



THE IAFSM CURRENT

Illinois Association for
Floodplain and Stormwater Management

Spring 2019 Newsletter

New Bulletin 70 Rainfall Data Published

On March 14, 2019 at the Plenary session of the IAFSM conference, James Angel, retired State Climatologist, presented the results of the updated Bulletin 70 rainfall data and provided a link to the new publication. As written in the introduction, “This study was designed to update the Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS) Bulletin 70, evaluating rainfall frequency relations in Illinois using current precipitation datasets. The study primarily used the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) daily precipitation data from 1948 to 2017 to perform regional frequency analysis (RFA) using the L-moments approach. Additional information on precipitation relationships for less than 24 hours were obtained from NOAA hourly precipitation data from 1948 to 2014 and Cook County Precipitation Network (CCPN) data from 1989 to 2016. Precipitation frequency relations were developed for storm durations from 1 hour to 240 hours and for recurrence intervals from 2 to 500 years. The results are presented for the same 10 geographic sections as in Bulletin 70 (Figure 1) to maintain the continuity of hydrologic studies and compatibility with regulations.”

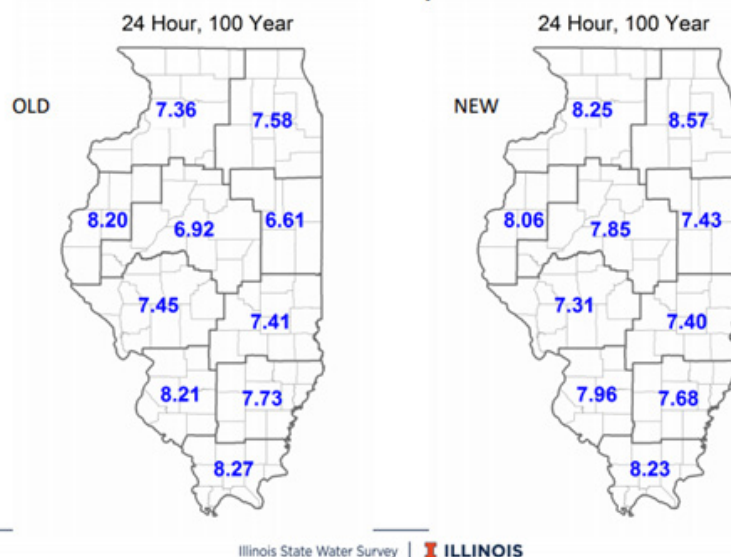
The document Frequency Distributions of Heavy Precipitation in Illinois: Updated Bulletin 70, published by James Angel and Momcilo Markus, March 2019, can be found online:

<http://hdl.handle.net/2142/103172>

A copy of the IAFSM plenary presentation can be found on the IAFSM website at:

https://www.illinoisfloods.org/content/documents/heavy_rainfall_frequency_analysis_for_illinois-an_update_to_bulletin_70.pdf

Old and New 100-Yr, 24-Hour Storm



Inside This Issue

New Bulletin 70 Rainfall Data Published.....	Page 1	Debate over Flood Insurance Reforms	Page 8
Lifetime Achievement: Matt Wahl.....	Page 2	Availability of NAI How-To-Guides.....	Page 9
2019 IAFSM Chapter Award Winners.....	Page 3	From the Chair	Page 10
2019 Conference Recap.....	Page 6	CEC Education & Training Opportunities	Page 11
Thanks to our 2019 Conference Sponsors.....	Page 7	IAFSM Training Opportunity	Page 12
		Important Stuff.....	Page 13

French Wetmore Award for Lifetime Achievement: Matthew G. Wahl, CFM

Matt Wahl, retired from the Peoria County Planning and Zoning Department, was the recipient of the 2019 French Wetmore Award for Lifetime Achievement. This Award is IAFSM's highest honor and it is not always given each year. It is reserved for outstanding longtime floodplain managers who have made a noticeable impact on floodplain and stormwater management efforts in the State of Illinois. Although Matt spent his career in local government, he has benefitted all of us throughout Illinois by his contributions to IAFSM and particularly the development of the Illinois certified floodplain manager program and decades of attention to its implementation.

Matt was the motivating force in the early days of the Illinois floodplain management certification program and exam, which was developed simultaneously with the Associations of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM)'s Certified Floodplain Managers (CFM) exam. At that time, it was felt that Illinois needed its own CFM exam tailored to recognize the higher floodplain and floodway standards required within the State of Illinois.



