



# NEWSLETTER

## Spring 2023

### Save the Date

for the

### **4th ANNUAL massFM CONFERENCE**

**Monday, October 23, 8 am to 5 pm**

**The Hogan Center at The College of the Holy Cross, Worcester**

The massFM Conference Committee is planning a great conference this year!

Watch the Events page at [massFM.org](http://massFM.org) for more information to come in the Summer Newsletter.

### **Call for Abstracts!**

**We are opening a call for abstracts for the technical program of our MassFM Fall Conference.**

The abstract submission deadline is 11:59pm, July 17, 2023.

For more information, suggested topics, and how to submit your abstract, head to the massFM Conference page at <https://www.massfm.org/call-for-abstracts-2023>

### **Call for Sponsors!**

Make a splash by sponsoring our 2023 Annual Conference. Host a table, market your services, and mingle with the growing Massachusetts flood management community. For added exposure, consider sponsoring our "Drinks and Chats" poster session to close out the day.

If you are interested in becoming a conference sponsor, please email [massfloodplain@gmail.com](mailto:massfloodplain@gmail.com).

### **Massachusetts Association for Floodplain Management (massFM)**

We educate, promote, & inform on practices related to floodplain management.

We welcome and encourage readers to send us notices of training and other events, articles or other contributions to share with others in our community.

Please visit our website at [www.massFM.org](http://www.massFM.org) for additional articles and resources, and to sign up to receive future editions via email.

Contact: [massfloodplain@gmail.com](mailto:massfloodplain@gmail.com)

## What's in Your Floodplain? FEMA's Endangered Species Conservation Action Program

By Linda Hutchins, PG, CFM

We all know the value of floodplains in slowing runoff and storing floodwater, but these areas also provide habitat to rare and endangered wildlife that is worthy of protection. In Massachusetts our floodplains (both inland and coastal) contain wetlands teeming with biodiversity, provide recreational opportunities, and are home to federal and state-listed endangered species. In collaboration with the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), FEMA promotes NFIP communities conserving endangered species in the floodplain as outlined in their webpage [Floodplains and Wildlife Conservation | FEMA.gov](#).

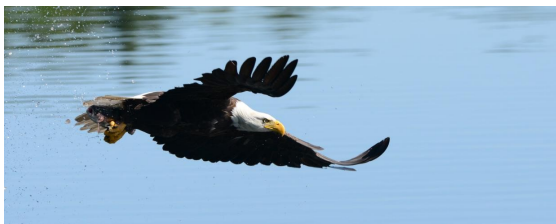


*Piping Plover and roseate tern are found on sandy coastal beaches and dunes in spring and summer months.*

*Many types of endangered Dragonflies, Damselflies, and Moths inhabit Massachusetts wetlands.*



*Psectraglaea carnosa* • Specimen from MA: Plymouth Co., Plymouth, collected 2 Oct 2002 by M.W. Nelson



*There are over 70 bald eagle nesting pairs found in Massachusetts' forested areas near large surface water bodies suitable for fishing. Bald eagles are no longer listed as endangered species but are still protected by the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act.*

*Atlantic and Shortnose sturgeon ply estuarine waters of the Merrimack, Taunton, and Connecticut Rivers during summer spawning season. As part of their mating ritual, watch for the large fish jumping high out of the water.*



## **What's in Your Floodplain? FEMA's Endangered Species Conservation Action Program, cont.'d**

Community Rating System (CRS) credits are available to NFIP communities for two new elements under Activity 510 (Floodplain Management Planning):

Floodplain Species Assessments (FSA): Identify threatened and endangered species and their critical habitats.

Floodplain Species Plans (FSP): Determine conservation and recovery activities for greatest impacts.

