

Nebraska Floodplain and Stormwater Managers Association



Newsletter January 2008

2008 NeFSMA BOARD MEMBERS

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Visit NeFSMA on the web at:
<http://www.nefsma.net/>

UPCOMING QUARTERLY MEETING

The first quarterly membership meeting for 2008 has been planned. If you have interest in a particular topic that NeFSMA could provide education, please contact any of the board members.

Do you wonder how you are going to pay for the stormwater best management practices in your NPDES permit? NeFSMA is pleased to have Dr. George Oamek and Mr. Elbert Traylor talk about stormwater funding opportunities. George is an economist and president of Honey Creek Resources who has over 25 years of experience in economic studies, including financing. George will present on a variety of funding options available to communities. Elbert is with the State of Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ).

Elbert will present on stormwater grant opportunities. We will also have an update on the pending enabling legislative bill to form a stormwater utility.

Topic: Stormwater Funding Opportunities

When: Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Where: Eugene T. Mahoney State Park, Peter Kiewit Lodge, Oak Room. Located at Exit 426 on Interstate 80, near Ashland NE. A valid park sticker is required for entrance. State vehicles are exempt. If you do not have an annual park pass, just leave your name with the park attendant and NeFSMA will pay the daily pass rate.

Time: Program 10 a.m. to Noon with lunch served after the program.

Cost: \$15.00 for members or \$50 for nonmembers (includes 2008 NeFSMA membership)
Lunch included.

RSVP to Rock Krzycki at RKrzycki@ci.lincoln.ne.us or call (402) 441-4959 by **February 20th**.

CHAIR'S COLUMN by Laurie Carrette Zook

At the 2007 Annual NeFSMA meeting, a new slate of officers was elected. We welcome the new officers and say a special thanks to Paul Woodward, past-chair and Bill Jones, past-secretary for their dedication to NeFSMA. Both Paul and Bill will continue to be involved with NeFSMA. Paul serves as the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM), Region 7 Director and Bill aids in our floodplain related training courses. Thanks Paul and Bill for a job well done!

I have been involved with NeFSMA since its inception in 2004 and look forward to a great year. During a recent board meeting, we came up with some great program ideas. Our first meeting will

be related to funding stormwater programs with presentations by Dr. George Oamek and Mr. Elbert Traylor. The meeting will be held at the Peter Kiewit Lodge at Mahoney State Park near Ashland. Plan on attending the meeting and staying for lunch.

As always, if you have any suggestions or comments on what NeFSMA can or should do, please contact any of the board members. We want to hear from you. See you at Mahoney in February!

2007 ANNUAL MEETING REVIEW

The 2007 Annual Meeting was held on November 9th, at Hardin Hall on the University of Nebraska's East Campus in Lincoln.

Rock Krzycki with the city of Lincoln's Public Works Watershed Management Division led a series of presentations on Lincoln's NPDES Phase II compliance activities. Other presenters from the city of Lincoln, Lower Platte South NRD and Lancaster County included Ed Kouma, Nate Hartman, J.B. Dixon and Ben Higgins.

Following the presentations, a bus tour included visits to several rain gardens, watershed restoration projects, porous concrete demonstration projects, and a bio-swale to illustrate best management practices being implemented to support Lincoln's Stormwater Management Program.

Following the tour, an annual meeting was held to review current issues, identify possible topics of interest, and elect new officers for the upcoming year. Detailed meeting minutes are posted on the NeFSMA's website.

2008 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual dues for 2008 are being accepted. If you have not sent in your application form, please see the website at www.nefsma.net or contact John Cambridge at (402) 742-2903. Annual dues are \$35 for individual and \$100 for corporate/organization memberships (allows 2 voting members).

ARE YOU A CERTIFIED FLOODPLAIN MANAGER (CFM)?

by Paul Woodward, P.E., CFM

The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources is a supporter of the Association of State Floodplain Managers. A part of that support includes encouraging individuals that work in fields related to floodplain management to train and test to become Certified Floodplain Managers (CFMs). NDNR, upon request, will schedule and proctor exams for individuals seeking this certification. A review session can be provided prior to taking the exam.

The ASFPM website, <http://www.floods.org> provides access to a study manual, in PDF format, covering the material that will be included in the exam. Applicants must schedule with and pay fees to ASFPM to take this exam. Please coordinate your interest in taking the exam with NDNR, to ensure that proctoring of the exam can be scheduled. In the past, the exam has been coordinated so several individuals can take the exam at one time. NDNR, upon request, will provide a CD copy of the training material. Contact Bill Jones at 402-471-3932 or bjones@dnr.ne.gov

FLOODPLAIN MAPPING AND LEVEES

by Paul Woodward, P.E., CFM

Have you ever wondered how floodplain mapping efforts in Nebraska, ongoing since 2000, would address existing levees? Well, up until 2007, so did everyone else; not just in Nebraska, but everyone in the nation. So what changed in 2007?

Actually, the story really begins with Hurricane Katrina in 2004. This single disaster left our nation asking questions not only about the levees protecting New Orleans, but all levees. Unfortunately, there was no one point of contact that had a complete inventory of all the nation's levees. Some are operated and maintained by the federal government, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), while others are simply managed by local farmers and towns.

Since the hurricane, the Corps and FEMA have worked together to address levees and other hazards. This cooperative program is known as the National Flood Risk Management Program. A lot of information about the program and the levee issues in general is available at:

<http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/nfrmp/index.cfm>

The quandary is that as FEMA's Map Modernization effort continues, more and more levees must be accessed to determine if they can be certified for protection. Certification of a levee is a very involved process which requires that a professional engineer certify all the necessary documentation needed to show that the levee meets minimum federal criteria. This certification process has delayed the release of some maps and has complicated the production of almost all ongoing floodplain studies.