Matt Wahl (center), Peoria County (retired) receives the Lifetime Achievement Award, pictured with Lou Sidell and Erik Gil

Matt got the IAFSM CFM testing committee organized to develop hundreds of questions for the test. If the committee couldn't agree on a question of procedure, Matt made the call as he had the perspective of the local floodplain manager, which was the intended recipient of the test. His work to create and manage the Illinois Certified Floodplain Manager program resulted in over 500 CFMs the state.

Matt's successful career at Peoria County started under Lou Sidell (pictured). He retired as Director of Planning and Zoning for Peoria County with more than three decades of progressive community development experience. He helped develop the County's first building code program, and for that initiative Peoria County achieved a Community Rating System Class 5 rating. Matt was also instrumental in the development of the multi-jurisdictional Illinois River Flood Mitigation Program which included a floodplain acquisition program of hundreds of repetitive loss properties.

Throughout his career, Matt has been honored with multiple awards including the ASFPM Larry R. Johnston Award national floodplain manager of the year in 1997 and the IAFSM Outstanding Service Award in 2014 and 2017. Matt is very deserving of the French Wetmore Award for Lifetime Achievement. Our thanks to Matt for all of his years of service to IAFSM and his dedication to making us all better floodplain managers.



2019 IAFSM Chapter Award Winners

Outstanding Service: Mike Sutfin

Mike is the current chair of the floodplain management committee for IAFSM. As chair Mike has worked policy makers, building & zoning officials, and emergency managers to push for the formation of multiple flood alliances throughout the state of Illinois. The initial alliance, the Illinois Valley Flood Resiliency Alliance, encouraged all the communities within the Illinois River watershed to join together to share experiences and practices which will help to make the Illinois River Valley more resilient.

Mike was instrumental in the establishment of the Rapid Assessment Flood Team (RAFT), which provides assistance from IAFSM members to jurisdictions that have experienced a damaging flood and he has participated in multiple RAFT assistance visits. Mike also worked tirelessly to help the City of Ottawa, where he is the Building & Zoning Official, to achieve a CRS Class 2 designation. He has been active in the Illinois River Coordinating Council under the Lt. Governor and also sits on the federal CRS task force.

In recognition of his enthusiasm to go above and beyond to promote IAFSM goals and encourage others not only join IAFSM but to actively participate in the organization, the Outstanding Service Award was given to Mike Sutfin.

Journalism: Rob Moore

Rob Moore, Director of the Water & Climate Team at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) works on a range of issues related to the water-related impacts of our rapidly warming climate, including the rising risks of flooding and the effects of sea-level rise. Prior to joining NRDC in 2013, he spent nine years as executive director of Environmental Advocates of New York. Before that, he served as executive director of the Prairie Rivers Network in Illinois and as the Lake Champlain Lakekeeper at the Conservation Law Foundation.

Rob has been a tireless advocate for common sense NFIP Reform, stronger floodplain regulations, and empowering state and local floodplain management efforts. His article “Seeking Higher Ground: How to Break the Cycle of Repeated Flooding with Smart Flood Insurance Reforms” covers the somewhat controversial topic of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the possibility of using insurance recovery money for relocation as an option instead of rebuilding. Rob Moore was presented with the Journalism Award in recognition of his publications. To read the article, please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/MooreArticle>



Mike Sutfin, recipient of the Outstanding Service Award, pictured with Glenn Heistand



Rob Moore, Director of the Water & Climate Team at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

2019 IAFSM Chapter Award Winners Cont.

Legislation: Representative Tom Bennett

For his efforts in creating and supporting a regional team for flood fighting, and for helping to make the state of Illinois more flood resilient, Representative Tom Bennett was this year's Legislation Award winner.

Representative Bennett has a very large district that starts just a few miles east of Peoria and runs all the way to the Indiana border. The City of Watseka is in his district and has one of the worst reputations in the State for flooding. In February 2018, Watseka flooded once again. After the waters receded, Representative Bennett established the East Central Illinois Flood Alliance, an organization of communities throughout his district, to provide education on flooding issues and mitigation. He is very involved in the alliance, attending all the meetings and making numerous calls prior to the meetings to make sure people are attending. He has sought funding to buyout homes in Watseka, and is genuinely concerned with the suffering his constituents have faced.



Rep Tom Bennett, recipient of Legislation Award

Stormwater Management: Village of Downers Grove

The Village of Downers Grove received this year's Stormwater Award in recognition of the Village's forward thinking stormwater management practices to reduce flood risk for their residents. In 2018, Downers Grove Village Council took a significant step toward improving stormwater management by working on an ordinance that would implement new stormwater regulations, which are among the most restrictive in the region. Additionally, Downers Grove is one of the only communities in Illinois that maps areas of known poor drainage or localized flooding and regulates these areas in a manner that is similar to FEMA floodplains. The Village has also been working to complete drainage studies and watershed plans for these localized flooding areas to find viable capital improvement projects to reduce the likelihood of flooding in these areas. The Village was also one of the first communities in Illinois to approve a utility fee, which provides a stable source of funding for stormwater infrastructure projects.



