

# KANSAS

## FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT TIPS



October 2020

### Long Term Solutions Through Mitigation

Chuck Magaha is the Emergency Management Director for Leavenworth County. The town of Easton is in the Northeast corner of Leavenworth County, close to Stranger Creek which lies directly east of town. In the early 90s, there were many homes adjacent to Easton, along the creek. These homes were regularly inundated every time Stranger Creek waters went overbank, causing considerable damage to them and to adjacent businesses. He was charged multiple times with trying to get people to evacuate their homes during flooding events.

In 1993, Chuck saw a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mitigation grant as a way to solve this problem and take people out of harm's way. Multiple communities decided to apply for a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grant. The application became a joint effort, as the City of Easton, the City of Leavenworth and Leavenworth County all became applicants. They covered their cost-share with a Community Development Block Grant through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The county was awarded around \$900,000. They bought out 20 homes immediately around the edges of the city of Easton. Easton bought out 20 homes from their community. In 1995, after another major flooding event, the county applied for and was awarded a second HMGP grant, and were able to buyout all but about 2 remaining homes in this area for the county.

Chuck and his team faced many challenges along the way. Many homes were rentals, meaning they needed to work with property owners as well as renters, providing them with upfront rent and utilities payments to help them in transitioning from their homes. The homes were flooding before they could be bought out. They were responsible for extensive reporting and documentation for economic and environmental impacts. They were responsible for asbestos inspection and removal. The septic tanks needed to be closed, and the land returned to as natural a state as possible. Chuck states that the real estate aspect was the most challenging to learn, and that kind of expertise is required for this work.

Finally, after two mitigation grants, two major flooding disasters, and seven years of work, they were finally finished with the process by the year 2000. He feels that the hard work was very much worth the benefit of no longer having that volume of homes regularly inundated. Though there have been periodic heavy rains for Leavenworth County and the Easton area this year, Chuck has few concerns about homes being damaged along these waterways. There are still other flooding problems of course, such as the area around the Missouri River. There are some vacation homes there that would be good candidates for a buyout. Some of the property owners have changed their minds since then, and are now ready to participate.

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Chuck Magaha

Chuck continues to work to better his community. His commitment to mitigation is protecting people and property in that area, indefinitely. There is a possibility that he will be applying for a new grant, including possibly an application for Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), FEMA's newest hazard mitigation grant program.

### **New and Old- FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Opportunities**

FEMA seeks to improve on their established Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grants. They currently offer three hazard mitigation grant programs, each targeted at different types of applicants and the types of flood loss they have experienced. Generally, eligible applicants include states, territories, federally-recognized tribes, local governments, and some private non-profit organizations. All HMA grant activities must be completed within 36 months of the close of the application period. FEMA requires applicants to develop and adopt hazard mitigation plans as a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for HMA mitigation projects.

**HMGP: Hazard Mitigation Grant Program-** This HMA grant is available to eligible applicants that have experienced a presidentially declared disaster within the previous 12 months. Possible mitigation activities under this program may include, but are not limited to acquisitions and structure demolition/relocation, dry floodproofing of historic structures, mitigation of flood and drought conditions, reconstruction, retrofitting of existing buildings, elevation of structures, residential/community safe rooms, and hazard mitigation planning. The cost-share of this grant is 75 federal to 25 non-federal. The non-federal share can come from a variety of sources- local, state governments, or individuals. The maximum amount of funding is determined using a "sliding scale" formula.

**FMA: Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant-** Has the goal of reducing insurance claims for repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties insured through the NFIP. A repetitive loss property is a structure that has incurred flood-related damage on 2 occasions, in which the cost of the repair, on the average, equaled or exceeded 25 percent of the market value of the structure at the time of each such flood event. A severe repetitive loss property is a structure that has incurred flood-related damage for which 4 or more separate claims payments (includes building and contents) have been made under flood insurance coverage with the amount of each such claim exceeding \$5,000, and with the cumulative amount of such claims payments exceeding \$20,000, or at least 2 separate claims payments (includes only building) have been made under such coverage, with the cumulative amount of such claims exceeding the market value of the insured structure. Almost all eligible activities under the HMGP are funded through this grant.