**Guidance** for completing these activities is available: [preparing a floodplain species for the CRS \(fema.gov\)](#)

The community's Conservation Commission or staff may be able to assist in completing the endangered species and critical habitat inventory. Resource mappers and information regarding species recovery are readily available online:

**FEMA's [Flood Risk and Endangered Species Habitat \(FRESH\) Mapping Tool | FEMA.gov](#)**: Displays Special Flood Hazard Areas along with federally listed endangered species/critical habitats.

**MassGIS [MassMapper](#)**: Conservation/Recreation layers include Natural Heritage Data/MassWildlife Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) vernal pools, estimated habitats of rare wildlife, natural communities, priority habitats of rare species; Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

Wetlands are found under Physical Resources/Hydrography Water Features/DEP Wetlands and National Wetlands Inventory.

**MassGIS BioMap2** at [BioMap Hub \(arcgis.com\)](#) displays Core Habitat (areas critical for the long-term persistence of rare species, exemplary natural communities, and resilient ecosystems) and Critical Natural Landscapes (large blocks of land minimally impacted by development and buffers to core habitats and coastal areas which enhance connectivity and resilience).

**MassWildlife NHESP Rare Species Viewer [Rare species viewer | Mass.gov](#)** contains a search engine that generates a list of threatened, endangered, and species of special concern by Town. These are protected by the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) regulations at 321 CMR 10.00.

**USFWS online mapper for inland species Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC)**: [IPaC: Getting Started - Draw on Map \(fws.gov\)](#) has simple instructions to draw an area of interest and generate a list of threatened and endangered species and critical habitats protected by the U.S. Endangered Species Act as well as migratory birds protected by the Migratory Bird Protection Act.

**NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Region** hosts a mapper for marine species: [ESA Section 7 Mapper \(arcgis.com\)](#) and allows the user to generate reports of listed species. Marine endangered species are protected by National Marine Fisheries Service.

**Species Profiles and Habitat Conservation Plans** are available from MassWildlife, USFWS, and NMFS. These contain information about threats, conservation and recovery. All can be found from links on the webpages listed in this article.

*See the CRS section of this newsletter for more information on earning credit for protecting natural floodplain habitats.*

*Linda is a Hydrologist and Environmental Protection/Floodplain Specialist with FEMA Region 1's Office of Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation.*



## Committees Spotlight

*Written by Lori Watson*

**If you are looking to get plugged into a small group within massFM, we have several types of committees that are all looking for more volunteers.**



### *Communications Committee*

This committee encompasses the newsletter and website volunteers. We have about 6 committee members. Newsletters are distributed seasonally (Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter). Past issues of the newsletters are available under our “Outreach” tab on the website. Our small group meets alternating months during the lunch hour to discuss content ideas and website design updates. We are currently looking specifically for a volunteer to manage our blog. Two of our association’s main purposes is to promote public awareness of floodplain management principles and to share technical information. If you have any recent project work or information about pending or updated legislation, please consider contributing to the newsletter.

For more information, contact:

Rosalie Starvish, Newsletter Chair at [rosalie.starvish@gza.com](mailto:rosalie.starvish@gza.com)

David Azinheira, Website Chair at [dazinheira@tigebond.com](mailto:dazinheira@tigebond.com)

### *Membership / Sponsorship Committee*

The purpose of this committee is to keep membership updated and accurate. As a new organization, this has been done manually while we work to identify software to streamline the process. Membership benefits include networking, reduced rates for our events, information about industry changes and training events and voting rights. We currently have approximately 100 members in our association. Our membership has doubled over the last couple of years! Our next step is to continue to expand membership. The growth of massFM is dependent on our sponsors (private, public or non-profit). We have about 10 corporate sponsors. If your company is interested in becoming a sponsor, there is a 2-page form on our website. Sponsors’ logos are shared on our website, newsletters and all advertising communications for our seminars and conferences. In addition, sponsors may be eligible for discounts. We have varying levels of support available that can be renewed annually at the start of the calendar year. massFM is a dedicated 501 (c) 3 association, so donations are tax-exempt. The membership/sponsorship committees welcomes new members to help massFM continue to grow.

