

# MONTANA HIGHGROUND

February 2019

Photo by MT DNRC

## CONTENTS

Flood After Fire	2
Silver Jackets Update	3
Fire Management Assistance Grant	5
Staff Updates	6
AMFM	7
Technical Bulletin Update	8
Montana DNRC Mapping	9
Montana DNRC Floodplain Training	10
Contact Information	12

## GET PREPARED

Your community may be at an elevated risk of flooding due to area wildfires.

See more on Page 2 & 4

## MESSAGE FROM AMFM

See a message from AMFM Chairperson  
Pam Vosen

Get more info on Page 7

# FLOOD AFTER FIRE

By Traci Sears and Worby McNamee

Photo by Erin Conwell, Reynolds  
Creek fire (2015)



Did you  
know?

Flood insurance covers both flooding  
and debris flow (but not landslides).

## 2018 WILDFIRE SEASON

Once again communities across the state faced an extraordinary fire season in 2018. While many communities recover from the clear and present dangers associated with wildland fires, many forget that the threat continues well after the fires have been extinguished. Flooding after fires not only effect the immediate burn area, but also leaves downstream locations very susceptible to flash flooding and debris flows. The threat increases as the terrain steepens. Rainfall that would normally be absorbed will run off extremely quickly after a wildfire, as burned soil can be as water repellent as pavement. “Know your risk in and around burn scars, stay informed and be alert if any rain develops. Remember that heavy rain can occur upstream and cause flash floods or debris flows downstream” Megan Syner, Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the Great Falls National Weather Service

Wildfires aren’t singular disasters, they are the beginning of many disasters. The disaster cycle can last from five to 10 years after the initial fire was extinguished. Flooding in these areas will continue until the watershed is stabilized.

For floodplain Administrators and communities that are in areas that have been affected by wildfires it’s important to understand the roles and responsibilities that come after the fires have been put out. Immediately after, make sure the community is aware that there is an increased risk of flooding and debris flows. Discuss, participating in the National Flood Insurance Program. Make sure you talk about flood insurance to members of your community. Coordinate possible mitigation projects. Make sure you address long-term development in and around these areas. Finally, fold into the long-term development discussion and planning, the possibility that meeting higher and stricter standards for building and development may be needed.

Continued on page 4...

# MONTANA SILVER JACKETS PROJECT UPDATES

Worby McNamee, Montana DNRC Floodplain Program,



The Montana Silver Jackets team is made up of federal, state and local agency partners with the goal of reducing flood risk for all Montana communities.

## EKALAKA

The Ekalaka project is nearing completion, the Town of Ekalaka along with various other local, state and federal partners were on hand in November 2018 to discuss the status of the project, as well as, view and discuss the preliminary 2-D model that was developed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The model will be considered and incorporated into the design of a new hospital, with the purposed location to within the Town of Ekalaka.

The final project closeout is expected to be in April 2019.

## GLENDIVE

This multi-pronged proposal first took aim to deliver the City of Glendive a levee breach analysis that would be incorporated into an updated emergency action plan. The second component that will be delivered to the city is a LifeSim model, that shows the economic impact of a levee breach. The model gives a minute by minute look at the impact of a levee breach on evacuation routes, number of homes impacted by the rise in flood waters, and what businesses would be affected by the breach.

This project is also expected to be completed by April 2019.



## FY19 FLOODRISK PROPOSALS

The MT Silver Jackets submitted two project proposals for the FY19 cycle. The first one that was awarded was a Glasgow Flood risk proposal. The objective of the project is to get the City of Glasgow updated information about their flood risk and levee. The key partners in this project are the Glasgow Levee Committee and the NWS Glasgow office.

Finally, the other proposal that was awarded for funding is a Flood After Fire workshop. This project is still in the developmental phase, with more details to come.

The FY20 Silver Jackets Interagency Flood Risk Proposal period has officially opened! The focus this year on a national level are projects that focus their attention on interagency cooperation and partnerships.

The proposal period is open until March 21, 2019. The proposals will have the overall mission of the Montana Silver Jackets as the overarching theme, to reduce the flood risk to all communities across Montana.