**BRIC: Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities-** This is FEMA's newest HMA program, which is replacing their Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant (PDM). The goal of PDM was to reduce overall risk to the population and structures from future hazard events, while also reducing reliance on federal funding in future disasters. BRIC aims to be more holistic by supporting community and capacity building, empowering people and infrastructure, and enabling innovative approaches. BRIC differs from PDM with an emphasis on community lifelines and infrastructure by focusing on building codes, shared responsibility and partnerships, and innovative projects. By prioritizing lifelines, communities are able to recover faster, and avoid cascading impacts of a disaster by stabilizing resources like food, water, shelter, health and medical, energy, communications, transportation, and more. In-person, non-financial technical assistance is available. By reducing limitations of funding, increasing funding caps, as well as providing some pre-award costs, this program aims to increase flexibility over PDM.

BRIC applications will be scored depending on how well they meet the criteria for the national competition. They are each worth varying point values and include infrastructure projects, mitigating risk to lifelines, incorporation of nature-based solutions, mandatory building code adoption requirements, applicant has building code effectiveness grading schedule rating of 1-5, application is from previous FEMA HMA advance assistance award, increased non-federal cost-share, and designation as a small impoverished community. The opening application date was September 30<sup>th</sup> of this year.

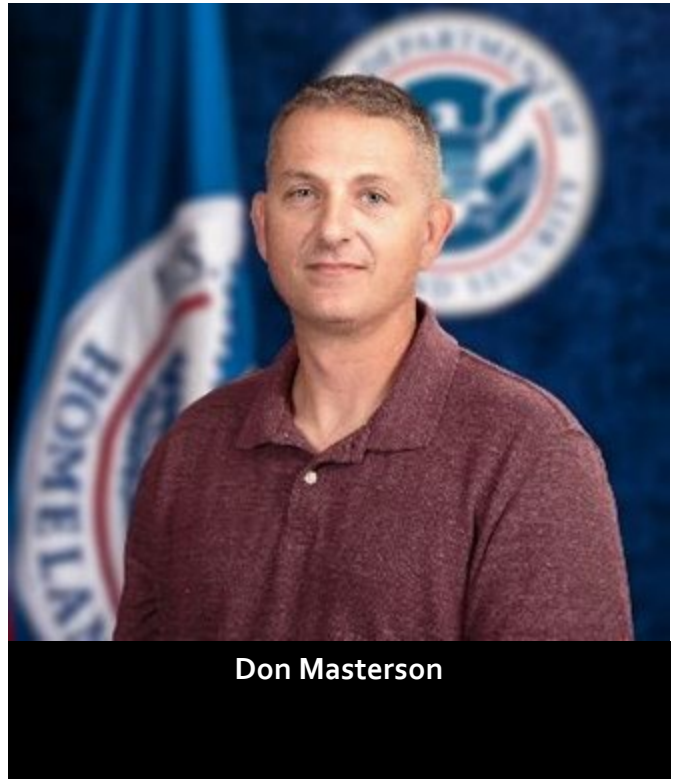
## **The People of Region VII**

Don Masterson is the Natural Hazards Program Specialist for FEMA Region VII, in the Mitigation Division. He retired from the army after 21 years as an infantryman. During his military career, he worked towards earning his Bachelor's degree in Homeland Security (Emergency Management) by studying at night and while off deployment. Following this, Don began his career with FEMA.

As a Natural Hazards Program Specialist, Don helps the people of Kansas from local governments to citizens, as well as state floodplain staff to build more resilient communities across Kansas. His primary goal is to prevent communities from sustaining flood damage during disasters. He describes his title alternately as 'Kansas State Representative Floodplain Specialist', overseeing floodplain programs implemented by communities across Kansas. Don is an expert in government regulation interpretation and application. His experience in developing, implementing, and monitoring floodplain management regulations, policies, and procedures have made him extremely adept at floodplain management. Don focuses on the bigger goals of floodplain management, keeping people safe. His favorite aspect of his work is working with people that need help. Sound floodplain management protects people, property, and resources.

During a disaster, Don is on the ground making substantial damage estimations for homes damaged as well as checking in with families and other members of the community to ensure their safety and security during a difficult time. As a mitigation specialist, Don spends his time helping people prepare for these events, and when they occur, he is aiding in their recovery. He is helping the civilians and communities of Kansas to become more resistant to floods and disasters through their floodplain management and mitigation. This aligns with FEMA's overarching goals, as well as that of mitigation itself, which is to lessen the impacts of disasters by implementing long-term strategies and solutions. Don is supporting Kansans as they prepare for flooding, with the ultimate goal of decreasing damage that is incurred by Kansas homeowners and property. Throughout his career with FEMA, Don has found that Region VII is regarded as a very dedicated assortment of people that spend all their time thinking of how to help the communities, families, and individuals for whom they work. They are committed to extending their collaboration and reach beyond Region VII, throughout the country. Region VII is very proactive in helping the communities they work with, keeping the state staff, individuals and communities, as well as their end goals, on the forefront of their efforts by taking a collaborative approach with each, as partners and teammates in solving floodplain problems and preparing for more intense future floods.