In response to these delays, FEMA has implemented a partial certification program in 2007 which affords a levee owner a period of 2 years with which to certify the levee. During the 2 year period, the levee is shown as providing protection to certain areas on the map; however, these areas are labeled with a "warning" that the levee is only partially certified and the map may have to be changed if the levee cannot meet the criteria.

So, how does this all affect ongoing efforts in Nebraska?

Let's use the small Village of Waterloo as an example. Waterloo sits along the banks of the Elkhorn River in Douglas County, Nebraska and is protected by a ring levee surrounding the town. Since there was no ongoing or proposed study on the Elkhorn River, everyone assumed the question, "does this levee protect against the 1% chance annual flood?", wouldn't come up. However, a change to the floodplain map in nearby Elkhorn just happened to occur in the same map panel as Waterloo and required that the levee be recertified. Since FEMA and the P-MRNRD, who had worked together for 4 years to prepare the new maps in Omaha and Elkhorn, didn't want to delay those maps, Waterloo was asked to sign a Partially-Accredited Levee (PAL) Agreement which would give them 2 years to determine if their levee meets the minimum standards. Waterloo signed this agreement in October and preliminary maps for the new study in Omaha and Elkhorn were issued on October 31, 2007. So, over the next 2 years, Waterloo will have to acquire existing information, resurvey, and likely hire an engineering firm to determine if their entire town will have to be shown in a floodplain or not.

The conclusion of this story is that this same scenario may occur in several towns around Nebraska as flood studies and maps are updated. For instance, a new study of the Missouri River may affect levees all the way from South Sioux City to St. Louis, MO.

We all need to be aware of the situation and spread the word to other local counties and towns who may be affected; and remember, the purpose of this endeavor is not to be mean and force people to buy flood insurance, the real purpose is to make sure everyone is aware of the true flood risk and that levees should not give a false sense of security!

NEW GENERAL CONSTRUCTION STORMWATER PERMIT ISSUED by Jesse Poore

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality has issued the long awaited NPDES General Construction Stormwater Permit. This Permit is effective as of January 1, 2008. A copy of the permit, fact sheet, and all application forms are located on the NDEQ website. Individuals may find it easier to find the documents that have been attached to the NeFSMA webpage www.nefsma.net

Please note that **within 90 days** (March 30, 2008) all active construction activity that was authorized under the previous general permit must apply for coverage under the terms of the new general permit. All authorizations currently in place will be terminated on that date. For questions regarding construction stormwater permits, please contact Mary Schrorer at NDEQ, 402-471-4220.

THE MOVEMENT TOWARD LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT by Jesse Poore

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently published a report that challenges engineers, planners, civic leaders, architects, and developers to consider ways to incorporate alternative stormwater management into our developments. The report, which is available online at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/costs07/>, argues that implementing Low Impact Development (LID) techniques can actually save money.

A paragraph from the article states "Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater management strategy that seeks to mitigate the impacts of increased runoff and stormwater pollution. LID comprises a set of site design approaches and small-scale stormwater management practices that promote the use of natural systems for infiltration, evapotranspiration, and reuse of rainwater. These practices can

effectively remove nutrients, pathogens, and metals from stormwater, and they reduce the volume and intensity of stormwater flows.”

This report from EPA summarizes 17 development case studies that include various LID practices and concluded that “applying LID techniques can reduce project costs and improve environmental performance. In most cases, LID practices were shown to be both fiscally and environmentally beneficial for communities. In a few cases, LID project costs were higher than those for conventional stormwater management projects. However, in the vast majority of cases, significant savings were realized due to reduced costs for site grading and preparation, stormwater infrastructure, site paving, and landscaping.

IECA NEWS by JB Dixon

The erosion & sediment control industry is gearing up for it's largest conference and trade show of the year, the International Erosion Control Association (IECA's) Environmental Connection, held February 18-22, 2008 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, FL. Over 2,500 attendees and over 175 product vendors will come together for a week of learning, connecting and fun. For more information, go to www.IECA.org.

The Great Rivers Chapter of the International Erosion Control Association announces its 2008 Board of Directors' Officers.

President: Tom Wells, CPESC, CISEC, Lamp Rynearson & Assoc.
V.P.: J.B. Dixon, CPESC, CISEC, Lower Platte South NRD
Secretary: Ron Poe, CPESC, NE Dept. of Roads
Treasurer: Sara Drake, CPESC, Carter-Waters, Corp.

The Great Rivers Chapter is in the process of planning two Spring Workshops for 2008. These 1-day workshops, to be held in April in Omaha, and Wichita, KS, will combine presentations on BMP selection and usage, along with in-the-field working demonstrations on installations and maintenance. Also, plans are in the works for the Chapter's 11th Annual Fall Conference and Expo, to be held in October 2008 in Iowa City, IA. For the latest information and dates on these events, go to www.greatriversieca.org.

NeFSMA BOOTH AND SPEAKERS AVAILABLE

NeFSMA has professionals available to attend local Nebraska conferences. Our mission is to provide local leaders and professionals with education about floodplain and stormwater management. If you or anyone you know are interested in having a representative of NeFSMA give a presentation or distribute information at a conference booth please contact Rock Krzycki at RKrzycki@ci.lincoln.ne.us or call (402) 441-4959.

NeFSMA THANKS OUR 2007 CORPORATE SPONSORS

In 2007, NeFSMA had 16 corporate/organization memberships. We appreciate their continued support in 2008.

- HDR Engineering, Inc.
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- City of North Platte
- City of South Sioux City
- Papio-Missouri River NRD
- Lower Platte South NRD
- Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
- Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality