

# THE BULLETIN

The Official Newsletter of the FDEM Mitigation Bureau



## Mitigation Fights Back! Hurricane Success Stories

### **Collier County**

Marco Island obtained 60 lift station generators funded under HMGP, which were deployed during Hurricane Ian. These generators helped maintain water and sewer service after experiencing 6 to 9 feet of storm surge. As a result, Marco Island had no interruption of water and sewer services throughout the entirety of the storm.

### **DeSoto County**

Recently, DeSoto County received an HLMP award to retrofit the Emergency Operations Center. The project consisted of installing impact-rated windows and a new roof. This project provided comprehensive wind mitigation and was completed roughly two months before Hurricane Ian made landfall, helping to protect the structure and keep the EOC operational.

### **Sarasota County**

The Department of Health in Sarasota County added a new generator which enabled them to remain fully operational during the storm. Additionally, several traffic lights were retrofit with traffic light cages, which successfully reinforced the lights to minimize damage from direct impact or high winds.

### **Seminole County**

Seminole County currently has an ongoing \$2.13 million HLMP contract providing adequate mitigation to retrofit two middle schools and two high schools into shelters. Due to this contract, Seminole County successfully utilized 3 of the 4 schools as shelters during Hurricane Ian.

### **St. Johns County**

Another successful mitigation story comes from the City of St. Augustine in St. Johns County. Reports show that several mitigated lift stations stayed dry, despite enduring upwards of 20 inches of rain and severe flooding (see pictured). This project was completed using Public Assistance (PA) Mitigation funding.



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# Resilience Coordination Team Tackles Hurricane Impacts

By: Laura Dhuwe



The Florida Statewide Office of Resilience, led by Dr. Wesley Brooks, Ph.D., and joined by state agency resiliency officials, visited several communities impacted by Hurricane Ian at the end of October (pictured left). State agencies represented included Division of Emergency Management (DEM), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Department of Transportation (DOT), and Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), as well as South Florida Water Management District (WMD) and South Florida WMD. The group visited with officials in Manatee, Hardee, Highlands, DeSoto, Sarasota, Charlotte, Lee, and Collier counties.

The purpose of the visit was to learn about the impacts the communities experienced from Hurricane Ian, as well as the local priorities for recovery and resiliency. Additionally, staff were able to learn how their associated state and federal programs may be leveraged to help the impacted areas rebuild more resilient communities. During the meetings, officials discussed potential solutions to challenges in the communities, including ideas for future projects that could be funded through the various state and federal funding programs. Some of the programs highlighted included DEP's Florida Resilient Coastlines Program, DEM's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and DEO's Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery.



*Aerial view of damage to the Sanibel Causeway and surrounding residential homes*

The group met again in early December to conduct similar visits to Hurricane Ian and Nicole impacted communities in central and northeast Florida, including Osceola, Orange, Seminole, Lake, St. Johns, Flagler, Volusia, and Brevard counties. Dr. Brooks intends to continue this work by bringing resiliency experts together to provide knowledge and information and leverage state and federal funding programs to help Florida communities achieve their resiliency goals. By bringing together all these agencies, the team not only has a wide-range of skill sets and knowledge, but also resources and programs to begin to tackle the impacts and build back in a more resilient way.



*Resilience Team meeting with Charlotte County*

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*We are completely focused on trying to be as efficient as possible, trying to bring together all these different programs in a coordinated way, to deliver results for people on the ground who have just suffered from this horrible tragedy. But also to help those communities evolve into the strong, vibrant, resilient communities of the future.*

*- Dr. Brooks during the Hurricane Ian tour of impacted areas*

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# What's the Buzz? A Silver Jackets Update

By: Brigette Carrillo

The Florida Silver Jackets Team has begun working on the FY23 awarded projects! Kick-off meetings were held throughout October for three of the projects, the Astor H&H Study, the Natural and Nature-Based Features projects, and the US-41 Collier Resilience Study. At the kick-off meetings, the team met with each project's key partners and discussed the overall plan for the project. Furthermore, the team is identifying partners and scheduling a kick-off meeting for the Advancing Florida Vulnerability Assessments project.

