

FLOODWATCH

Educating, Planning, Protecting

June 2018

The Official Newsletter of the Louisiana Floodplain Management Association

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LFMA 35th Annual Technical and Business Conference April 2018 — Natchitoches



Conference photo credits—Kim Reeves, Erin Johnson

FLOODWATCH ${\it Fage}~2$

From the Chair

As my time as Chairman is coming to an end, I have been reflecting over the last 2 years and thinking about LFMA's accomplishments and goals for the future. And what a 2 years it has been! It is shocking to think that in the blink of an eye, we have had so many life changing events in such a short span. Beginning with the March 2016 flooding which covered the northern half of our state and then continuing on into August 2016 which basically took care of the rest of the state and devastated much of the south. Summer 2017 brought Hurricane Harvey and all its devastation to our neighbors in Texas. That could have so



easily been Louisiana in the path of destruction. Fast forward to this week of June 2018 and a pop up rain storm dumps several inches of rain over Baton Rouge in less than an hour and BOOM flooding all over again! The point here is that this problem is a continuous one for our state and we must keep educating our communities about the importance of floodplain management.

2018 marked LFMA's 35th year as an Association and with that LFMA has been heading toward organizational changes as well. The LFMA Board has been working diligently this past year in order to attempt to provide some variety and exciting new services and perks for its members. An Online Membership Portal was recently launched with options to register for events, update your profile, pay membership dues, as well as an option to pay via credit card.

We also had a very good response to our "Call for Presenters" for the Annual Conference that was held this past April in the beautiful City of Natchitoches. I want to thank everyone who submitted an abstract and please remember that if you did not get a slot for the conference, we are always looking for topics for upcoming workshops. I believe this year's conference was a huge success overall and would like to also thank Ms. Juanita Fowler and Ms. Melissa Becker for all of their dedication and hard work on getting everything just right for the conference and our group!

The accomplishment that I am most proud of during my time as LFMA Chairman is the formation of the Disaster Response Team (DRT). Not many know that Louisiana is 1 of only 3 states in the entire country which has a DRT. We have definitely come a long way since the official adoption of the DRT as an LFMA Committee in July 2016. Ms. Shandy Heil, our DRT Coordinator, has been able to successfully procure funding through a FEMA CAP-SSSE grant and has been able to purchase much needed materials and supplies to support DRT efforts. So, in the event that your community is in need of help after an event, please remember that the DRT is ready to assist!



From the Chair, cont.

It was also brought to my attention recently that not all of our membership realized the intent of the yearly poster contest that we offer to school kids around the state which results in the production of the yearly LFMA calendars. Each year, school kids around the general area of where we will hold the annual conference are asked to provide artwork as it relates to floodplain management and the annual conference theme. Twelve winners are chosen and first through third place receive recognition at our annual conference. This is a great educational outreach tool to reach out younger generation and get them thinking about floodplain management at an early age. LFMA typically receives a grant from FEMA for printing and production of the calendars which are then distributed throughout the State usually through the LFMA Regional Representatives and via the help of Ms. Cindy O'Neal and her staff at the State NFIP Office. We are hoping to have our calendars printed by October and get them distributed as far and wide as we can before the beginning of 2019.

On that note of the educational aspect of our calendars, I hope that LFMA's goals continue to support its motto of "Educating, Planning, and Protecting". We can continue to educate by promoting informational events such as our annual conference and workshops. We must continue to plan for our futures and must protect that future by promoting higher standards in a smart way. I want to congratulate Mr. Toby Fruge, who will take over as Chairman on July 1. I know that Toby will continue to push and promote these goals and LFMA will be in good hands.

In closing, I would like to leave everyone with a funny quote that I heard recently from one of the local meteorologists in Baton Rouge. He was giving a presentation on Hurricane Preparedness and brought up the recent flash flooding that occurred in our area (several inches of rainfall in less than an hour). He showed images of hundreds of vehicles that attempted to drive through the standing water and of course were unsuccessful. Luckily, I believe no one was hurt, but he did say something that stuck with me. He thinks that maybe us Louisianan's might understand something more tailored to our unique culture such as "Hit the Brakes Y'all, Don't Stall!" in lieu of the widely used National Weather Service slogan of "Turn Around Don't Drown".