Accepting the Stormwater Manager of the Year Award on behalf of the Village of Downers Grove are Nan Newlon, Director of Public Works (left) and Martin Tully, Mayor (right), with Sarah Hunn, IAFSM Awards Chair (center)

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2019 IAFSM Chapter Award Winners Cont.

Floodplain Manager of the Year: City of Ottawa

The Floodplain Manager of the Year Award was presented to the City of Ottawa in recognition of their status as a Class 2 CRS community. The Community Rating System (CRS) is a part of the National Flood Insurance Program and provides flood insurance premium discounts to residents living in the floodplain when their community is a participant. As a Class 2 community, Ottawa residents in the floodplain will see a 40% reduction in their insurance premiums. The City is the first community within FEMA Region 5 (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin), to earn the Class 2 designation and one of only six in the entire United States to achieve Class 2 or higher. IAFSM was honored to have FEMA Region V Director James K. Joseph along with the Ottawa Mayor Bob Eschbach at the annual conference to acknowledge and celebrate this achievement.

Ottawa joined CRS in 2009 as a Class 5 but had a goal of improving that score and had the political will to put plans in place to achieve that goal. The City has worked with both FEMA and the State of Illinois on a buyout plan that was shown to save Ottawa nearly \$10 million in losses. Flood damage avoided by the buyouts is already \$9 for every \$1 spent, and as an added bonus, the City has been able to repurpose the land into a fantastic new City park.

Ottawa also initiated the successful development of a flood threat and response plan. This plan describes every area that faces flooding and identifies responsibilities during flood events. Since the development of this plan, many other communities and alliances around the state and country have begun to replicate what the City of Ottawa did and have implemented similar plans in their own communities.

Mitigation Award: Jeff Denny, Alexander County

This year's Mitigation Award winner is recognized for his accomplishments in managing the largest buyout in the State's history. Jeff won the Floodplain Manager of the Year award in 2008 for getting Alexander County reinstated in the NFIP by correcting years of past violations. Just three years later, the County had one of the largest floods in a century, and a large number of people in his jurisdiction were thankful for his efforts, which had allowed them to get flood insurance.

More than 100 homes were substantially damaged in the flood and many homeowners requested a buy-out. Jeff managed the buyout project but faced numerous obstacles, most significantly that the State's budget crisis shut down the project for two years. The project is now complete and 117 homes (plus 3 elevations) have been purchased for a total of \$9 Million.



City of Ottawa receives Floodplain Manager of the Year Award. Pictured are Mike Sutfin - Building & Zoning, Mayor Bob Eschbach, and FEMA Region V Director James Joseph



Jeff Denny of Alexander County receives the Mitigation Award from Glenn Heistand

2019 Conference Recap

Thank you to everyone who attended the 2019 IAFSM annual conference last month in East Peoria!

We had over 430 attendees during the two-day conference, which included the usual wonderful breakout sessions and exhibitors, but also some really interesting field tours, and a demonstration of the Asian Carp Cowboys on the Illinois River outside the hotel. Mark your calendars now for the 2020 IAFSM annual conference, held at the Tinley Park Convention Center on March 11-12, 2020. The IAFSM conference is always a great place to learn new things and make new contacts. A HUGE thank you is owed to our Conference Chair, Erik Gil, as well as Sarah Harbaugh, our Executive Secretary, for their hard work and commitment to this year's conference. Thank you, Erik and Sarah.



Thanks to our 2019 Conference Sponsors!

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Debate Begins (again) over Flood Insurance Reforms

In March, as we convened for our Annual Conference, the 116th Congress began hearings on the future of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The program is deeply in debt due to the growing problems of flooding and sea level rise fueled by climate change. NFIP reform is desperately needed.

The House Financial Services Committee began deliberations on a package of four discussion bills, intended to address the NFIP's shortcomings. Rob Moore, winner of our 2019 Legislation Award, wrote a blog post that describes how the bills compare to the climate-smart NFIP reforms called for by many experts including the National Resources Defense Council:

1. Helping People Move to Higher Ground
2. Increasing Transparency and Requiring Disclosure of Flood Risk
3. Producing Flood Maps that Reflect Future Conditions and Climate Change

For a discussion of how the current bills address these issues, and NRDC's recommendations, please visit Rob Moore's blog post – and keep an eye out for future updates. <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/rob-moore/flood-insurance-debate-begins>



The National Flood Insurance Program needs major reforms to respond to growing problems of flooding including rising sea levels and increased risk due to climate change. Image by Don McCullough and used under Creative Commons License.