If your agency is interested in submitting an FY20 MT Silver Jackets proposal, please contact Worby McNamee, [worby.mcnamee@mt.gov](mailto:worby.mcnamee@mt.gov) or call 444-1343.

## HIGH WATER SIGN CLOSEOUT THANKS TO ALL THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATED!

The last batch of High Water signs are being printed and delivered by the US Army Corps of Engineers Omaha District. Expected delivery is Winter/Spring 2019!



The Montana Silver Jackets would also like to thank everyone who attended the 2018 Annual In-Person meeting in Helena. During the October In-person meeting representatives from various state and federal agencies discussed ongoing projects, future proposals, and current Montana Silver Jackets team matters.

For anyone that is interested in the materials from the 2018 Annual In-person meeting please contact MT Silver Jackets Team Lead, Worby McNamee at [worby.mcnamee@mt.gov](mailto:worby.mcnamee@mt.gov)



# FLOOD AFTER FIRE

Continued from page 1

FEMA has several resources available online for floodplain administrators and communities to refer to for guidance. FEMA produces several infographic, factsheets and even has a Flood After Fire Toolkit. In the toolkit, there are media templates communities can use for social media and press releases, factsheets outlining the risks, and a link to the National Weather Service to check on local conditions. You can find the materials on the FEMA website here, <https://www.fema.gov/media-library>

- » Since 2010, the NFIP has paid over \$4 million in flood claims throughout the state.
- » FEMA paid over \$65 million in Public and Individual Assistance after Montana's 2011 flood event.
- » Montana's overall flood risk rating is likely close to \$1 billion.

## REDUCE YOUR FLOOD RISK

Remind your community about flooding after wildfire:

### The Time to Prepare is Now.

Gather supplies in case of a storm, strengthen your home against damage, and review your insurance coverages. No flood insurance? It typically takes 30 days for a new flood insurance policy to go into effect, so get your policy now.

**Only Flood Insurance Covers Flood Damage.** Most standard homeowners policies do not cover flood damage. Flood insurance covers both flooding and debris flow. An average flood policy costs around \$600 a year, rates start at just \$129 a year for homes in moderate- to low-risk areas.

### Plan Ahead.

Plan evacuation routes. Keep important papers in a safe, waterproof place. Conduct a home inventory; itemize and take pictures of possessions.

## TOWN OF MEDICINE LAKE

Fun Fact: What is the mascot of Medicine Lake High School?  
**The Redhawk**



Welcome Town of Medicine Lake in Sheridan County to the National Flood Insurance Program! The town is officially Montana's newest community to join. The Town of Medicine Lake sits at the northeast corner of the state and the current population is 264. Situated between Plentywood to the north and Culberston to the south, the Town of Medicine Lake is home to the Medicine Lake Wildlife Refuge.

To check out more of what the Town of Medicine Lake has to offer visit their website at, <https://www.medicinelakemt.com/>



©heil photographics medicine lake, mt





# FIRE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT

Montana Disaster and Emergency Services

2017 was a devastating year for wildland fires, burning more than 1.4 million acres across the state. There were several Montana counties that were awarded Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAGs). Tied to those declarations from 2017 is a new source of Hazard Mitigation Grant funds that FEMA is making available now through March 1, 2019. Top priority is given to the counties that received the FMAGs, however, after that, the entire state is eligible to apply for the 75/25 grant (25% match required: hard, soft or in-kind). Eligible applicants include; state agencies, counties, Tribal governments, and private non-profits.

Potential projects that will be eligible; community education and outreach for wildfire prone areas or post wildfire areas, generators to critical facilities, soil or erosion stabilization to post wildfire areas, and minor flood reduction projects in post wildfire areas.

Applications must be completed in eGrants. For more information or how to access eGrants, Jake Ganieany at [jake.ganieany@mt.gov](mailto:jake.ganieany@mt.gov) or one of the MT DES District Field Officers.

