



NFIP/CRS UPDATE

July—August 2011

Webinars and Website will Explain CRS Changes

The 2012 edition of the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*, to be released early in 2012, will incorporate many improvements to the Community Rating System. Changes—some large and some small—are being made to certain elements, activities, prerequisites, procedures, documentation, and credit points. They are the product of several years of effort by the CRS Task Force, FEMA, and many CRS stakeholders, who collaborated to review and evaluate the current program, pursuant to *A Strategic Plan for the Community Rating System, 2008—2013*.

Two new vehicles are being used to help orient communities and others to the revised *Coordinator's Manual* before it becomes effective. This will give everyone a chance to get answers to specific questions, submit comments on the proposals, anticipate the impacts of certain revisions, and plan for a smooth transition.

First, a series of two-hour “webinars” are being offered in July and August during which the anticipated new aspects of the *Coordinator's Manual* will be explained and webinar participants can ask questions. (A participant in a webinar logs onto a specified internet website at the same time he or she phones in to a specified toll-free conference call line. PowerPoints or other visual aids are displayed on the participant's computer screen while the presenter or moderator speaks over the phone line. Discussion among the participants or between the presenter and the participants can take place just as on a regular conference call.)

Second, a special website for the 2012 *Coordinator's Manual* has been set up as a central point for distributing the latest information on the proposed changes to the CRS, the background work that went into the revisions, the schedule of webinars, and other information. The website can be found at <http://www.crs2012.org>.

Details about the webinars and the website are given on the next two pages.

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Learn about the 2012 Coordinator’s Manual

Sign up for a Webinar and get Answers to your Questions

A series of two-hour webinars will be held in July and early August to explain the anticipated changes that will take effect with the 2012 edition of the *CRS Coordinator’s Manual*. The webinars are free and are open to everyone. Some webinars—particularly those being sponsored by CRS users groups (see list below)—will also focus on CRS changes appropriate to that locale. For example, the webinar sponsored by the Pinellas County Users Group will devote more time to coastal credits and programs specific to Florida.

| SCHEDULE FOR WEBINARS on the 2012 <i>CRS COORDINATOR’S MANUAL</i> | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Date (2011) | Sponsor | Subject | Start Time | | | |
| | | | EDT | CDT | MDT | PDT |
| July 11 | Miami–Dade County CRS Users Group | General overview with attention to local issues | 1:30 | 12:30 | 11:30 | 10:30 |
| July 14 | New Orleans area CRS Users Group | General overview with attention to local issues | 12:00 | 11:00 | 10:00 | 9:00 |
| July 15 | Natural and Beneficial Functions Committee of the ASFPM | Credit for natural floodplain functions | 10:30 | 9:30 | 8:30 | 7:30 |
| July 15 | Pinellas County, Florida, CRS Users Group | General overview with attention to local issues | 1:30 | 12:30 | 11:30 | 10:30 |
| July 19 | CRS Committee of the Colorado Association for Stormwater and Floodplain Management | General overview with attention to local issues | 3:00 | 2:00 | 1:00 | 12:00 |
| July 20 | Palm Beach County, Florida, CRS Users Group | General overview with attention to local issues | 10:00 | 9:00 | 8:00 | 7:00 |
| July 21 | CHOST–Coastal Hazards Outreach Strategy Team (Coastal Mississippi CRS Users Group) | General overview with attention to local issues | 10:45 | 9:45 | 8:45 | 7:45 |
| July 25 | FEMA and the Insurance Services Office | General overview | 12:30 | 11:30 | 10:30 | 9:30 |
| August 1 | CRS Committee of the Illinois Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management | General overview with attention to local issues | 2:30 | 1:30 | 12:30 | 11:30 |
| August 2 | FEMA and the Insurance Services Office | General overview | 3:00 | 2:00 | 1:00 | 12:00 |
| August 4 | FAST–Floodplain Awareness Success in Texas (Houston–Galveston Area CRS Users Group) | General overview with attention to local issues | 2:30 | 1:30 | 12:30 | 11:30 |
| All webinars are two hours long. More webinars may be scheduled, depending on demand. | | | | | | |

To Register

You may register for any webinar, but you must do it at least two days before the webinar. There is no fee, and the conference call is a toll-free number. Register online at <http://www.CRS2012.org> (click on “Webinar Info”).

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Webinars *—continued from previous page*

Within 24 hours of registering, you will receive an email with the webinar URL, the toll-free call in number, and the conference code. The first 20 registrants will have a conference code that will allow them to ask questions during the webinar (all other registrants can listen and view the presentation, but the call-in system has only 20 lines that allow participants to speak during the call). Anyone with questions that are not answered during the webinar can submit them separately by using the “Outreach and Feedback” tab on the website (<http://www.crs2012.org/outreach-and-feedback>).