Another exciting part of starting a new cycle of projects is getting out in the field! A site visit was conducted on November 14 for the US-41 Resilience Study project, where team members met with local partners and visited areas of concern. The team will also conduct a site visit in the Astor community in mid-December to tour the community and see areas that are highly vulnerable to flooding.



Photos from the US-41 Collier Site Visit



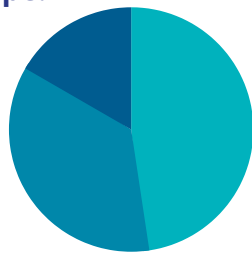
The next SJ Quarterly Meeting is scheduled for December 20, 2022. To view past projects, visit the Florida Team's website [here](#). For questions, please email Brigette Carrillo at [Brigette.Carrillo@em.myflorida.com](mailto:Brigette.Carrillo@em.myflorida.com).

## BRIC FY22

**Total # of Subapplications Received: 51**

**Top 3 subapplications by type:**

- Drainage (21)
- Utility Mitigation (15)
- Generators (7)



**Total project subapplication funding:**

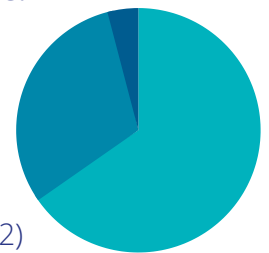
**\$ 652,437,140**

## FMA FY22

**Total # of Subapplications Received: 36**

**Top 3 subapplications by type:**

- Elevation (32)
- Mit. Reconstruction (2)
- Acquisition & Acquisition/Demolition (2)



**Total project subapplication funding:**

**\$ 57,074,740**

*\*2 additional subapplications received did not specify FMA or BRIC*

## New Statewide Substantial Damage Plan

By: Michael Burchette

As we have now seen the devastation of Ian and Nicole, the State Floodplain Management Office is proud to begin work on a Statewide Substantial Damage Plan. According to FEMA, substantial damage refers to a structure in a Special Flood Hazard Area, or floodplain, for which the total cost of repairs is 50 percent or more of the structure's market value before the disaster occurred.

Once it is adopted and enforced, the plan will show communities how to earn Community Rating System points. This plan will increase awareness of flood risk areas, identify vulnerable structures and neighborhoods, and ensure that there is a strategy in place for making damage determinations and enforcing the substantial damage requirements when a flood occurs. In addition, the plan fosters communication among departments, residents, and elected officials, and helps develop long-term actions to mitigate properties and reduce future losses.

The Mitigation Floodplain staff will continue efforts in substantial damage trainings, public awareness, preparation for the necessary post-flood activities, and investigation of mitigation options. If a flood does occur, the effort will be paid back many times over in efficiency by minimizing future damage and building community resiliency. We can't wait to help further Florida's ever-growing flood management needs.



*Substantial damage from Hurricanes Ian and Nicole to homes in Wilbur-By-The-Sea, Volusia County*

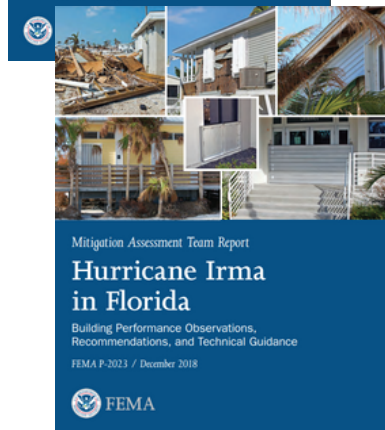
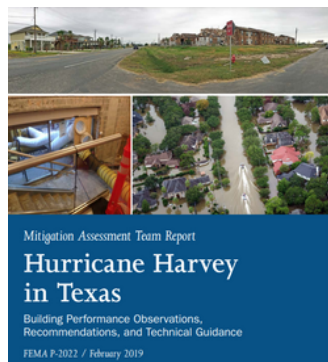
## FEMA's Mitigation Assessment Team Program

By: Angie Speir

For more than 30 years, the Mitigation Assessment Team (MAT) Program has enabled FEMA to assemble and quickly deploy teams of investigators. These investigators evaluate the performance of buildings and related infrastructure in response to the effects of all hazards. The teams conduct field investigations at disaster sites, working closely with local and state officials to develop recommendations for improvements in building design and construction, code development and enforcement, and mitigation activities that lead to greater resistance to hazard events. FEMA publishes the observations and recommendations of a Mitigation Assessment Team in reports. The award-winning MAT Program, operated by a consulting engineering firm under contract to FEMA, has been covered by the national media and featured in numerous technical and professional journals.