Please use the link below to access the DES website for the grant posting and for more information.  
<http://readyandsafe.mt.gov/Home/Articles/hazard-mitigation-grant-post-fire>



## OTHER MITIGATION RESOURCES

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: Help communities implement hazard mitigation following a Presidential Disaster Declaration.  
[readyandsafe.mt.gov](http://readyandsafe.mt.gov)

Flood Mitigation Assistance Program: Intended to help reduce or eliminate claims under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).  
[readyandsafe.mt.gov](http://readyandsafe.mt.gov)

# STAFF UPDATES

## Happy Retirement Tim Read

As many of you have heard, Tim served as the Floodplain Administrator for the Town of Superior and Mineral County. Tim's contribution and passion for safe development have always been in the best interest of the citizens of Mineral County. We wish him well, and a big Thank you for all the hard work!



## Welcome TO DOUG BRUGGER, ENGINEERING SPECIALIST

We are pleased to announce that Doug Brugger joined the State Floodplain office in Helena as a Engineering Specialist. Doug provides general engineering support for the mapping program. This includes project scoping, grant writing, tracking project milestons, and technical review of hydrologic and hydraulic models. Call Doug at 406-444-1343 or email him at [douglas.brugger@mt.gov](mailto:douglas.brugger@mt.gov)

## Welcome TO NADENE WADSWORTH, FLOODPLAIN OUTREACH SPECIALIST

We are pleased to announce that Nadene Wadsworth joined the State Floodplain office in Helena as our Floodplain Specialist. Nadene assists with outreach for the mapping program. Her primary focus will be assisting communities that have levees during new mapping projects. Call Nadene at 406-444-6732 or email her at [nadene.wadsworth@mt.gov](mailto:nadene.wadsworth@mt.gov)

## Welcome to our new LOCAL FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATORS

[CATHY BARTHA](#) | City of Lewistown Floodplain Administrator

[ANDY SHORT](#) | Mineral County Floodplain Administrator

[NICOLE STEPHENSON](#) | Treasure County Floodplain Administrator

[BOBBI VANNATTAN](#) | Rosebud County Floodplain Administrator

[CLICK HERE](#)

for an updated list of Local  
Floodplain Administrators

Contact Traci Sears with updates  
[tsears@mt.gov](mailto:tsears@mt.gov) | 406-444-6654



JOIN  
US IN

Lewistown

MARCH  
11-14

REGISTER NOW & BOOK YOUR  
HOTEL ROOM FOR THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE!



## Message From the Board

Hello from the AMFM Board!!

I am Pam Vosen & I am the new president of the Association of Montana Floodplain Managers. I am the Planning Director & Floodplain Administrator (among other things) for Fergus County, where I have been for the last 14 years. Please save the date for March 11th – 14th for the annual AMFM conference in my hometown, Lewistown. I am looking forward to seeing you all there.

Visit <https://mtfloods.wildapricot.org> for updates on AMFM registration and sponsorship opportunities!



## TECHNICAL BULLETIN UPDATE

In June FEMA announced that a series of updates will be released to NFIP Technical Bulletins (TB). The technical bulletin update is managed by FEMA Building Science, with contributions from FEMA Headquarters, FEMA Regional offices, NFIP State Coordinators, and more. This is an ongoing effort that began in 2015 with plans to complete the release of the updates by late 2019. FEMA Technical Bulletins provide guidance concerning the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) building performance standards as outlined in 44 Code of Federal Regulations Section 60.3. The Bulletins are not regulatory; however, they are intended to provide guidance for complying with the minimum requirements of existing NFIP regulations.

The Bulletins are being modernized and streamlined. Incorporating newer content, presentations, latest I-Codes and ASCE Standards. The Bulletins also will contain best practices and address known issues identified by various stakeholders. The updates will be reflected in TB 0, TB1, TB 4, TB5, and TB 8. For a complete summary of what each Bulletin covers and what updates will be made go to: [www.fema.gov/nfip-technical-bulletins](http://www.fema.gov/nfip-technical-bulletins).

## TRAININGS AND MEETINGS



### AMFM ANNUAL CONFERENCE

March 11-14, 2019 in Lewistown, Montana

20th Annual Association of Montana Floodplain Managers Conference  
Information will be posted at [www.floodplain.mt.gov/training](http://www.floodplain.mt.gov/training).



