

An aerial photograph showing a flooded area. A road runs through the center, with trees and grassy areas on either side. The water is a murky brown color, and the overall scene is somewhat desaturated.

2025 Spring WCCA Floodplain Updates and... When do I need a survey?

Sarah Rafajko – DNR, State NFIP Coordinator

WCCA – March 20, 2025

Floodplain Updates

- Ordinances
- Audits
- Staffing Update
- Impacts from Federal Changes



Current WDNR Model Floodplain Ordinance

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

MODEL FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE

FOR

WISCONSIN COMMUNITIES

Effective March 10, 2022

A cooperative effort
of
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource
and
Federal Emergency Management Agency

- The current WDNR Model Floodplain Ordinance is dated March 2022 and went effective in April 2022.
- Includes Act 175 language (enacted March 2020 and created §87.30 (1d)(d), Wis. Stats)
- Includes coastal language
- Clarifying language in floodfringe, campground updates, removal of lands from the floodplain updates, cumulative 50% rule.
- <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/Floodplains/ModelOrd.pdf>

Blue highlights are instructional for the ordinance writer and can be deleted once the item is completed

Yellow highlights are places where the ordinance needs to be filled in with community specific information

Grey highlights are ordinance additions for communities that choose to implement Act 175

Red highlights are ordinance additions for communities that have existing Cranberry Farms (FA-C) (when applicable)

Green highlights are ordinance additions for communities that have adopted a Flood Storage District (when applicable)

Pink highlights are ordinance additions for communities that have adopted a Coastal Floodplain District (CFD) (Great Lakes when applicable)

Ordinance Update Suggestions

- We recommend that each jurisdiction adopt a Stand-Alone Floodplain Ordinance.
- When you have a mixed ordinance, any revisions to that ordinance will require DNR approval for the floodplain ordinance even if the revision has nothing to do with the floodplain ordinance.
- Stand Alone ordinances are easier to enforce both from the state and local level
- DNR staff can do the draft for you
- If you are going through the Ordinance Adoption Process to adopt new maps, please stay on schedule!
- Ordinance needs adopted within 6 months of the LFD date or your community will be suspended from the NFIP.

Ordinances

- Ordinances have finally started to dial back and we will be able to assist with more optional updates or adoptions for LOMRs.
- Just a heads up... any community needing to adopt Letters of Map Revision, Dam Failure Analyses, or would like to adopt Act 175 will need to do a full repeal/recreate to the 2022 ordinance language as part of that adoption.

Audits

- FEMA has increased the expectation on States of performing audits on local floodplain management programs.
- There are 570 NFIP participating communities in the State of Wisconsin that all require periodic audits.
- Historically these full audits would happen once every 10-15 years.
- FEMA's new requirement starts in July of 2026 and will have every community audited once every 5 years, which breaks down to 114 communities per year.

Audits – What are we looking at?

- Floodplain Ordinance
- Administrative Procedures
- Floodplain permits and variances that were issued
- Record keeping & Documentation

Best way to prepare for a smooth audit is to have a separate file for floodplain permitting or if you have permitting software, a way to flag any floodplain permits.

Staffing Updates

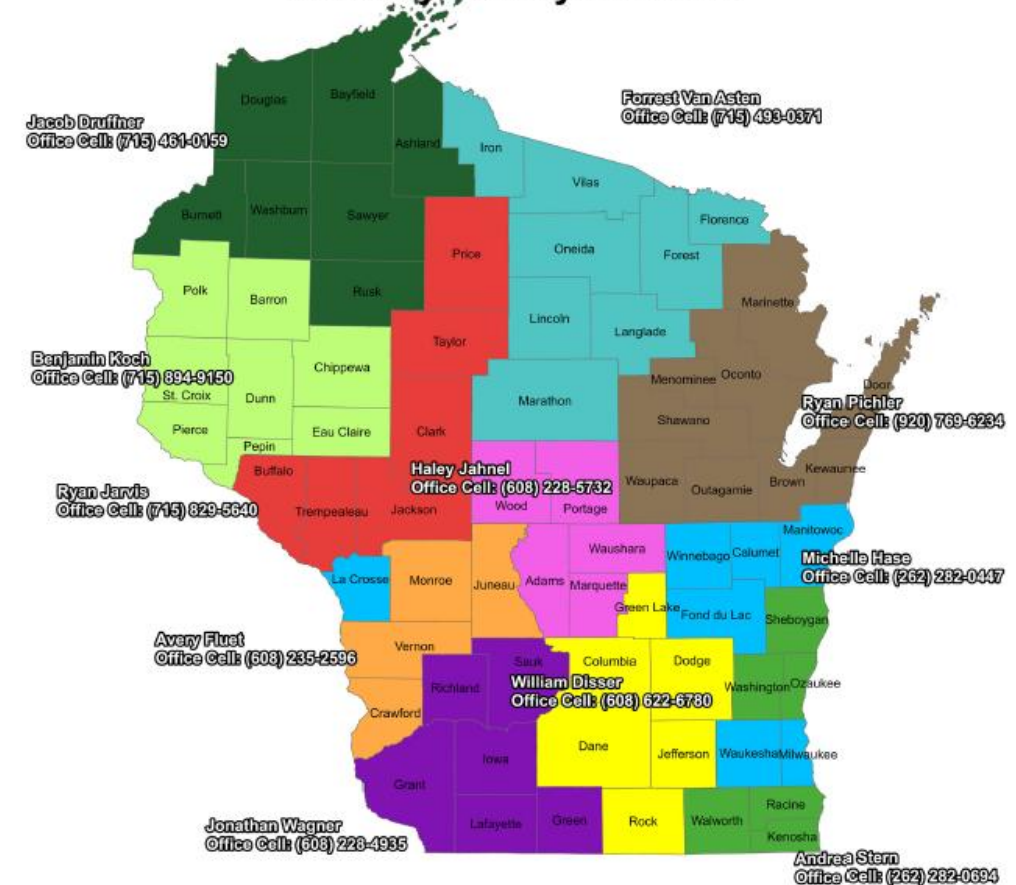
- Sarah Rafajko will be on a short-term leave sometime in May, likely returning
- If you receive my out of office reply, your Water Management Engineer, should be your first point of contact for floodplain management questions.
- For ordinance questions, Mia Van Horn (Michele.VanHorn@wisconsin.gov) should be your first point of contact.