Keeping Louisiana Safe through Effective Floodplain Management

Kara K. Moree, CFM

From the Director's Desk

By: Theodore DeBaene, P.E., CFM Executive Director

BASE LEVEL ELEVATIONS

The latest advance in establishing Base Flood Elevations in "A" Zone is Base Level Elevation (BLE). This is a great concept. It eliminates two of the most expensive items in a detailed study – Surveying and Hydrology. It replaces them with total reliance on LiDAR topography and Regional Regression Equations. It produces a product that can be used for setting foundation elevations, LOMAs and LOMRs.



The concept is not new. A project in 2005 for Rapides Parish utilized this approach for 73 streams with a reach length of 242 miles in "A" Zones. At this time, it was called an Enhanced Approximate Study.

The difference between the Enhanced Approximate Study and the BLE is that the Enhanced Approximate Study included bridge/culvert survey information and levee details. These are important since effective flow around roadway openings has a great influence on nearby water surface elevations and most floodplain development occurs near the roadways. Furthermore, the levees were constructed to control flow.

The inclusion of these details would not be expensive to the local community. Roadway crossings are easy to access and GPS elevation readings are sufficient for approximate studies. Levees are generally identified on quad maps and approximate elevations are frequently available. This data can be added to the BLE hydraulic analysis by an engineer experienced in floodplain analysis.

While this enhanced BLE is not quite a detailed study, it is a really good approximate study.

LFMA 35th Annual Technical & Business Conference 2018

The 2018 LFMA conference was held in Natchitoches with the theme of "Keeping our Heads above Water for 35 Years". Many thanks to all who volunteered to make it a success, especially the wonderful speakers who covered a wide range of topics. We heard about Flood response



planning, the Cane River spillway repairs stemming from the March 2012 flood, watershed based floodplain management, and the relocation of the Isle De Jean Charles residents, among many other presentations.









LFMA 35th Annual Technical & Business Conference 2018, cont.













LFMA 35th Annual Technical & Business Conference 2018, cont.











LFMA 35th Annual Technical & Business Conference 2018, cont.











LFMA 35th Annual Technical & Business Conference 2018, cont.

The technical tour was a trip through the historic district of Natchitoches, including the Steel Magnolias house and a stop at the J. Bennett Johnston Waterway Visitor Center.







LFMA 35th Annual Technical & Business Conference 2018, cont.





The Red River has been used for navigation and trade throughout history, from the Caddo Indians to French, Spanish, and American explorers. Unfortunately the river was known for hazards such as logjams, debris along the banks, swift currents, and flooding. After the Louisiana Purchase, Captain Henry Miller Shreve was tasked with clearing "The Great Raft" (gigantic logjam) to facilitate navigation on the Red River. He designed Snag Boats to remove the debris, and Shreveport is named after him. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked to lessen the hazards by building earthen levees, dams, reservoirs, and various water quality projects. In 1994 the J. Bennet Johnston Waterway (named for its most famous supporter) opened allowing boat traffic to travel between Shreveport and the Mississippi River. Ongoing maintenance by the USACE includes building and repairing revetments and levees to reduce scour, erosion and flooding, sustaining the cutoffs that eliminate the sharp bends along the winding river, dredging to reduce sediment build up, and supporting dikes that facilitate the river channel alignment and flow.

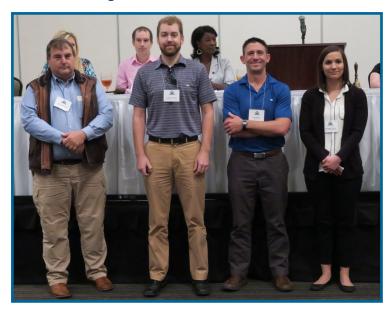
LFMA 35th Annual Technical & Business Conference 2018, cont.

Tom Rodrigue, winner of the 2018 Rod Emmer Award



Congratulations to the new CFMs!







LFMA 35th Annual Technical & Business Conference 2018, cont.

We'd like to extend a big THANK YOU also to all of the great sponsors and exhibitors for this year's conference!





