### MILES CITY FLOOD AWARENESS DAY

Tuesday April 16, 2019

Miles City Flood Awareness Day brings Federal, State and Local representatives to discuss, review and plan for flood events and response. Please contact Samantha Malenovsky Miles City Floodplain Administrator for more details. [smalenovsky@milescity-mt.org](mailto:smalenovsky@milescity-mt.org).

## UPCOMING CFM EXAM DATES



MONDAY MARCH 11, 2018 | 6:00PM-9:00PM

AMFM Annual Conference

Lewistown, MT

<https://mtfloods.wildapricot.org/>

## CONGRATS TO MONTANA'S NEWEST CFMS

Annie Gillispie- Carbon County Floodplain Administrator

Alex Dachs- City of Great Falls

Sandor Hopkins- Cascade County

Anna Weber- Cascade County

Joshua Hillings- Missoula



## PROJECTS! PROJECTS! PROJECTS!

Montana DNRC was fortunate to receive generous funding for FFY 2019 from FEMA for mapping projects. The Mapping Team has been working hard to secure contracts and work with local officials to get these projects started off right.

## NEW PROJECTS FOR FFY 2019

### Madison-Jefferson Phase II

Phase II includes hydraulic modeling and floodplain mapping and eventually lead to new digital FIRMs for Madison Co.

### Jefferson Countywide Modernization

New flood study will be conducted for all the effective floodplain mapping in Jefferson County

### LiDAR Collects

- Jefferson County
- Hill County
- Phillips County
- Valley County
- Blaine County (Milk River Corridor)

## On-going projects

### Beaverhead County

Study of the Beaverhead River, Blacktail Deer Creek and Junction Creek in Lima

### Mineral County

Study throughout Mineral County

### West Gallatin River and Bozeman Creek

Study in Gallatin County and City of Bozeman

### Musselshell Watershed (Lower)

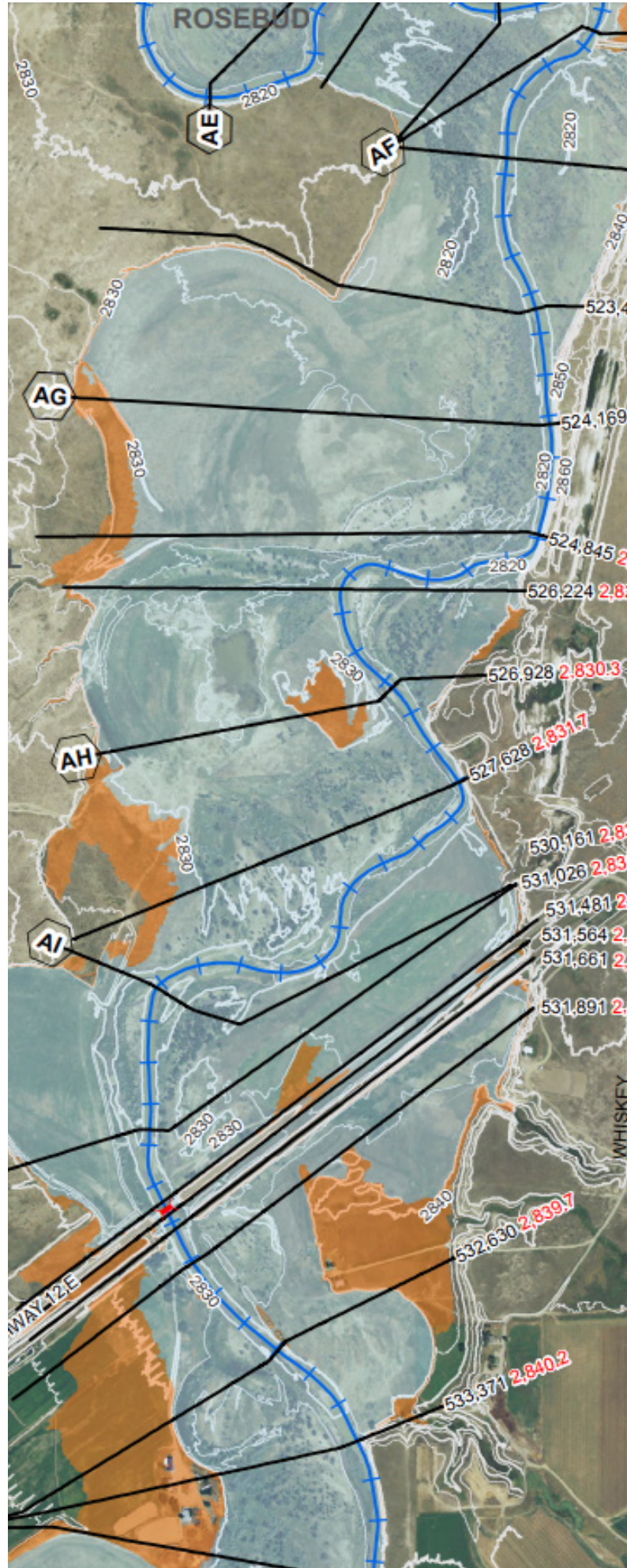
Study in Musselshell, Rosebud, and Petroleum Counties

