

Waterlines - News from the Division of Water

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Division of Water
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
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What is a Conservancy District?

By Kristi Johnson & Angie Plank, Division of Water

Indiana is a state rich in natural resources. That includes water, with more than 35,000 miles of waterways and over 100,000 acres of publicly owned lakes and reservoirs. Indiana's conservancy districts can play a vital role in managing and protecting these water resources.

A conservancy district is a special-purpose unit of local government that manages water resources within a defined geographic area. These districts are created to address specific water-related issues such as flood prevention and control, drainage improvement, irrigation, water supply, sewage services, recreation, erosion control, augmentation of streams, and operation and maintenance of structures related to water management. They are established under the Indiana Conservancy District Act (IC-14-33) which was passed in 1947. Since the Conservancy District Act was passed, 142 conservancy districts have been formed throughout the state, with 102 of those districts still active.



When a conservancy district is created, it can have many benefits to the community. Conservancy districts are a way for communities to raise funds and address water issues that directly affect them. By forming a district, all property owners within it can fairly contribute funds for projects that would otherwise be too expensive for a few individuals to fund. For example, districts can allow communities to have access to clean drinking water or sewage services that otherwise would be unattainable. A district also allows government status to secure loans or grants if needed.

Conservancy districts are governed by a board of directors whose members are elected by the property owners living in that district. The board works to form a district plan which outlines the goals as well as specific strategies and projects needed to reach those goals. After the district plan is approved, the conservancy district goes to work to implement projects outlined in its district plan. Projects can vary widely depending on the needs of the district, but some examples of projects could be water or sewer line connections, dredging, dam maintenance and operation, streambank stabilization, and woody debris removal.



Conservancy districts make it easy for multiple issues to be addressed and involve the whole community in finding solutions. By supporting and participating in the work of conservancy districts, Hoosiers can help provide important water services and management for the community without having to rely on other unstable funding sources. Districts can play a crucial role in maintaining the balance between development and conservation, ensuring sustainable water use for generations to come.

Floodplain Management Section

By Doug Wagner & Carley Bramel, Division of Water

Our Floodplain Management Section has had some recent changes. The first was the addition of a regional planner position. We now have three regional planners to better assist local communities with floodplain management concerns and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). We will follow up with notifications to communities as future changes occur or become effective.

In April, Carley Bramel joined the Floodplain Management Section. Carley has been assigned responsibility for the NFIP communities in the newly created central region of the state. She has earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences at Purdue University and is currently pursuing her Master of Science degree in Applied Geospatial Analytics from Purdue University. Carley spends her free time playing video games and playing outside with her dog Piper.



Also in April, Darren Pearson, CFM, was promoted to Section Manager. Darren will continue to serve as NFIP State Coordinator until that position can be posted and filled.

Finally, we said fairwell to Anita Nance, CFM on May 24. She retired after 29 years of service to DNR, 27 of those with the floodplain management section. Prior to DNR, Nance served Pike County for 16 years, eight as deputy recorder and eight as recorder. We wish Anita well in retirement and commend her on 45 years of public service.

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NEWS & NOTES

OUTREACH

The Division of Water is increasing its outreach efforts to better serve Indiana citizens. As part of this initiative, more frequent e-newsletters highlighting a single topic or update should be arriving soon. These communications will

feature various subjects tailored to our stakeholder groups. You can sign up to receive these email updates [here](#).

This new newsletter format will be in addition to the quarterly Waterlines newsletter. We welcome feedback on the frequency and type of communications you wish to receive from the division. Email your thoughts to water_inquiry@dnr.IN.gov.

Required Floodplain Administrator Training

Many Indiana communities participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Participation in the NFIP is based on an agreement between local communities and the federal government that states that if a community will implement and enforce measures to reduce future flood risks to new construction in special flood hazard areas, the federal government will make flood insurance available within the community as a financial protection against flood losses. As a participating community in the NFIP, your community's floodplain management ordinance has designated a floodplain administrator to administer and implement the provisions of the ordinance.

The Department of Natural Resources Division of Water is the state coordinating office for the NFIP in Indiana. We would like to remind you of legislation that affects the floodplain administrator for your community. On July 1, 2023, Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 242 became law and amended the Floodplain Management Act (IC 14-28-3-7.2). The act now requires floodplain administrators to obtain approved training by June 30, 2025, to serve as the floodplain administrator of a county or a municipality. A document that provides information on the new requirement, including the training options available and the reporting process, can be found [here](#).

