



Wetlands Watch Training: Leveraging Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) Resources to join the Community Rating System (CRS)

In prior fiscal years, Wetlands Watch staff had **produced multiple Community Rating System (CRS) training videos** that sought to introduce new local government staff to the program, as well as additional activity-specific training for the most common activity series, public outreach and engagement, including the Program for Public Information, which acts as a multiplier for many other activities, and stormwater management. These courses are streamed via private YouTube links and a short learning exam can secure continuing education credits for Certified Floodplain Managers (CFMs). Substantial time and resources were invested into developing training, and Wetlands Watch staff anticipated these resources to be well-utilized, especially because CRS Workgroup members provided ample feedback, requesting these specific topics and formats for asynchronous use, through discussions at meetings and surveys conducted by Wetlands Watch staff.

However, there has been very **low subscription rates** for the existing Community Rating System (CRS) video training resources developed. Because of this lack of interest in online, pre-recorded CRS training, Wetlands Watch shifted its strategy to more directly engage with localities. Wetlands Watch conducted meetings one-on-one with locality staff interested in pursuing the CRS Program, and offering support to bridge the gap on staff capacity by encouraging localities to pursue funding from Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) to allow for the cost of staff time and floodplain management planning. During these discussions with locality staff, Wetlands Watch recognized a **need for more interactive and accessible training formats for the CFPF** to bolster the outreach and engagement provided by DCR's Floodplain Management team. Wetlands Watch staff hosted a virtual training session in September focused on guiding localities in leveraging Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) resources. This initiative was designed to address capacity gaps and support local governments in building the expertise necessary to enhance flood resilience and pursue CRS participation. The recording of this training is accessible on [Wetlands Watch's YouTube channel](https://youtu.be/Q5BklcHi77Y). The virtual training succeeded in:

- Promoting awareness of CFPF resources,
- Encouraging localities to apply for CFPF funding to support critical capacity-building efforts.
- Emphasizing the benefits of CRS participation, including premium reductions for residents and improved flood risk management, and
- Providing practical guidance on utilizing CFPF resources to pursue strategic planning for flood resilience.

Link to training: <https://youtu.be/Q5BklcHi77Y>



This project, Task 91.03, was funded by the Virginia Coastal Program at the Department of Environmental Quality through FY23 Grant # NA23NOS4190255 of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended.