Timeline for Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Accelerated by Two Years

Contributed by Mitch McDonald

Conservation groups applaud agencies for advancing crucial coastal restoration project

(NEW ORLEANS, LA – April 2, 2018) Earlier today, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Louisiana Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority (CPRA) announced an update to the permitting timeline for the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion. The updates will advance the target date for completion of an Environmental Impact Statement and issuance of required decisions and permits from 2022 to 2020, shaving 22 months off the original schedule.

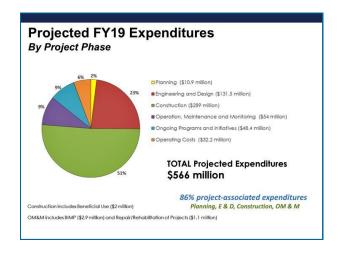
Full press release here.

Annual coastal spending plan gains first legislative approval

By Mark Schleifstein

mschleifstein@nola.com,

A Louisiana House committee Thursday approved a plan to spend \$566 million on coastal restoration and hurricane protection projects in fiscal year 2019, if all of the requested money becomes available. But a Senate committee delayed a similar vote for another week to review the projects in the plan.



Louisiana to get \$1.2 billion in federal flood-control funds; these long-stalled projects could benefit

WASHINGTON — The federal government will be sending more than \$1.2 billion in grant money to pay for flood-control and prevention projects in the state, Gov. John Bel Edwards and U.S. Rep. Garret Graves announced Thursday.

A number of long-stalled U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects in the state — including the Comite River Diversion Canal, New Orleans-area flood protection projects or parts of the Morganza to the Gulf levee system — could get funded through the massive federal allocation.

Just which projects will be in line for the funds remains unclear. Edwards said in a statement Thursday evening that state officials are waiting for details from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development — the agency handling the grant — on exactly how the dollars can be spent.

Full story here.

Group seeks state money for levee system gap

Contributed by Mitch McDonald

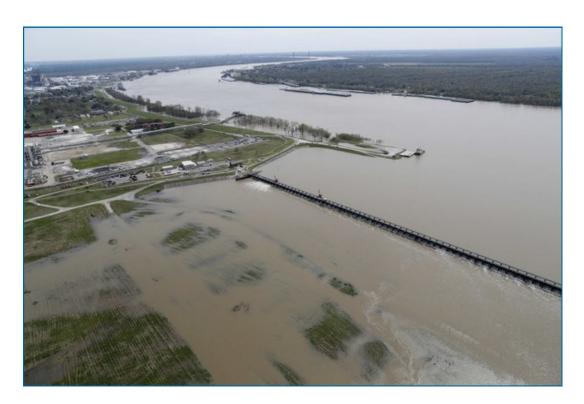
Members of the Morganza Action Coalition recently met with Gov. John Bel Edwards to advocate for an estimated \$22.5 million in state money for the Grand Bayou Floodgate.

The Grand Bayou Floodgate is the last major link between the Terrebonne and Lafourche levee segments along the Morganza-to-the-Gulf hurricane protection system.

Morganza is made up of levees, locks and floodgates designed to withstand 100-year, Category 3 storm surges to protect Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes. Over the last 15 years, about \$400 million in local and state money has been spent on the system.

Full story <u>here</u>.

Mississippi River's high water is a missed opportunity to restore the coast



Contributed by Mitch McDonald

Opinion by Steve Cochran

Steve Cochran is director of <u>Restore the Mississippi River Delta</u> and associate vice president for coastal protection at <u>Environmental Defense Fund</u>.

Heavy rain and snow in the Midwest have caused flooding throughout the Mississippi River basin, triggering flood warnings from St. Louis to New Orleans.

Last month, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers <u>opened the Bonnet Carre Spillway</u> for the 12th time since its construction in 1931 - but the fourth time in just the past decade. And it's possible the spillway may need to be opened again this year, which would be truly historic. When opened, the spillway allows a portion of Mississippi River water, as much as 250,000 cubic feet per second, into nearby Lake Pontchartrain, relieving pressure on downriver levees and preventing catastrophic flooding.

