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News from Region X

Pierce County, WA Floodplain Property Acquisition Program



After many years and multiple flooding events, a Pierce County family in the Clear Creek area was recently freed of their flood-prone property, thanks to the county's Floodplain Property Acquisition Program.

The program has been a resource for many property owners devastated by flooding. The program has allowed the county to purchase more than 200 riverine floodplain properties along the Puyallup, Carbon and White Rivers and South Prairie Creek since 1988. The acquired properties total more than 1,100 acres, and purchase costs total more than \$30 million. Most of the acquired properties were homes with extensive flood damages or at high risk for flooding.

Funding Sources

Funding for property acquisitions is largely dependent on federal and state grant programs, which require a monetary match from Pierce County. Federal funding programs include FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance, Pre-Disaster Mitigation, and Severe Repetitive Loss. State funding programs include Community Development Block Grants, WDOE Flood Control

Account Assistance Program, and Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

Pierce County provides cost share matches for grants through Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) revenues allocated for the purpose of riverine floodplain property acquisition. Pierce County maintains a list of properties whose owners are interested in being bought-out. Although the acquisition program has been in existence for 25 years, requests for buyouts still greatly exceeds available funding resources.

Clear Creek Property

Pierce County recently acquired a house and property in the Clear Creek area, a severe repetitive flood loss area. The owners purchased the property in the early 1980's and discovered after a couple of winter seasons they had purchased a property susceptible to severe flooding. After having to repair their house from flood damages more than once, they elevated the house at their own expense. Flooding continued to occur and flood damages to the house continued even after elevating. However, the damages were not as costly and extensive as they were prior to elevating the structure.

Pierce County started purchasing flood damaged properties in the Clear Creek area in the late 1990's, utilizing FEMA HMGP funding. Property acquisition eligibility is generally based on a benefit-cost analysis (BCA). Because the house was elevated, the BCA was insufficient to meet funding

Continued on next page



Pierce County (cont.)

eligibility. Other houses and properties in the same neighborhood were acquired instead, because the structures were lower and had sufficient BCA results.

After many years and more flooding events, the FEMA Severe Repetitive Loss Program provided an opportunity to purchase the property. The property was finally purchased by Pierce County in 2013, and the family was able to invest in a home that is not in a special flood hazard area, giving them much greater peace of mind.

More information about the acquisition program can be found at youtu.be/40RxExHr7Vk. or contact Randy Brake, rbrake@co.pierce.wa.us.

New Mitigation Ideas Guidance

A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards



FEMA has released a new resource that communities can use to identify and evaluate a range of potential mitigation actions for reducing risk to natural hazards and disasters. The focus of this document is mitigation, which is action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to hazards. Ideas for mitigation actions are presented for the following natural hazards: Drought, Earthquake, Erosion, Extreme temperatures, Flood, Hail, Landslide, Lightning, Sea level rise, Severe wind, Severe winter weather, Storm surge, Subsidence, Tornado, Tsunami, and Wildfire.

Download the publication at 1.usa.gov/12NomwN.

Review of New Standards for Flood Hazard Mapping

FEMA maintains a set of documents called Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners to support flood risk mapping for the NFIP. These documents define technical requirements, product specifications for Flood Hazard Maps and related NFIP products, and requirements associated with coordination and documentation activities. FEMA has reviewed all of these requirements and developed a set of about 450 standards as a replacement for all of the standards in the current documents, and intends to publish these standards as a FEMA policy. The draft standards are being made available for public review to provide an opportunity to comment prior to the finalization of the policy.

These standards are consistent with the previous requirements for FEMA flood risk mapping. However, they represent a significant change in the way the requirements are organized. The new approach presents the standards as a separate document to avoid any ambiguity with respect to what is truly mandatory and what is recommended. The vast majority of these standards are simply restating long-standing requirements of the mapping program, specifically identifying those that are mandatory. But, throughout the process of compiling these standards, a few changes were identified. Some of these were already being implemented through the routine program processes to update requirements and a few were identified during review as requiring an update.

For more information, please see the public announcement, www.fema.gov.

Giving Tribal Mitigation Planning a “Face-lift”



The FEMA Mitigation Planning Team welcomes representation from tribal entities across the United States to assist in review and feedback of the *Tribal Mitigation Planning Guide* and an updated Tribal Mitigation Plan Review Guide. Your expertise and familiarity with tribal laws, emergency management and land use capabilities, and various government structures will assist in making these products beneficial throughout Indian Country.

The update of both the Planning Guide and Review Guide will simplify and improve efficiency of the plan review process, work to promote tribal ownership over their mitigation plan, foster proactive relationships with Tribes, and increase the focus of mitigation plans on risk reduction and plan implementation.