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Availability of NAI How-To-Guides to Achieve a Resilient Community

~George Riedel, CFM, ASFPM Foundation

In 2013, The ASFPM Board of Directors approved the development of seven *No Adverse Impact (NAI)* “How-To-Guides.” This was a direct result of feedback from ASFPM members who used the NAI Toolkit which provided examples of NAI techniques, but didn’t go into detail about how these techniques could be implemented in a “real world” setting. The ASFPM Foundation provided funding for the development of these *How-To-Guides*.

The NAI Toolkit identified seven “building blocks” or areas of community involvement that can have an impact, and the *How-To-Guides* are in alignment with these seven areas:

1. Hazard identification and floodplain mapping
2. Education and outreach
3. Planning
4. Regulations and development standards
5. Mitigation
6. Infrastructure
7. Emergency Services



Six of the seven guides have been completed and are available on the ASFPM [website](#). Content for the seventh guide, Emergency Services, has been completed and is in its final design stage and will be posted to the website soon.

The *How-To-Guides*’ ultimate goal is to encourage communities to take a different approach to managing development that results in reduced flood risk; this can be accomplished by incorporating NAI techniques into a community’s flood risk reduction activities. The *How-To-Guides* break down the information by topic in a user-friendly way that is easily understood and that communities can apply to their own unique circumstances. The Foundation truly believes the more NAI techniques a community implements, the better prepared the community is for the next flood event – not if, but WHEN it occurs.

Communities striving for a more resilient future in the aftermath of a flood event should consider using these guides. The *How-To-Guides* can be found on the ASFPM website by [clicking here](#).



From the Chair

~Glenn Heistand, P.E., CFM

Congratulations to our Chair-Elect, Erik Gil, who will be assuming the Chair's role beginning at the May 2019 board meeting and congrats to the other hard-working incumbent board members who are moving along their chosen steps of leadership. The new Vice-Chair is Steve Altman, Treasurer is Dallas Alley, and brand new to the board is Sharon Osterby as Secretary. This is my final "From the Chair" article, as I look forward to graduating to Past-Chair, which has all the benefits and none of the work, or at least that's what I tell myself. As I stated during the annual conference in East Peoria this year, I am honored to have served the IAFSM board and look forward to continuing a close relationship with IAFSM.

Sometimes writing this article is tricky. There are only so many times you can praise the board, praise the annual conference, restate the IAFSM objectives, and mention the current flooding situations that are happening somewhere, before it seems repetitive. Not that those things don't deserve to be stated and reminded to members, but there's something to be said for fresh ideas and perspective. That's one reason the IAFSM board is elected each year. One of the things I do before writing this article each quarter is look back at previous articles, those written by myself and by past-chairs like Stu Richter, Loren Wobig, Mike Cothard, and Jeff Wickenkamp, for inspiration and continuity. These are the chairs who served immediately before me and set a high bar to follow.

I reviewed the Spring editions of the IAFSM Current, going back to 2010 when I first became involved on the IAFSM board. Based on these old editions, not much has changed at IAFSM during this period, besides the removal of our old beaver mascot from the newsletter and the ongoing train of Board officers that move through on the regular schedule. Our annual conference is always a big success (Erik Gil and Sarah Harbaugh put together an awesome conference in East Peoria this year, thank you). Our board is always talented and driven (several committee chairs have served over a decade, including Jennifer Maercklein, your newsletter chair). Floods keep happening (keep your eyes on the midwest this flood season, NOAA predicts a doozy this spring). There's something to be said for consistency, especially as we have been consistently good! One notable change is that IAFSM has grown from 622 to 750 members over the past two years, making us one of the largest state chapters in the nation. If nothing else, it appears I did not drive people away during my tenure.

As I said in my first article in Summer 2017, I think we have done a fine job advancing the IAFSM objectives, but let's not rest on our laurels. There is work to be done. Stormwater and floodplain issues are still significant challenges in many of our communities. The rainfall data we rely on for modeling and engineering design are a moving target. The occurrence of urban flooding is increasing. The old guard is being replaced with new faces. We must assure that hard-won knowledge and wisdom are passed forward, and that the achievements made will continue to advance as we adapt to changing conditions. Our best days are still ahead. Our consistency of purpose and dedication to stormwater and floodplain management will continue to make a difference in the lives of Illinoisans. Be proud along with me for all we have already done, but do not be complacent.