How the catastrophic 1995 flood led to a \$1.5 billion drainage bonanza

The 1995 flood

It was born of disaster: the <u>catastrophic May 8-10, 1995, flood</u>, that caused \$3.1 billion in damage and killed seven people in southeast Louisiana and south Mississippi. Soon after the water cleared, Jefferson Parish officials and U.S. Rep. Bob Livingston, R-Metairie, embarked on a mission to prevent it from happening again.

-- See "A rain of biblical proportions"

The steps they took would eventually pour \$1.5 billion into flood prevention, put the Army Corps of Engineers into a new line of work and improve drainage on both sides of the Mississippi River.

What they created was the Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Control program, which on Monday (April 16) will celebrate the capstone of Jefferson's SELA projects with a ribbon-cutting at the Harahan "pump to the river" station at 1088 Dickory Ave. It is the last of 59 Jefferson projects that have been fully studied by the corps, authorized by Congress, engineered and completed.



Mirabeau Water Garden project

Located between Bayou St. John and the London Avenue Canal in the Filmore neighborhood in Gentilly, the Mirabeau Water Garden is a public works project that will transform a 25-acre empty site into a recreational and educational amenity. The land was donated to the City of New Orleans by the Congregation of St. Joseph on the condition that it be used to enhance and protect the neighborhood. The water garden vision is based on innovative site design and stormwater management features developed in the Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan. This vision was embraced by the Sisters of St. Joseph as one that, in their own words, "would manifest the holiness and the beauty of this land... and evoke a huge systemic shift in the way humans relate with water and land."

Full story <u>here</u>.

\$40 million in Louisiana coastal work in Gretna

With flood-prone Louisiana planning to spend about \$40 million on "resiliency" projects in six parishes, Gov. <u>John Bel Edwards</u> travels to <u>Gretna</u> on Friday (April 20) to announce where the money will go. A state official said the news conference will take place in Gretna City Park, a sign that money might be directed there for recreation and drainage improvements across 78 acres.

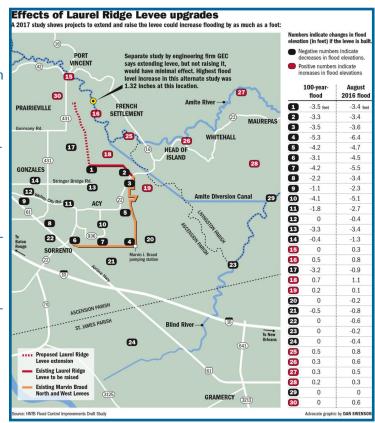
Region II News

By Bruce Dyson

Floodplain management issues have risen to the surface between neighboring parishes in Region 2. Livingston Parish has filed a lawsuit against adjacent Ascension Parish in an attempt to halt the proposed Laurel Ridge Levee Extension project. Livingston Parish officials have concerns that the levee extension in northern Ascension Parish will raise anticipated flood levels along the Amite River at locations such as Port Vincent areas south (downstream). The 4 and a half mile long levee extension is proposed to extend through the St. Amant and Lake Martin area. The Livingston Parish view is that constructing the levee would cut off approx-

imately 5,000 acres of land in the Amite River Basin that would normally provide storage for floodwaters, thereby raising flood levels. Ascension's plan is based upon the concept of providing flood protection for their residents in the area of the levee, with minimal impact to the Amite River Basin.

So, let's have a look at the numbers. Two separate engineering studies of the effects of the proposed levee extension showed different results. One study considered the extension of the Laurel Ridge Levee and concluded that flood elevations on the Amite River at Port Vincent for a 100-year event could increase by a small margin of 1.3 inches. Another study considered the levee extension and raising. This study predicted an increase of over 6 inches in the French Settlement area, while also predicting a lowering of flood levels by more than 3 feet inside the protection of the levee. So, there are a number of good news/bad news angles to view the proposed project. It all depends on where you are located.



Ascension Parish and its project co-sponsor, the Pontchartrain Levee District, have pursued the State and Federal permitting process steps. Both permits were granted (by the Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). Ascension Parish has been steadily moving forward with the levee extension project until the arrival of the Livingston Parish lawsuit. The lawsuit was filed by Livingston Parish in the 19th Judicial District Court and named Ascension Parish and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, office of Coastal Management as defendants. Hearings in State Court during the month of June will decide whether a preliminary injunction will be issued to temporarily halt the Parish's final design and land acquisition, and to halt permitting by the Department of Natural Resources until the case is settled.