For more information, contact:

Shannon Hulst, Membership Chair at [shannon.hulst@capecod.gov](mailto:shannon.hulst@capecod.gov)

Gabrielle Belfit, Sponsorship Chair at [GCBelfit@tigheBond.com](mailto:GCBelfit@tigheBond.com)

### *Annual Conference Committee*

The massFM Annual Conference Committee consists of Noah Slovin, Joy Duperrault, Rebecca Haney, Gabrielle Belfit, Bin Wang, Matt Shultz, Ellie Baker, Lara Sup, and David Azinheira. We have been meeting regularly to advance planning for the fourth annual conference, to be held in-person on Monday October 23, 2023 at Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. Specifics are now being worked out by subcommittees including: Registration, Budget, and Content Subcommittees. Stay tuned for more information!

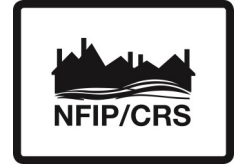
For more information, contact:

Noah Slovin, Chair at [nslovin@slrconsulting.com](mailto:nslovin@slrconsulting.com)

*Lori is a new member to massFM and has joined the Communications Committee. She can be reached at: [lori.watson@mbakerintl.com](mailto:lori.watson@mbakerintl.com).*

## Community Rating System Corner

### A Handy Place to Stay Current on CRS Matters



Written by Shannon Hulst, CFM

Another article in this newsletter, “What’s in Your Floodplain? FEMA’s Endangered Species Conservation Action Program” discusses protection of endangered species in the floodplain. There are two CRS activities that are directly related to the Endangered Species Act as referenced in the article; Floodplain Species Assessments (FSA) and Floodplain Species Plans (FSP) in Activity 510. In addition to these activities, the CRS program has several ways that protecting natural floodplain functions and habitats can earn credit. A new guide from the program, “CRS Credit for Habitat Protection” details the ways in which a community can earn credit for natural resource protection. They include:

- Public Information Activities
  - \* Activity 320 (Map Information Service)
  - Activity 330 (Outreach Projects)
  - Activity 340 (Hazard Disclosure)
  - Activity 350 (Flood Protection Information)
- Mapping and Regulation Activities
  - \* Activity 410 (Floodplain Mapping)
  - Activity 420 (Open Space Preservation)
  - Activity 430 (Higher Regulatory Standards)
  - Activity 450 (Stormwater Management)
- Restoration Activities
  - \* Activity 510 (Floodplain Management Planning)
    - ◆ Floodplain Species Assessment
    - ◆ Floodplain Species Plan
  - \* Activity 520 (Acquisition and Relocation)
  - \* Activity 540 (Drainage System Maintenance)

Some of these activities are more involved than others. Many of them likely overlap with other community goals and requirements, and your Conservation Commission is likely to already be doing some of these activities. Take a closer look at credit opportunities in Activity 330 (Outreach), Activity 350 (Flood Protection Information), Activity 420 (Open Space), and Activity 540 (Drainage System Maintenance) for some of the lower-hanging fruit your community may already be doing.

*The Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary program within the National Flood Insurance Program that offers discounts on flood insurance in exchange for actions taken within a community that improve flood resilience. More information can be found at [www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system](http://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system) and [crsresources.org](http://crsresources.org). More information can be found at [www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system](http://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system) and [crsresources.org](http://crsresources.org).*

*Shannon is the CRS & Floodplain Coordinator for Barnstable County through the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension & Woods Hole Sea Grant.*