In his free time, Don spends time with his son, taking him to and watching his wrestling matches. He enjoys hunting and working on older cars when he isn't working on his house. Helping Kansans to better understand and manage their floodplains as well as being better prepared for disasters to come is his passion, making Don an invaluable member of FEMA Region VII and to the state of Kansas.



**Don Masterson**

## **Training Opportunities**

The Floodplain Management Program will host the following training sessions throughout Kansas. If you are interested in any of the no-cost training opportunities, please contact Cheyenne Sun Eagle at 785-296-0854 or Steve Samuelson at 785-296-4622. A training registration form is in this newsletter.

### **Elevation Certificates Section A**

This class is for officials responsible for reviewing elevation certificates and surveyors who complete the forms. The focus is on the first section of the elevation certificate forms. Approved for 1 hours Continuing Education Credit (CEC) toward the Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) credential. Limited to 50 participants.

- Virtual Meeting on October 20, 2020 from 11:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

### **Elevation Certificates Section B**

This class is for officials responsible for reviewing elevation certificates and surveyors who complete the forms. The focus is on the second section of the elevation certificate forms. Approved for 1 hours Continuing Education Credit (CEC) toward the Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) credential. Limited to 50 participants.

- Virtual Meeting on October 21, 2020 from 11:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

### **Elevation Certificates Section C**

This class is for officials responsible for reviewing elevation certificates and surveyors who complete the forms. The focus is on the third section of the elevation certificate forms. Approved for 1 hours Continuing Education Credit (CEC) toward the Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) credential. Limited to 50 participants.

- Virtual Meeting on October 22, 2020 from 11:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Find more information about floodplain management from Kansas Department of Agriculture  
Division of Water Resources online at:

<http://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/floodplain>

Email saves money on postage. The electronic newsletter also has links and the photos are in color. In the case that you are getting this newsletter by postal mail and would prefer email please contact Cheyenne Sun Eagle at [cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov](mailto:cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov).

To find and register for upcoming training, as well as recordings of previous trainings, please see our new Floodplain Management Training webpage at: <https://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/floodplain/training>

**Kansas Department of Agriculture**  
**Division of Water Resources**  
**Floodplain Program**  
**Training Registration Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name, date and location of training you will attend \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Please share this invitation with anyone else who could benefit from the training.

\*\*Classroom locations will be sent to registered participants one week before the training.

Please scan and email your registration to: [cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov](mailto:cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov)

Or mail to:

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM  
1131 SW Winding Road, Suite 400  
TOPEKA, KS 66615

For questions about training, please contact Cheyenne Sun Eagle by email at [cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov](mailto:cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov) or by phone at 785-296-0854. May also contact Steve Samuelson by email at [steve.samuelson@ks.gov](mailto:steve.samuelson@ks.gov) or by phone at 785-296-4622.

Please help us keep our records current. If the name that appears on this newsletter is for an individual no longer with your organization, please call 785-296-0854 or email [cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov](mailto:cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov) to report the change.

4626  
Kansas Department of Agriculture  
Division of Water Resources  
Topeka Field Office  
Floodplain Management  
1131 SW Winding Road, Suite 400  
Topeka, KS 66615

### **ASFPM 2021 National Conference in Raleigh**

The 2021 Association of State Floodplain Managers National Conference will be May 9-13, 2021 in Raleigh, NC. This conference is an excellent opportunity for floodplain managers to receive training on mapping technologies, regulations, permitting, outreach and best practices. It is estimated the conference will be attended by more than 1,000 floodplain management professionals. This conference is great chance to meet people for networking and to learn the latest news in floodplain management. Visit [www.floods.org](http://www.floods.org) for more information.

### **Kansas Association For Floodplain Management Conference in Mulvane**

The 2021 KAFM conference will be September 1-3rd, at the Kansas Star Event Center in Mulvane, Ks

#### **KDA/DWR Water Structures Floodplain Program Staff**

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