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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/ASFPM Sponsored Training Opportunities:

- 4-Day 1-D/2-D HEC-RAS Seminar – April 16-19, 2019. 1 day of one-dimensional HEC-RAS review followed by 3 days of 2-dimensional HEC-RAS Course.
- Using HEC-RAS to Model Bridges, Culverts, and Floodplains May 20–22, 2019, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI
- Using the New HEC-RAS Mapper Applications – May 23, 2019 University of Wisconsin – Madison, WI

Additional Training Opportunities:

EMI provides a wide range of training opportunities and upcoming training. See article in this newsletter!

- EMI courses are free for local and state government employees. Learn more at the EMI website:
- <http://training.fema.gov/EMI/> Upcoming classes include:
 - E212 Hazard Mitigation Assistance – May 6-9, 2019
 - E0172 Hazus-MH for Floodplain Managers – June 17-20, 2019, and July 8-11, 2019

Webinars:

ASFPM – <http://www.floods.org/n-calendar/webinars.asp>

- None listed at this time

Conferences:

- May 19-23, 2019 ASFPM National Conference Cleveland, OH.

Other training and CEC opportunities can be found on ASFPM's calendar: <http://www.floods.org/n-calendar/calendar.asp?>

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IAFSM TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

L278 NFIP/Community Rating System

The Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (IAFSM) is pleased to sponsor this 4-day training course for the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS). This is the field deployed version of the class conducted at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, MD.

Class Dates:

October 7-10, 2019

Location:

**Downers Grove Public Works
5101 Walnut Avenue, Downers Grove, IL**

Course Description:

The course describes activities eligible for credit under the 2017 CRS Coordinator's Manual, how a community applies and how a community modifies an application to improve its classification. The CRS Program underwent significant changes in 2013 and 2017. This course will assist communities prepare for new applications, as well as, cycle verification.

Target Audience

Local officials, regional planning officials, NFIP state staff, FEMA regional office staff, and others interested in learning about the CRS program.

Suggested Prerequisites:

- Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) **OR**
- Have completed the E273, *Managing Floodplain Development Through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)* course, **OR**
- Be a full-time Floodplain Manager with more than 3 years of full-time floodplain management experience, such as floodplain management, codes enforcement, or building code field and through work specifically related to floodplain management.

Cost to Attend:

\$30.00 – Covers snacks and beverages for morning and afternoon breaks. Lunch will not be provided, food is available from numerous local restaurants.

To Apply:

The course Point of Contact is Amanda Gowans, ISO/CRS Specialist, agowans@iso.com, 443.743.7993

Step 1: Applicants will need a Student Identification (SID) number in place of their social security number. If you do not yet have a SID, visit [Register for a FEMA SID](#) or go to <https://training.fema.gov/apply/> and follow directions to register for your SID number.

Step 2: Complete [FEMA Form 119-25-2 Short Form Application](#)

Step 3: Send your application, via email, to Amanda Gowans at agowans@iso.com. Registration closes September 7, 2019. Class size is limited to 35.

Step 4: You will receive enrollment confirmation from Amanda Gowans with additional information, including instructions for payment of the class fee.

Continuing Education:

EMI awards 2.9 CEUs for completion of this course. ASFPM will award 12 CECs towards CFM continuing education. Students must attend all four days to receive a certificate and CECs.

For general questions contact:

Julie Lomax, IAFSM CRS Committee Chair,
jlomax@downers.us

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Important Stuff We Tell You in Every Newsletter...

Save the Date! 2020 IAFSM Conference

The 2020 Annual Conference will be March 11 & 12, 2020 at the Tinley Park Convention 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 four 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 currently keeps one in Springfield and one in Bartlett, with the remaining two tables at other locations (tbd) throughout the state. Contact Sarah at IAFSM@illinoisfloods.org to make arrangements.

Next Board Meetings

The next IAFSM Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 8 at 10:00 am at V3 Companies, 7325 Janes Ave, Woodridge. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend Board meetings. See you there!

Jobmart

Visit our Jobmart at <http://www.illinoisfloods.org/jobmart.html> Jobmart is a free service to members of IAFSM. To post an open position, please sign into our website and complete the job listing form. If you have any questions please contact Sarah at IAFSM@illinoisfloods.org.

2019 CFM Exam Schedule

To view 2019 exam dates and register, visit www.illinoisfloods.org/certification.html.





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Floodplain and Stormwater Management

Spring 2019 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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