The floodplain administrator, along with any other staff authorized and directed to enforce the provisions of your floodplain ordinance, need to complete the training. Other staff that work with permitting in flood hazard areas are strongly encouraged to attend the training.

The Division of Water will offer the new administrator training as Indiana's NFIP 101 on June 11. There are no fees for NFIP 101, which has the shortest time commitment of the specified training options. This is an in-person event at the Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room C. For registration and

other details on the workshop offerings see our [training page](#).

DNR Division of Water has partnered with ASFPM to host the L0273 course Managing Floodplain Development Through the NFIP. This course meets the training requirement of the floodplain management act. The course will be held August 5-8 from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily at the Hendricks County Government Center, 355 South Washington Street, Danville, IN 46122. For more information on the course or to register, view the [flyer](#).

To date only 165 of the 452 (36.5%) NFIP participating communities have met the new training requirement.

Upcoming Training Opportunities



(Information from FEMA, ASFPM, and other websites)

Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM)

ASFPM has an online training program and new training is added regularly. See floods.org/training-center for more information.

The association will hold its 48th annual conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, June 23-27. As the nation's premier conference dedicated to all aspects of flooding and floodplain management, there will be topics to suit anyone's individual needs. Conference and registration information can be found at floods.org/conference/2024-asfpm-conference.

FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI)

In-person classes have resumed at the EMI in Emmitsburg, MD, however it still offers many courses through self-study webinars. Currently, E0273: Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP, is scheduled for September and December 2024 and February, June, and September 2025. For additional information on EMI classes and webinars, please visit EMI's training calendar website at training.fema.gov/emcourses/schedules.aspx and its course catalog at [NTED | National Preparedness Course Catalog \(firstrespondertraining.gov\)](https://nted.nationalpreparednesscoursecatalog.gov).

FEMA Region 5 announces continued training opportunities

FEMA Region 5 is conducting regular webinars on various topics such as floodplain management, flood insurance, and National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements to educate and train community officials on managing their community's floodplains. Each webinar lasts an hour, and one ASFPM CFM CEC is available by attending a session. The virtual webinar is open to all; however, local and county officials working in emergency management, building code administration, and floodplain management are strongly encouraged to attend. The webinars are presented by FEMA Region 5's Mitigation Division, Floodplain Management and Insurance Branch.

For more information on the trainings or to register, see dnr.IN.gov/water/events-and-training.

STATE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Indiana Silver Jackets

The Indiana Silver Jackets will be holding "Indiana Flooding & Flood Tools Awareness" workshops this fall. These workshops are an effort to increase knowledge and awareness of the following topics:

- Common types and causes of flooding.
- Flood-related regulations, mitigation best practices, and climate change impacts.
- Focus on flood risk reduction tools available.

These three-hour workshops will be held on:

- Aug. 19, Made @ Plainfield, 1610 Reeves Road, Plainfield, IN 46168
- Aug. 28, American Red Cross, 29 S Stockwell Road, Evansville, IN 47714
- Sept. 11-13, INAFSM Conference, Michigan City, IN

More information and registration links will be posted when available at dnr.IN.gov/water/events-and-training.

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

For upcoming events and training hosted by the DNR Division of Water, check dnr.IN.gov/water/events-and-training. We will post training videos and other opportunities as they are developed or scheduled.

An additional offering of Indiana's NFIP 101 has been added for June 11.

Attending the in-person event meets SEA 242, which requires local floodplain administrators to complete training before July 1, 2025. The workshop will also offer CECs for CFMs and PEs. Registration link and other information is available at dnr.IN.gov/water/events-and-training.

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Indiana Department of Homeland Security

Please visit the Indiana Department of Homeland Security's training calendar for upcoming courses and trainings at oas.dhs.IN.gov/hs/training/public/calendar.do.

Certification

The Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) exam is now digital and may be taken at your convenience at a Measure Learning (formerly Scantron) test site or from your home or office. For information on the exam or to register visit ASFPM's website, floods.org/certification-program-cfm.

THANK YOU

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