The Building Science Disaster Support (BSDS) Program funds the deployment of a Pre-MAT team, which evaluates building performance, identifies specific damage trends and/or sites of interest, and makes recommendations for work that can be/needs to be performed by the MAT. The Pre-MAT visited a number of affected locations following Hurricane Ian including Fort Myers Beach, Bonita Beach, Vanderbilt Beach, Naples, Bonita Springs, Estero, Orlando, and Astor. Some of the potential steps the MAT can take through their investigations are developing disaster-specific recovery advisories, supporting local and state land use and code changes, and developing recommendations to improve model building codes including consensus design standards and the Florida Building Code as necessary.

Click on the following links to learn more about the [Mitigation Assessment Team](#) and [Building Science Support Programs](#).

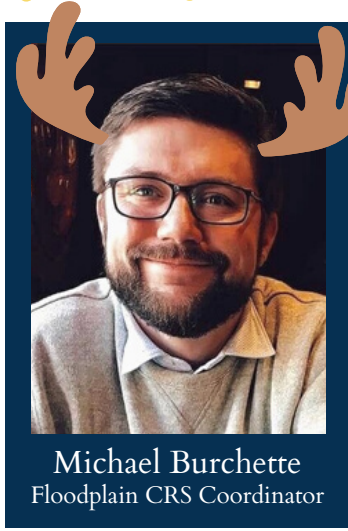


# New Employee Spotlight

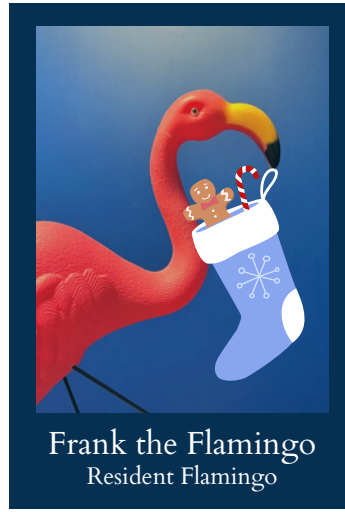
If you see these new faces in the halls, help us welcome our new Mitigation staff to the team!



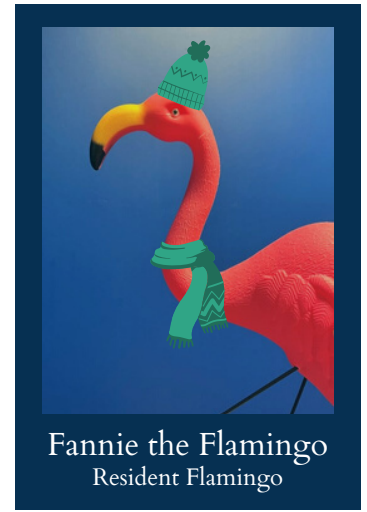
Angie Speir  
Mitigation Planner



Michael Burchette  
Floodplain CRS Coordinator



Frank the Flamingo  
Resident Flamingo



Fannie the Flamingo  
Resident Flamingo

## Mitigators Respond

By: Jared Jaworski

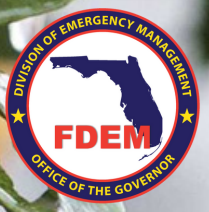
In response to Hurricane Ian, mitigation staff were deployed to the Joint Field Office (JFO) in Brandon, FL. Whenever a state has a major disaster declaration, FEMA is brought in to assist. Their presence signals an increase in funding assistance, as well as additional staff to help the state manage the response and recovery efforts. The JFO is established so that both the state and federal government can coordinate these efforts in a shared space. While mitigation is not typically thought of as something that comes into play early in the disaster cycle, FDEM Mitigation set an early presence to see how mitigation can address the needs of the communities.