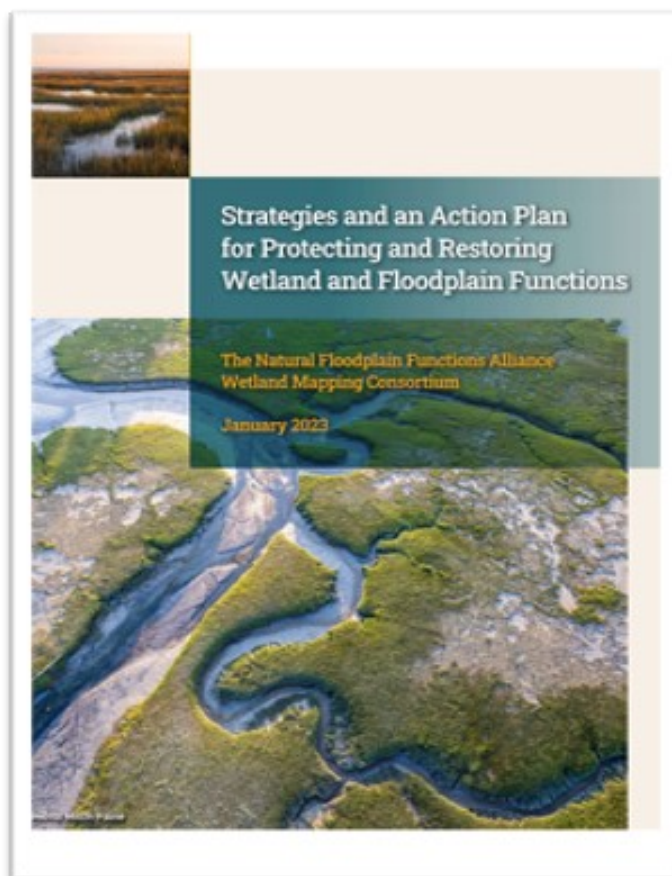


## The National Floodplain Function Alliance Wetland Mapping Consortium

### Strategies and Action Plan for Protecting and Restoring Wetland and Floodplain Functions

#### *Final Report Now Available!*

Since 2017, the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) Foundation has collaborated with the Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM), the National Floodplain Functions Alliance, and the Wetland Mapping Consortium to provide funding and active participation in a series of four workshops, the focus of which was to:



“Improve floodplain mapping integrating geospatial data being developed and used by the wetland mapping community to identify wetland and floodplain functions.”

Each of the first three workshops had a targeted discussion topic, which attendees discussed at length, offering their professional insights and informed opinions.

- The **first workshop** – conducted in 2018 was titled “Exploring Opportunities for Integrated Mapping and Functional Assessment of Riverine and Coastal Floodplains and Wetlands.”
- The **second workshop** – conducted in 2019 was titled “Data Needs, GAPS and Interoperability for Integrated Mapping and Functional Assessment of Riverine and Coastal Floodplains and Wetlands.”
- The **third workshop** – conducted in 2021 was titled “Federal Program and Policy Changes Needed to Advance Integrated Functional Mapping of Floodplain and Wetlands for Nature – Based Solutions.”

The final workshop, which convened in 2022, was a culmination of discussions during the first three workshops, and resulted in the development of strategies and actions, which were memorialized in the January 2023 final report, titled “Strategies and an Action Plan

for Protecting and Restoring Wetland and Floodplain Functions.” The final report and summary workshops reports are available on the Reports and Publications page of the [ASFPM Foundation website](#).

For more information about the National Floodplain Function Alliance Wetland Mapping Consortium, please visit website or contact Brad Anderson, ASFPM Foundation Projects Chair, at [Brad.Anderson@acewater.com](mailto:Brad.Anderson@acewater.com).

---

#### *ASFPM Foundation Mission Statement*

*Serve as the catalyst for ASFPM, its Chapters, and members to advance research, projects, education and policy initiatives, that promote reduced flood risk and resilient communities.*

---



## We would like to extend a Thank You to our Sponsors!



Our mission at massFM is to create a forum for the exchange of local knowledge about floodplain management, to share that knowledge with the public, to inform municipal and statewide policies and procedures, and to improve the Commonwealth's ability to mitigate flood hazards now and in the future. massFM strives to be inclusive across multiple disciplines, regardless of means. We welcome you to join us.