Region III News

New Coastal Pump Station Commissioned in Lockport



Contributed by Darla Duet

Coastal Pump Station drains water for area residents and businesses from Mathews (Highway 1 to the 40 Arpent Canal at Fantastic Acres Blvd.) to Lockport (Company Canal Station).

"Today we commissioned the new Coastal Pump Station, located at the end of North Barrios Street in Lockport, which replaced infrastructure that was more than seventy years old," said President Jimmy Cantrelle. The new investment, at a price tag of \$2,578,377.66, features forty eight (48) inch pumps, new engines and a rebuilt holding suspension for the entire pump system. Coastal Pump Station drains water for area residents and businesses from Mathews (Highway 1 to the 40 Arpent Canal at Fantastic Acres Blvd.) to Lockport (Company Canal Station). "Last year we used this model for the first time at the Parr-Larose Pump Station with success. The design is simple and efficient; it does what it's supposed to do," said President Cantrelle.

Picciola and Associates, Inc. designed the new pump station in conjunction with Circle, LLC hired on as the contracting firm to build the station. The long-term goal for newly constructed pump stations is to join drainage canals throughout Lafourche Parish to compose a Master Drainage Infrastructure. Councilman Armand Autin, District 7, has seen a combined investment of more than \$4 million dollars come to fruition in the past ten months with the commissioning of the Parr-Larose and Coastal Pump Stations under President Cantrelle's leadership. "We continue to focus our efforts on drainage improvements and recreation where it's needed. I enjoy seeing these projects wrap-up; it's a good feeling to accomplish set goals together," expressed Cantrelle.

NFIP/CRS Update - April / May 2018

FEMA sets Insurance Coverage Goal

The CRS at ASFPM

The 4-1-1 on 310

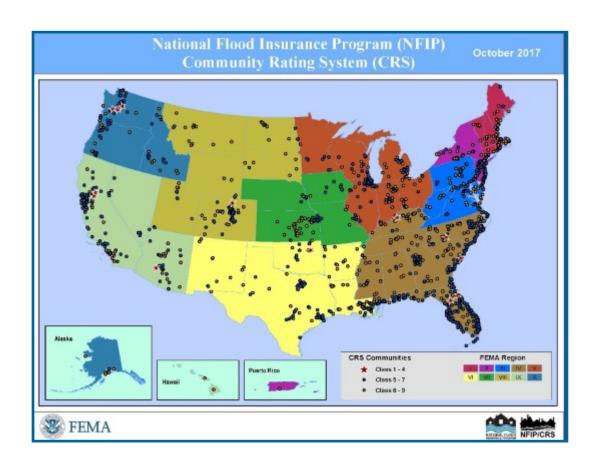
Debbie's Dish

Online Resources

Training Opportunities

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To view the PDF of this CRS Update visit https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/161061



SAFE TO PROCEED

Roadway Flooding Solution

SAFE TO PROCEED

Roadway Flooding Solution

 Frank Gutierrez, Sales Manager for South Central/Southeast USA High Sierra Electronics, Inc.

Flooding causes more deaths and property damage in the U.S. than any other severe weather related event. The reason that so many people drown during flooding is because few of them realize the incredible power of water. A mere six inches of fast-moving water can knock over an adult. It takes only two feet of rushing water to carry away most vehicles, which includes pick-ups and SUV's.

Texas is prone to extremely heavy rains and flooding with half of the world record rainfall rates (accumulations in 48 hour less). It also has the distinction of being the state with the most flood-related deaths in the past thirty-six years. Bexar County in Central Texas, about 190 miles west of Houston, is particularly vulnerable because storms stall along the Balcones escarpment. This region has earned the nickname "flash flood alley". Due to this geography, floods are a natural hazard and a regular occurrence.