A number of our mitigation staff were able to visit some of the impacted communities in Fort Myers Beach, Cape Coral, and Punta Gorda. This was done as part of the regular site visits done to assess completed mitigation projects funded by the grant programs the Bureau administers. The experience was both inspiring and sobering. On one hand, it's great to be able to see the fruits of many hands coming together to improve someone's home, or to keep vital infrastructure up and running during a storm. On the other, you often see the devastation in those impacted communities and the amount of work still left to be done to help protect them from being devastated again.

While it was hard to see the destruction left in the wake of Hurricane Ian, it only further cements our resolve to continue the work that we are doing in and around Florida. One of the great benefits of being able to work at any JFO, is that you are surrounded by like-minded individuals dedicated to a singular cause of helping rebuild communities stronger than they were before.



FDEM Mitigation Team at the JFO  
(Left to right) Conn Cole, Jared Jaworski, Al Bishop, Luz Bossanyi, Evan Jenkins, Mishka Bailey-Griffiths, Kathleen Marshall, Angela Collins



# My Safe FL Home: Open for Business

By: Kristin Lentz

The My Safe Florida Home Program is now open and accepting applications for free hurricane home inspections! The program was recently enacted by the Florida Legislature to help single-family homeowners protect their homes against hurricanes and save money doing it. Owners of any site-built, single-family residential Florida property may apply for a free home hurricane inspection. The owner will receive an inspection report and recommended improvements. Eligible applicants may then apply for program grant money for home strengthening improvements.

If eligible, grant money is available for a number of roof, structure, and opening improvements, such as above code roof upgrade, bracing gable ends, window and garage door upgrades, reinforcing connections, and more. The program was created to strengthen Florida homes against hurricanes and save Florida homeowners money.

- You may be eligible to apply for \$2 in grant money for every \$1 spent on improvements
- No state sales tax (6%) on impact-resistant doors, garage doors, and windows through 6/30/24
- Potentially lower your home insurance premiums

For more information about eligible activities and grant applicants, please visit the website at [www.MySafeFLHome.com](http://www.MySafeFLHome.com). Homeowners can register using the My Safe Florida Home Participant Portal.



## Happy Holidays from the Mitigation Bureau! WHAT'S ON YOUR MITIGATION WISH LIST?

Evaluate flood insurance coverage

Replace single pane windows with impact resistant ones

Reinforce the garage door

Install hurricane shutters

Weatherize openings, like windows and doors

Seal the roof and install tie downs

Elevate the outlets, utilities, or even the entire structure





## SHMP Road Tour

In September, the Mitigation Planning Unit hit the road to get input from stakeholders for the 2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan update. The team held 3 stakeholder workshops in Tallahassee, Orlando, and Palm Beach County. Over the three workshops, we received input from 20 local governments, 5 state agencies, 3 Water Management Districts, 3 Universities, and 1 Regional Planning Council.



*Palm Beach Workshop at PBC EOC*

Each workshop was a combination of informative presentation and activity participation. The Planning Unit gave a progress update on the SHMP website, gave a demo of the progress, and solicited feedback on various components of the SHMP. Participants were then asked to work in small groups to brainstorm action items for the SHMP Mitigation Action Plan. This valuable input will make sure the SHMP is comprehensive and representative of many voices.

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*I think the website is very well set up and clean, the maps are super useful, and I like the access to different components it gives. I would like to see a page that links to all available funding the state, both at DEM and beyond!*  
”  
- Tallahassee Workshop Participant

All feedback was cataloged and will be considered when finalizing the 2023 SHMP website. Participants gave a lot of great feedback and had some awesome ideas on how to make the SHMP more useful for Florida's stakeholders and the public!



*Orlando Workshop at SLRC*



*Tallahassee Workshop at FDEM*

## The Bureau of Mitigation

Mitigation is an integral part of the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM). Mitigation actions reduce or eliminate the loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Due to Florida's weather, geography and miles of coastline, the state is highly vulnerable to disasters. Disasters can be very costly to both the citizens and government.

Under the direction of Division Director Kevin Guthrie and State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Laura Dhuwe, the Bureau of Mitigation administers several federal mitigation grant programs including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program. The Bureau also administers a state funded mitigation program called the Hurricane Loss Mitigation Program.

If you would like to know more about mitigation in Florida, visit [www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation](http://www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation).

### Need More Information?

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