WME-by-county-External

WDNR Dam Safety & Floodplain

[DNR Floodplain Contacts by County: Water Management Engineer Contact Information | Wisconsin DNR](#)

- Use this link for the most up-to-date contact information as new Water Management Engineers shift to County coverage.



CENTRAL OFFICE

Dams and Floodplain Section Manager - Vacancy

Uriah Monday, State Dam Safety Engineer - Office Cell: (608) 225-6716

Christopher Olds, Floodplain Engineer - Office Cell: (608) 422-0410

Sarah Rafajko, State NFIP Coordinator - Office Cell: (608) 893-8710

Mia Van Horn, Floodplain Zoning Ordinance Coordinator - Office Cell: (608) 590-5296

Allison Kielar, Floodplain Mapping Project Lead - Office Cell: (608) 235-8115

Ben Sanborn, Floodplain Mapping Program Manager - Office Cell: (608) 445-7417

Fritz Statz, GIS Project Lead - Office Cell: (608) 220-4290

Konstantin Margovsky, Dam Safety / Floodplain Engineer - Office Cell: (608) 419-6531

Chad Heimerl, Floodplain Engineer - Office Cell: (608) 576-2811

Impacts from Federal Changes

State and local regulations have not changed

Wisconsin is considered the birthplace of floodplain management, and has had State floodplain management rules in place since 1966 - before FEMA and the NFIP existed and before any other state. These rules are not changed by recent federal actions. Floodplain ordinances have been adopted by local communities, in accordance with state law, and will continue to be the regulations enforced within our communities regardless of any changes at the Federal level.

Recent federal actions impacting federal agencies

As always, we are in close contact with our partners at the local, state and federal levels and we are monitoring the dynamic situation in Washington. We will let communities know if and when any federal actions lead to changes to current processes related to floodplain management and mapping updates.

When do I need a survey?

NOTES:

1. THIS IS NOT A BOUNDARY SURVEY PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 4733-37 OF THE OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE CODE.