FEMA will accept volunteers until March 30, 2013. If you would like more information about time commitments and participation in this process please contact FEMA Region X Mitigation Planner Brett Holt, (425) 487-4553, or brett.holt@fema.dhs.gov.

Alaska Risk MAP Page is LIVE

Please visit commerce.alaska.gov/dca/planning/riskmap.html to access the Alaska Risk MAP site. The Alaska Mapping Business Plan is available for download, commerce.alaska.gov/dca/planning/RiskMAPBusinessPlan.html.

RiskMAP
Increasing Resilience Together

NORFMA News

Conferences

NORFMA will be hosting three conferences this year: Oregon Mini-conference April 24 in Salem Oregon; NORFMA Annual Conference, September 18-20 at Skamania Lodge; and Idaho Mini-conference November 13-15. All three will host CFM exams and continuing education credits will be available to meet participants' CFM requirements.

The next Sediment Management Issue Group meeting will be Thursday, April 11 in Tacoma. Contact Hans Hunger, hhunger@co.pierce.wa.us, for more information.

CRS Users Group

The next CRS Users Group meeting will be April 25 in Tacoma. Contact Dennis Dixon, ddixon@co.pierce.wa.us, for details.

Committee Chairs

The NORFMA Board has appointed two committee chairs: John Velimesis, Policy Committee chair and Henry Hu, Training Committee Chair. Both committees have set goals for 2013 and will provide opportunities for involvement and support for local communities. Visit www.NORFMA.org for committee chair contact information.

ASFPM

The ASFPM 2014 Seattle Conference Committee is making steady progress. Carla Bracken from Northwest Hydraulics Consultants is the volunteer coordinator and Tom Bean from King County is Field Trip Coordinator. To volunteer, contact Jerry Louthain, jerry.louthain@hdrinc.com.

Featured Training

NFIP Basics

March 13, 10:00 am Pacific

This one-hour session will cover the history of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), basic terminology, governing authority, and provide an overview of the community's role in floodplain management through the NFIP. The target audiences are state and local officials who need a general understanding of the ins and outs of the program and guidance on where to go for more training and answers.

One (1) CEC

Presenter: Becca Croft, STARR

For registration information, email RXTraining@starr-team.com

Registration is free, and required.

EMI: National Flood Insurance Program/Community Rating System (NFIP/CRS)

April 1-4

Emmitsburg, Maryland

The April 1-4 CRS class at EMI (E278) still has 7-8 vacancies. Applications are required, and will require approval by your State. Please note that if students are accepted, EMI pays their travel and housing.

This course covers the Community Rating System (CRS). It describes activities eligible for credit under the 2012 CRS Coordinator's Manual, how a community applies, and how a community modifies an application to improve its classification.

Visit www.training.fema.gov for more information on attending an EMI class.

Upcoming Events & Training

(All times Pacific)

NFIP Basics

March 13, 10am
Online* - 1 CEC

Flood Hazard Analysis with Hazus

March 14, 8:30am - 4:30pm
Boise, ID
www.cvent.com/events

Elevation Certificates

March 14, 10am - 12:30pm
Online* - 2 CECs

Determine a Base Flood Elevation

March 21, 10am
Online* - 1 CEC

L317 Comprehensive Data Management for Hazus

March 26-29
Tacoma, WA
Kelly.Stone@fema.dhs.gov

EMI: NFIP/CRS

April 1 - 4
Emmitsburg, MD
training.fema.gov

Elevation Certificates for A Zones

April 11, 10am
Online* - 2 CECs

Biggert-Waters 2012 NFIP Reform

April 17, 10am
Online* - 1 CEC

NORFMA CRS Users Group

April 25, 1pm - 3pm
Tacoma, WA
ddixon@co.pierce.wa.us

*To register for online courses, visit STARR's training site online at j.mp/starrwebtraining, or email RXTraining@starr-team.com.

CRS Award for Excellence Nominations

The NFIP has established an award to recognize individuals who have actively advanced the vision of the NFIP and the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is a program within the NFIP that provides guidelines for participating communities that want to continually improve their community's safety and resilience to flooding and other natural disasters.

While all CRS participating communities are taking steps that improve their flood safety and resilience, certain communities stand out. As in all serious endeavors, outstanding results do not just happen. They are due to the efforts of specific individuals, who through their knowledge, commitment and passion, have made their communities safer. In an effort to recognize such individuals the NFIP is seeking nominations for the 2013 CRS Award for Excellence.

FEMA is asking for help in identifying worthy individuals. In particular, nominees who have provided leadership in the area of alerting residents to the dangers of flooding and promoting the purchase of flood insurance through the NFIP.

If you know of any such individuals, please help to recognize their achievements. Nominations are due by March 8, 2013.

Download the CRS Award Announcement and Nomination form at www.starr-team.com. 