At least five minutes before the webinar start time, you will need to go to the webinar URL to download the necessary software. You will then be given another URL to get to the webinar.

See the webinar information on the website at <http://www.crs2012.org>. If you still have questions, e-mail NFIPCRS@iso.com. If you want to talk to someone, say so in the e-mail and give a phone number and convenient time to receive a return call.

A Website for the 2012 *CRS Coordinator’s Manual*

A website has been dedicated to the proposed changes to the National Flood Insurance Program’s Community Rating System that will be incorporated into the 2012 edition of the *CRS Coordinator’s Manual*.

The site, located at <http://www.crs2012.org>, has information organized under five main tabs.

Under **Activity Information** can be found a range of information about each of the 19 activities that are credited under the CRS. For each activity, there is (1) a short summary of what is covered and credited; (2) notes on the relative weighting of the elements and activities that were taken during May committee meetings and at the Weighting Forum held in June, and (3) reports made to the CRS Task Force by the committee that undertook to review and revise that activity over the last few years. In addition, there is an overview description of the four CRS Series (Public Information, Mapping and Regulations, Flood Damage Reduction, and Flood Preparedness.

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Statement of Purpose

The *NFIP/CRS Update* is a publication of the National Flood Insurance Program’s Community Rating System. It provides local officials and others interested in the CRS with news they can use.

The *NFIP/CRS Update* is produced in alternate months. It is distributed electronically, at no cost, to local and state officials, consultants, and others who want to be on the mailing list. Communities are encouraged to copy and/or circulate the *Update* and to reprint its articles in their own local, state, or regional newsletters. No special permission is needed.

To become a subscriber or to suggest a topic that you would like addressed, contact

NFIP/CRS Update, P.O. Box 501016, Indianapolis, IN 46250-1016
(317) 848-2898 fax: (201) 748-1936 NFIPCRS@iso.com

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The **Outreach and Feedback** tab contains a place where visitors can submit questions or make comments about the proposed 2012 changes.

Posted under **Other Materials** are several documents that pertain to more than one activity or to the CRS as a whole. These include reports on natural floodplain functions, climate change, prerequisites, special hazards, and repetitive flood losses, as well as the report of the 1998 evaluation of the NFIP, and the background papers prepared for the 2011 Weighting Forum

The **General CRS Documents** tab contains the CRS Strategic Plan, the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*, and the current *CRS Application*.

Finally, **Community Self-Assessment** explains the new process under the CRS designed to help a community summarize its flooding problem and the natural resources and functions of its floodplain and/or coastal area. This information will help a community identify appropriate CRS activities to pursue. A link here leads to the pilot self assessment. Note that the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) will provide 3.0 hours of Continuing Education Credit (CEC) for Certified Floodplain Managers who complete the demonstration self-assessment and provide feedback on their experience.

The website is continuously updated as more information becomes available and as the proposed changes to the CRS are finalized. Comments and questions are welcome.

The 2012 CRS Manual

What's new in 2012 in the CRS Coordinator's Manual



Home Activity Information Outreach & Feedback Other Materials General CRS Documents Community Self-Assessment

Top Ten Changes proposed for the 2012 *CRS Coordinator's Manual*

Here is a short preview of some of the changes to the 2012 *Coordinator's Manual* that will be explained during the webinars planned for July and August (see <http://www.CRS2012.org> and click on “Webinar Info”). By the time the first webinar takes place, more detailed information will be posted on the special website (<http://www.crs2012.org>).

Note that these ten are listed in CRS Activity order, not in order of importance.

1. The 50-page *CRS Application* will be replaced with a shorter “Quick Check,” which will appear in Section 212–Application Documents.
2. More items will need to be submitted with each annual recertification, including all Elevation Certificates collected during the previous year. (Section 214, Recertification, and Activity 310–Elevation Certificates)
3. A new web-based self-assessment can help communities identify the CRS activities that will help them the most. Instructions will appear as a new Section 240, Self-Assessment.
4. A new approach to public information programs is being taken, which will result in a reduction in credit for old, routine, annual outreach projects. (Activity 330–Outreach Projects)
5. The first new activity in 20 years is being added to the CRS. Activity 370–Promotion of Flood Insurance, will provide credit for communities that take an active role in encouraging people to obtain and maintain their flood insurance coverage.
6. More credit will be provided for preserving open space. New credit points are going to be available to communities that encourage developers to set aside their floodplain areas as open space. (Activity 420–Open Space Preservation)
7. There will be more points available for protecting the natural functions of floodplains and coastal areas. This will include a new credit for implementing regulations that encourage low-impact development. (Activity 420–Open Space Preservation and Activity 450–Stormwater Management)
8. More emphasis will be placed on prohibiting fill in the floodplain, including NOT approving LOMR-Fs (Letters of Map Revision based on Fill). (Activity 430–Higher Regulatory Standards)
9. New credit will be provided for exemplary administration of local regulations, including points for conducting field inspections and reinspections. (Activity 430–Higher Regulatory Standards)
10. A new approach will be taken to the provision of credit to programs that prepare people and emergency management offices for the potential failure of a levee or dam. (Activity 620–Levee Safety and Activity 630–Dam Safety)

Training Opportunities

CRS Training

As noted on the first page of this issue, webinars are being offered this summer to help familiarize local staff and officials with the upcoming changes in the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*. Find out more about the webinars at <http://www.CRS2012.org> (click on “Webinar Info”).