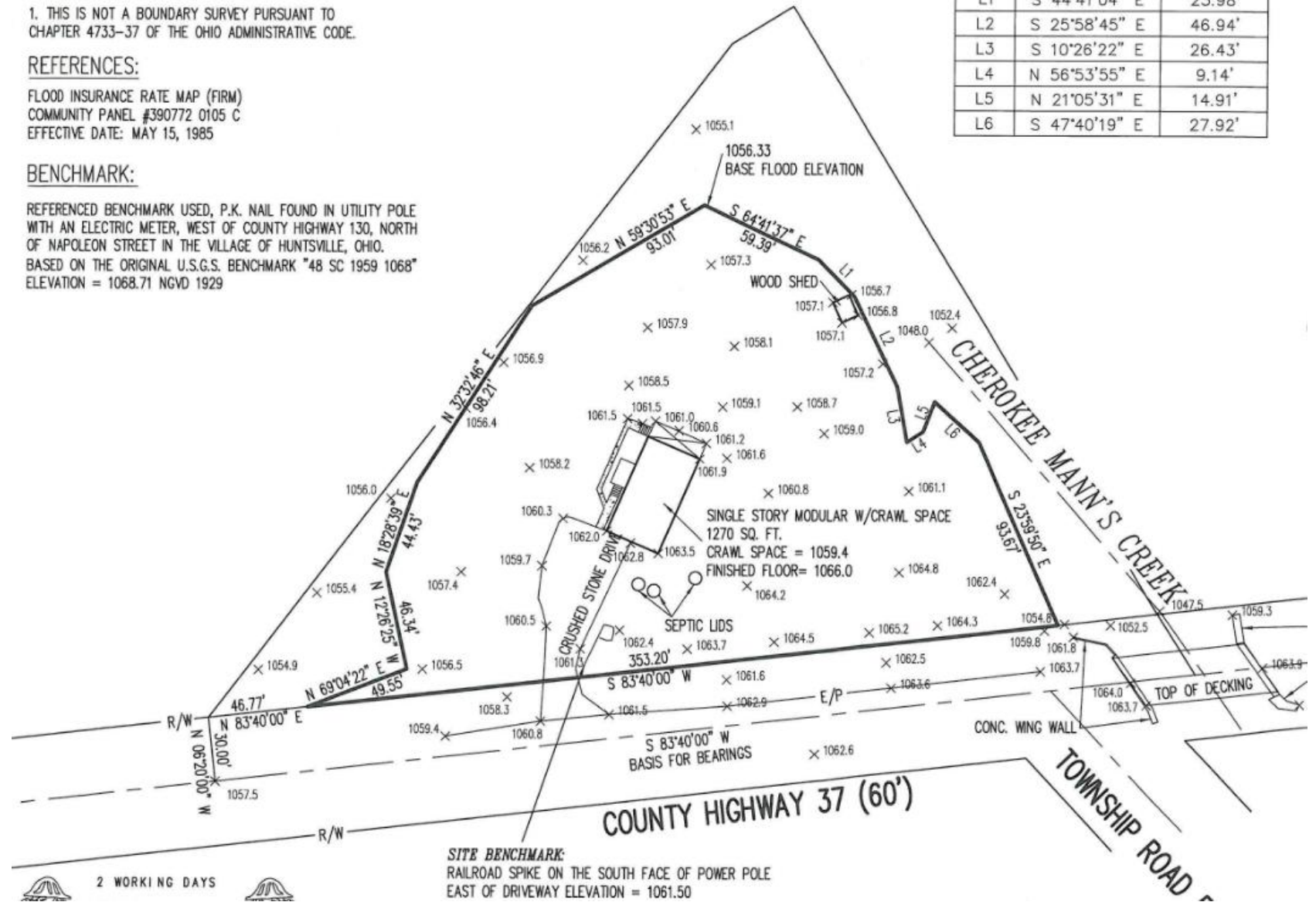
REFERENCES:

FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP (FIRM)
COMMUNITY PANEL #390772 0105 C
EFFECTIVE DATE: MAY 15, 1985

BENCHMARK:

REFERENCED BENCHMARK USED, P.K. NAIL FOUND IN UTILITY POLE WITH AN ELECTRIC METER, WEST OF COUNTY HIGHWAY 130, NORTH OF NAPOLEON STREET IN THE VILLAGE OF HUNTSVILLE, OHIO. BASED ON THE ORIGINAL U.S.G.S. BENCHMARK "48 SC 1959 1068" ELEVATION = 1068.71 NGVD 1929

LINE	BEARING	DISTANCE
L1	S 44°41'04" E	23.98'
L2	S 25°58'45" E	46.94'
L3	S 10°26'22" E	26.43'
L4	N 56°53'55" E	9.14'
L5	N 21°05'31" E	14.91'
L6	S 47°40'19" E	27.92'



Floodway – survey in lieu of H&H

- Walking trails, parking lots
- Excavation/Fill

Walking Trails



- The yellow squiggly lines denote walking trails in the floodway
- A pre-project and post-project survey can be used as documentation instead of a Hydrologic & Hydraulic Analysis

Excavation/Fill – LOMR-F



- In this case, a surveyor flagged the floodway boundary on-site to ensure no excavation occurred in the floodway.

Floodfringe/Zone A

- LOMR-F/LOMAs
- Proximity to Floodplain

LOMR-F/LOMAs



- On land removals, I would recommend communities require/request a survey clearly showing the land removed.
- Structure Only removals would not need a survey.

Proximity to Floodplain



When development is proposed in close proximity to the floodplain or specific zone boundary, a survey can help determine whether the development is in the floodplain or help determine which zone regulations apply.

**When have you required surveys for
floodplain compliance?**

CONNECT WITH US

QUESTIONS?

Sarah Rafajko

**Floodplain Management Policy Coordinator
(608) 893-8710**

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"WILD WISCONSIN:
OFF THE RECORD"