



COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF STORMWATER AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS  
2480 W. 26<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 156-B  
Denver, CO 80211

**Friday, October 4, 2013**

**Purpose:** Media Statement for Colorado Floods

**Distribution:** Unlimited

**Topic:** Rebuilding guidance for northeastern Colorado communities affected by the 2013 regional floods

Coloradoans,

The September 2013 flooding across northeast Colorado is a tragic regional disaster that has changed and disrupted lives and livelihoods. The Colorado Association of Stormwater and Floodplain Managers ([CASFM](http://www.casfm.org)) is an organization of professionals that understand the state of Colorado must rebuild from this effort so that residents and business owners return to a sense of normalcy. This basic human need, this fundamental desire to return to normal life and business, is paramount to our long-term survival as a community of neighbors, friends, colleagues and family members.

Members of CASFM in private industry and in public service are working toward the same cause; **to reduce the loss of human life and property from flood and storm damage**. In Colorado's time of need there is nothing more crucial than taking a moment to stop, to think, and to envision a future condition that is better than the present. The only way we can secure that vision is to build back smarter, stronger and more resilient to floods and debris flows. To create a resilient state in the future, we recommend communities and government agencies take the following bold actions today;

1. **Consider detailed flood hazard assessments before issuing building permits** to provide time for post-flood information to be collected and community reconstruction plans to be created from that information. A library of emergency permitting procedures and guidelines are available on the [CASFM website](http://www.casfm.org).
2. **Support the public safety intent behind the State Floodplain Regulations** by instituting them immediately on all rebuilding efforts. These regulations are available on the [Colorado Water Conservation Board website](http://www.colorado.gov).
3. **Develop Advisory Base Flood Elevations (ABFEs)** for rebuilding structures in and around flooded areas. This should include high water marks from 2013 flooding, historic flood records, and FEMA Flood Insurance Study data.
4. **Rebuild outside the floodplain** whenever possible to reduce the potential for damage in the future. One of the most effective ways to mitigate future losses is to relocate structures and infrastructure outside known hazard areas.

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5. **Utilize CASFM members and website** library for rebuilding guidance. Our 700-member organization of Certified Floodplain Managers ([CFMs](#)), engineers, planners, scientists, environmentalists and stormwater managers are available to direct communities to assistance.
6. **Support the implementation of master plans** locally and regionally by executing them during flood recovery rebuilding efforts rather than replacing in-kind.
7. **Consider FEMA repetitive flood loss** clauses that affect the cost of flood insurance in areas most frequently impacted by flooding. Local governmental entities should consider available flood evidence and history before issuing permits in high hazard areas, especially in Front Range canyon watersheds and along the South Platte River.
8. **Complete a post-disaster analysis** of the 2013 flood to track how federal recovery funds were spent on the disaster in individual communities. This will allow all communities to measure the effectiveness of these recovery efforts during future floods that will occur in Colorado.

The history of Colorado provides ample evidence that large natural disasters will occur in the future. Instituting these eight measures will help future generations in Colorado avoid repeating the life-changing disruptions of September 2013 in the next major floods.

As floodplain managers, stormwater managers, scientists, engineers, planners, and agents of the greater good, it is incumbent upon all of our members to work tirelessly to help our neighbors, friends, families and visitors get back on their feet. It is also incumbent upon all floodplain professionals to provide those generations with a more resilient future than the recent past or the present could provide against floods that will visit Colorado and other states again.

CASFM members are committed to helping Colorado rebuild now, and to assuring our state's future is stronger, more economically vibrant, and more resilient than our past.

Ever at Colorado's service,

Brian Varrella, PE, CFM  
CASFM Chair

Shea Thomas, PE  
CASFM Vice Chair

Jason Messemer  
CASFM Secretary

Brian Murphy, PE, CFM  
CASFM Treasurer

*Further information about flooding and flood mitigation issues can be found on the CASFM website at [www.CASFM.org](http://www.CASFM.org), or by contacting the CASFM Chair Brian Varrella at [casfmmedia@gmail.com](mailto:casfmmedia@gmail.com). The Colorado Association of Stormwater and Floodplain Managers is a non-profit organization of 700 members working in and around Colorado's watersheds and floodplains, and our cadre of experts are available to assist communities as needed.*

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