### Musselshell Watershed (Upper)

Restudy and new mapping in Wheatland and Golden Valley Counties

### Richland County

Physical Map Revision on the Yellowstone River through Richland County







# MONTANA DNRC FLOODPLAIN TRAINING

By Traci Sears

Montana has been fortunate to have a variety of first class training events over the years. 2018 was no exception to this trend. Recovery workshops, legal workshops, resiliency training, insurance information, community rating system training, communication strategies and tips and engineering workshops were just a few of the events that we were fortunate to have here in the state in conjunction with leading industry experts.

The Association of Montana Floodplain Managers annual conference kicked off the training season last year. Candance Lake with ISO brought advanced Community Rating System (CRS) training and how to increase points. The technical workshops included tackling tricky permitting and enforcement issues by Michelle McNamee and Traci Sears. Peter McCarthy and Steve Sando with USGS presented on Peak-Flow Frequency Analysis and Stream Stats, Eric Roberts presentation included Functional Floodway vs. Regulatory Floodway, Chris Nelson with River Design Group provided insight into Restoration projects, and Eric Anderson with WGM discussed streambank solutions as part of the engineering focused technical session workshop. The main part of the conference consisted of outstanding presentations from federal, state, and local partners and stakeholders.

Due to the higher than normal snowpack in 2018, DNRC Floodplain program reached out to both the Mississippi and South Carolina NFIP Coordinators to tap into their experience and expertise in NFIP recovery responsibilities. Both coordinators did not hesitate to provide assistance in the form of webinar training, presentation materials, critical information for property owners, class room and in the field training on Substantial Damage assessments.



This assistance was also made possible through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and coordination with the Montana Disaster and Emergency Service. The EMAC process was groundbreaking in this event. The Association of State Floodplain Managers along with the two states mentioned above advocated FEMA to make changes to the EMAC system to assist with NFIP Recovery efforts. This year NFIP Recovery efforts are now recognized as an approved expense under the EMAC process.

Continued on next page



Left: Maria Cox Lamm (SCDNR) and Traci Sears (MT DNRC).

Right: Maria Cox Lamm (SCDNR) and Todd Klietz( Missoula County FPA).





# MONTANA DNRC FLOODPLAIN TRAINING

Continued from previous page

This past summer, the Montana Floodplain Resource Seminar had an outstanding line-up of presenters. The state floodplain program reached out to Edward Thomas, Esq. to help put together workshops for state and local attorneys and resiliency stakeholders. Mr. Thomas coordinated and presented a legal workshop and supplemental presentations that would complement the event and the topic of resiliency and recovery. Ed and the Natural Hazard Mitigation Association partnered with Joe Rossi, ANFI, CFM and Tim Trautman, PE, CFM for the seminar.