Don't forget that the CRS offers “remote” workshops to help communities with their elevation certificate requirements. If you are interested in hosting a “webinar” on the FEMA Elevation Certificate, contact your ISO/CRS Specialist.

Courses in Advanced Floodplain Management at EMI

CRS Coordinators are reminded about the EMI courses that (like the CRS itself) go “above and beyond” basic techniques for the management of floodplains. EMI offers three courses in Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts. Each course has four or more modules and some can directly help with a CRS element or activity.

Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts I (E194) covers, among other topics

- NFIP floodplain rules and regulations in depth;
- NFIP: LOMC procedures for applying and floodplain management implications (Activity 410–Additional Flood Data);
- Roles and responsibilities of the local floodplain manager; and
- Preparing for post-disaster responsibilities (Activity 610–Flood Warning Program).

Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts II (E282) covers, among other topics

- Considerations for placing manufactured homes and recreational vehicles in the floodplain (MHP–manufactured home park credit under Activity 430–Higher Regulatory Standards);
- NFIP flood insurance principles for the floodplain manager;
- Higher standards in floodplain management (Activity 430–Higher Regulatory Standards); and
- Hydrology and hydraulics for the floodplain manager (Activity 410–Additional Flood Data).

Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts III (E284) covers, among other topics

- Floodway Standards (1 day) (Activity 410–Additional Flood Data);
- Disconnects between NFIP regulations and insurance (1 day);
- Common noncompliance issues (½ day);
- Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) (½ day) (Activity 410–Additional Flood Data and Activity 440–Flood Data Maintenance); and
- Substantial Improvement/ Substantial Damage (1 day) (CSI–Cumulative Substantial Improvements and LSI–Lower Substantial Improvements under Activity 430–Higher Regulatory Standards).

As noted below, each member of a community's floodplain permit staff can earn five CRS points for graduating from one of the advanced courses (up to 25 points) (see Section 431.n, Staffing (STF) of the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*)

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Training Opportunities

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Emergency Management Institute Courses

FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) conducts courses on floodplain management and other CRS-related topics. These are oriented to local building, zoning, planning, and engineering officials. Tuition is free for state and local government officials and travel stipends are available. Call the training office of your state emergency management agency, see <http://training.fema.gov/>, call EMI at 1-800-238-3358 or (301) 447-1035, or see <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMICourses/EMICourse.asp>.

- **The Community Rating System (E278)** September 26–29, 2011;
February 27—March 1, 2012; August 6–9, 2012; September 17–20, 2012

Note that, beginning in February 2012, the CRS course will use the 2012 edition of the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*. The September course will work from the 2011 *Coordinator's Manual* but also will cover the changes that are in the works.

Prerequisite: To enroll in the CRS course, you must be a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) or have completed the National Flood Insurance Program course listed below (E273) or be a full-time floodplain manager with more than 3 years of experience specifically related to floodplain management.

The CRS course is also offered at other sites upon request. Scheduled so far are

Colorado (FEMA Region VIII), October 11–14, 2011, Longmont, Colorado; contact Cristina Martinez at cristina.martinez@iso.com.

Two “short” (2 ½ days) CRS classes will be held later this year:

North Carolina (sites to be determined) (FEMA Region IV), October 26–28, 2011; contact John Gerber, (919) 715-5711 x106 or jgerber@ncem.org.

- **Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts I (E194)** February 13–16, 2012
- **Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts II (E282)** December 12–15, 2011
- **Advanced HAZUS Multi-Hazards for Flood (E172)** (prereq: E313) July 11–14, 2011
- **Basic HAZUS Multi-Hazards (E313)** September 19–22, 2011
- **HAZUS Multi-Hazards for Risk Assessment (E296)** July 11–14, 2011
- **Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP (E273)** August 29—
September 1, 2011; October 31—November 3, 2011; March 19–22, 2012

E273 is also field deployed periodically. Contact your State NFIP Coordinator for more information. Find your State Coordinator at <http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuID=274>.

- **Residential Coastal Construction (E386)** August 15–18, 2011

Under Section 431.n, Staffing (STF) of the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*, five points are provided for each member of a community's floodplain permit staff who graduates from courses E194, E273, E278, E282, E284, or E386 (up to 25 points). Graduating from E279 is worth five points under Activity 360—Flood Protection Assistance.