In order to better prepare residents, Bexar County officials implemented a High Water Detection System (HWDS) in 2007. The High Sierra Electronics, Inc. (HSE) system has evolved over the years and now includes more than 100 sites. It uses a combination of rainfall and water level gauges to monitor conditions at low points on the roadways. When water rises to a pre-determined unsafe level, the sensor(s) automatically trigger flashing beacons and/or barrier gates. The system is solar powered and works during power outages (i.e., extreme weather events). The system provides control even in remote locations and County officials can receive text or email alerts when the system is activated.

Information from the HWDS feeds a Bexar County public web site known as HALT, High Water Alert Lifesaving Technology. The HALT system is a tool used to warn drivers when there is too much water over the roadway to help prevent a potential drowning disaster. The public is encouraged to visit https://www.bexarflood.org/#!/main/map where a map displays current flood information and emergency road closures. More specific information can be obtained by clicking (highlighting an area) on the map or entering a location. Alerts via a Twitter feed are also available.

Likewise, the City of San Antonio (within Bexar County) has implemented their own program known as SAFE, San Antonio Flood Emergency. The City emphasizes being prepared, being informed, being safe. They utilize HSE's HWDS in the same manner with flashing beacons and automatic barrier gates. In neighboring Comal County HSE was awarded a contract in 2010 for a similar project involving the installation of more than thirty stations. Plans are currently underway in coordination with the City of New Orleans' Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (NOHSEP) to deploy 24 stations with flashing beacons in August 2018.

For more information about these and similar projects, contact HSE (800-275-2080) or visit their web site at www.hsierra.com. HSE has been designing and manufacturing environmental systems since 1992. Their systems help identify threats posed by the weather, which include flooding, dangerous road conditions, and vulnerable dams and levees.

SAFE TO PROCEED

Roadway Flooding Solution, cont.







LFMA Committees Call for Volunteers

Your committees need you! If you haven't already volunteered to be on a committee, please consider doing so. The committee chair contacts are listed below and at the end of the newsletter.

Newsletter

Continuing Education

Workshop

Disaster Response Team (DRT)



Hurricane Season 2018



Basic Preparedness Tips

- Know where to go. If you are ordered to evacuate, know the local hurricane evacuation route(s) to take and have a plan for where you can stay. Contact your local emergency management agency for more information.
- Put together a go-bag: disaster supply kit, including a flashlight, batteries, cash, first aid supplies, medications, and copies of your critical information if you need to evacuate
- If you are not in an area that is advised to evacuate and you decide to stay in your home, plan for adequate supplies in case you lose power and water for several days and you are not able to leave due to flooding or blocked roads.

Many communities have text or email alerting systems for emergency notifications. To find out what alerts are available in your area, search the Internet with your town, city, or county name and the word "alerts."

Check the Ready.Gov website <u>here</u>.

Baton Rouge organization awarded \$1 million to reduce flood risk

By <u>Tristan Baurick</u>
<u>tbaurick@nola.com</u>

NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune

A Baton Rouge nonprofit organization has been awarded \$1 million to boost flood risk planning and education in coastal Louisiana.

<u>The Center for Planning and Excellence</u>, also known as CPEX, received the funding from three foundations - McKnight, Kresge and Walton Family - and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, for work that will span the next two years.

Full story <u>here</u>.



Jefferson Parish Voters Approve Property Tax For Flood Protection

Author: Jacqueline Quynh

Published:8:57 PM CDT April 28, 2018

Updated:10:31 PM CDT April 28, 2018

Voters on the west bank of Jefferson Parish approved a new property tax for flood protection on Saturday.

The vote comes two years after voters rejected the tax. Now, the federal hurricane levee system is mostly rooted in dirt.

"They're constantly adding dirt," Bessie Simmons, said.

"After Katrina, they got back there and added more dirt, but before Katrina, they had the levee back there," she said.

The maintenance of the levees costs millions of dollars a year, and the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-West says it is running out of money. That's why they proposed a 10-year 4.75 mill property tax on Saturday's ballot in West Jefferson. It would add up to \$47.5 million total.

"All told it's about 47 miles," Susan Maclay, SLFPA-W Levee Board District President.

On a map, you can see the levees wrap around parts of St. Charles, through West Jefferson to Plaquemines Parish. Maclay says it's facing a shortfall of \$42.5 million to keep work up for its 10-year plan.