Top: Traci Sears and Lindsay Morgan  
Bottom: Lima 1st St. bridge



Joe Rossi provided an excellent overview on using flood insurance as One Tool of Resiliency and Recovery. Joe is the Chair and Executive Director of the Massachusetts Coastal Coalition and a Flood Specialist with Rogers and Gray. This unique discussion focused on the decline in federal disaster declarations and how communities should be prepared to handle response and recovery efforts without state and federal assistance. His presentation weaved in actual events that affected communities throughout Massachusetts. It also highlighted the importance of and power of flood insurance after a disaster.

Tim Trautman with Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina discussed the great strides his community has taken to help reduce flood risk during the Resiliency and Sustainability Empowering Residents and Local Communities Workshop. Charlotte-Mecklenburg is a recognized Class 4 CRS community, providing up to 30% discount for flood insurance premiums. Tim provided the audience insight to a local community that has been committed to decreasing flood damage over the past twenty years.

The Resource Seminar ended with a Hydraulics Workshop conducted by Eli Gruber, P.E., a Water Resources Engineer with CDM Smith. The workshop focused on HEC-RAS 1D and 2D modeling techniques. Eli provided in-depth review and discussions on several case studies.

The Floodplain Resource Seminar success triggered a request for Edward Thomas, Esq. to present at the Montana County Attorneys Association Conference in Billings. Ed coordinated with the Montana Floodplain Program to co-present at the event in October. The Conference had over 120 participants and generated many questions from those in attendance. The presentation provided an introduction to the floodplain program and legal liability.

This March, AMFM will once again kickoff the 2019 training season. We are looking forward to another outstanding year. The DNRC Floodplain Program and AMFM Board always welcome suggestions for training ideas. Thank you to those who continue to contribute and participate in these outstanding events. We look forward to seeing everyone in Lewistown!





[READ MORE](#)

## ABOUT THE MONTANA HIGHGROUND

We are always accepting articles and ideas for this newsletter! Please email your contributions at anytime to [worby.mcnamee@mt.gov](mailto:worby.mcnamee@mt.gov).

The Highground Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Montana DNRC Floodplain Program. This newsletter & other DNRC Floodplain Program activities are funded, in part, through grants from FEMA.

Persons with disabilities who need an alternative accessible format of this document should contact the DNRC Public Information Officer at 406-444-0465.

### MONTANA DNRC FLOODPLAIN STAFF

1424 9th Ave, PO Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601

Steve Story  
Water Resources Bureau Chief  
406.444.6816 [sestory@mt.gov](mailto:sestory@mt.gov)

Nicole Decker  
Engineering Specialist  
406.444.6656 [ndecker@mt.gov](mailto:ndecker@mt.gov)

Doug Brugger  
Engineering Specialist  
406.444.1300 [douglas.brugger@mt.gov](mailto:douglas.brugger@mt.gov)

Tiffany Lyden  
Outreach Specialist  
406.444.0599 [tlyden@mt.gov](mailto:tlyden@mt.gov)

Worby McNamee  
Floodplain Specialist  
406.444.1343 [worby.mcnamee@mt.gov](mailto:worby.mcnamee@mt.gov)

Traci Sears  
CAP/NFIP Coordinator  
406.444.6654 [tsears@mt.gov](mailto:tsears@mt.gov)

Nadene Wadsworth  
Floodplain Specialist  
406.444.1300 [nadene.wadsworth@mt.gov](mailto:nadene.wadsworth@mt.gov)

### MONTANA DNRC REGIONAL ENGINEERS

Sam Johnson  
Billings Regional Office  
406.247.4423 [sam.johnson@mt.gov](mailto:sam.johnson@mt.gov)

Larry Schock  
Missoula Regional Office  
406.721.4284 [lschock@mt.gov](mailto:lschock@mt.gov)

Position Vacant  
Havre Regional Office  
Contact Marc Pitman

Sterling Sundheim  
Lewistown Regional Office  
406.538.7459 [ssundheim@mt.gov](mailto:ssundheim@mt.gov)

Marc Pitman  
Kalispell Regional Office  
406.752.2713 [mpitman@mt.gov](mailto:mpitman@mt.gov)



[www.floodplain.mt.gov](http://www.floodplain.mt.gov)