return to Bloomington-Normal and be held THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, March 12-13, 2015, at the Marriott Bloomington-Normal Hotel and Conference Center.

Wanted: Newsletter Ideas and Articles

IAFSM members, this is YOUR newsletter! Email Jennifer Maercklein, editor, at jmaercklein@v3co.com if there are topics that you'd like us to cover. You don't need to write the article - we just want your ideas! If you're gifted with a pen and would like to provide content, we welcome your written contributions as well.

Get Involved with IAFSM!

IAFSM Committee Chairs welcome your help and involvement. See the list of chairs on the last page of this newsletter, or visit the committee webpage to learn more about volunteer opportunities. <http://www.illinoisfloods.org/committees.html>

Borrow our Water Table

IAFSM has two Watershed Tabletop Models available for all members to check out (free of charge) and bring to Public Works Open Houses, Scout meetings, 4-H meetings, school classrooms, etc. This offers a great opportunity to educate about the dangers and impact of unplanned development and human activity in the floodplain. IAFSM keeps one in Springfield and the other in northeast Illinois. Contact Sarah at IAFSM@illinoisfloods.org to make arrangements.

Next Board Meeting

The next IAFSM Board Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 20, tentatively scheduled at the Police Department Training Room in Lisle. Check our website for the meeting address once the location is confirmed: <http://www.illinoisfloods.org> under "What's New". We will focus on planning the 2014 Conference. All members are welcome! See you there!

Jobmart

Visit our Jobmart at <http://www.illinoisfloods.org/jobmart.html> Jobmart is a free service to members of IAFSM. If you would like to post a position, send complete information to IAFSM@illinoisfloods.org.

2013 and 2014 CFM Exam Schedule

To view 2013 and 2014 exam dates and register, visit www.illinoisfloods.org/certification.html. The exam will once again be offered on Tuesday night before the Annual Conference.



Illinois Association for
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Fall 2013 Newsletter

The IAFSM Newsletter is published quarterly for members of the Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management. Information and opinions contained herein do not necessarily reflect the views of all members. Items for publication and other editorial matters should be directed to the editor at jmaercklein@v3co.com.

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