Full story <u>here</u>.

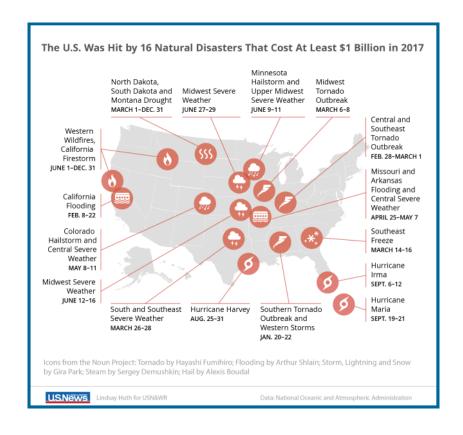
Bracing for the Storm

Routine natural disasters make the need for resilient communities all the more dire

HURRICANE HARVEY, WHICH dumped trillions of gallons of water on the southern U.S., killed <u>at least 89</u> people and displaced thousands more in a matter of days, held only a 0.2 percent chance of bringing its type of torrential flooding to Houston last year.

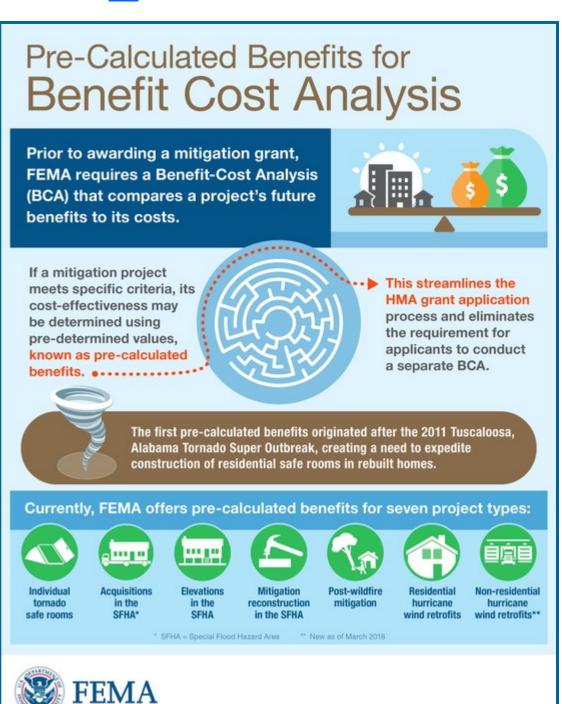
But Harvey – referred to by many as a 500-year flood event because the odds of it happening in a given year are at least 1 in 500 – was the third such major natural disaster to hit the city in as many years. And months later, Houston, the fourth-largest city in the U.S., is <u>still grappling</u> with the storm's aftermath.

<u>Harvey</u> also wasn't America's only major storm last year. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, there were <u>16 severe weather events</u> that each cost the U.S. \$1 billion or more in 2017, ranging from <u>wildfires in California</u> to a tornado outbreak in the Midwest. Carrying a total price tag of \$309.4 billion along with 362 deaths, 2017 was the cost-liest year on record for weather and climate events.



Pre-Calculated Benefits for Benefit Cost Analysis

Read more about it here.



LFMA 2018-2019 Board of Directors

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- Vice Chair Kara Moree
- Secretary Darla Duet
- ◆ Treasurer Melissa Becker
- Executive Director -Ted DeBaene



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- Region 4 Alternate Bonnie Anderson
- Region 5 Rep Dana Watkins
- Region 6 Rep Melissa Becker
- Region 7 Rep Juanita Fowler
- Region 8 Rep Larry Walters
- Region 8 Alternate Lisa Richardson



Newly elected officers begin serving on July 1, 2018. Congratulations to all!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

LFMA Summer Workshop

July 27, 2018 8:00-12:00

USGS National Wetlands Research Center

700 Cajundome Blvd.

Lafayette, LA 70506

Workshop Host contact: <u>Stephanie Weeks</u>

2018 Summer Workshop Registration



LFMA Fall Workshop

October 5, 2018

St. Charles Parish, in conjunction with "Battle for the Paddle"

More details coming soon!

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educating Planning Protecting

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