

Speaker Bios

KEYNOTE SPEAKER – Robert E. Criss, PhD

Robert E. Criss is Professor Emeritus of Earth and Planetary Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis. Born in Akron Ohio, he earned his BS (73) in Geology at Case, then his MS (74) and PhD (81) in Geochemistry at Caltech. For the next six years he was an isotope geologist with the United States Geological Survey, then for six years was Professor of Geology at UC Davis. He is author of *Principles of Stable Isotope Distribution* (Oxford University Press, 1999) and co-editor of several books, including *Observational Hydrology*. His published papers encompass many disciplines and have appeared in >50 different scientific journals, three government series and several book chapters. He has conducted field and geochemical work in many different geologic environments in North America, including Cordilleran batholiths, volcanic plateaus, metamorphic zones, gold-silver districts, landslide areas, karst and cave regions, and alluvial aquifers and rivers. Another focus is on the development of novel mathematical formulae that explain large data sets, that recently address flood statistics, hydrographs, galactic spin, Earth's shape and gravity field, heat flow, and theoretical physics. Criss applies his knowledge of Missouri hydrogeology to local environmental problems, by testifying at public hearings on flooding, floodplain development, landfill problems, and groundwater contamination, and by authoring op-eds that have appeared in several newspapers. In his long career as a professor he has taught several classes including Geochemistry, Hydrology, Stable Isotope Geochemistry, Chemical Thermodynamics, Geochronology, and Environmental Potamology. Criss was the 2017 recipient of the Lewis C. Green Environmental Service Award of the Great Rivers Environmental Law Center.

Dane Bailey

Mr. Bailey is the Senior CTP Lead at FEMA Region 7. He served as the CTP Coordinator for the State of Kansas for 5 years prior to joining FEMA. His experience includes the development of FIRMs and interacting with communities to analyze and review flood risk.

Lori Blatter, BSBA, CFM

Lori Blatter, a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) and the Floodplain Management Officer for the State of Missouri, has over 5 years of experience in public service and over 30 years in business management. She served as Training Coordinator for the Missouri Emergency Response Commission (MERC) at the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) in Jefferson City where she supervised and coordinated twelve (12) Hazardous Materials Instructors across the State of Missouri. These instructors delivered hazardous materials instruction and skills testing to first responders across the State prior to state certification. She interacted with the public as well as state and local government officials. In addition, Lori also managed the contracts and scheduling of other hazardous material courses throughout the state for several departments at SEMA and the Division of Health and Human Services.

Lori has served in a multitude of areas during her 5 years at the State Emergency Management Agency including Training and Exercise and Emergency Human Services. In the spring of 2017, just prior to Disaster Declaration 4317, she gained the title of Missouri State Floodplain Management Officer.

Lori has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a degree in Management. In addition, Lori's professional credentials include supporting multiple national organizations during her career. She served as Missouri's Training Coordinator for the Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response (TRANSCAER®) organization, as well as holding positions within several of the National Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) committees. Lori also earned her Instructor I and Operations Level Certifications, issued by the Missouri Division of Fire Safety.

Christine Blonn

As a marketing professional for over 10 years, Christine Blonn's experience includes working for the Arts and Education Council of Greater St. Louis as a marketing consultant and for Chicago's primary Public Broadcasting Station, WTTW, as a marketing project manager. Christine has managed the creation, development, production, and analysis of direct, promotional and digital marketing campaigns including social media. Christine also has prior experience managing multiple marketing communication channels for brands such as Old Spice, Secret, Olay and Noxzema.

Phil Blonn, PE, CFM

As a Project Manager and Water Resources Engineer, Mr. Blonn has delivered a wide variety of projects involving hydraulics, hydrology, watershed planning, flood control, and storm water management. This work has included projects such as major combined sewer overflow control programs, airport, railroad, highway, and industrial facility design including site civil and drainage design. Mr. Blonn has extensive experience with hydrologic and hydraulic models including XP-SWMM, EPA-SWMM, PC-SWMM, HEC-RAS, HEC-HMS, and INFOWORKS.

Allen Chestnut, PE, CFM

A Mr. Chestnut is a registered Professional Engineer (P.E.) in Kansas since 2015, as well as a Certified Floodplain Manager (C.F.M.). He has worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Kansas City since 2007, receiving his Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering in 2009 (Kansas State University), and Master's Degree in 2015 (Colorado State University).

Mr. Chestnut's projects normally include hydrologic and hydraulic engineering work. Work elements include:

- Hydrologic and Hydraulic Modeling and Analysis
- Analysis of Flood Risk Management Solutions
- Inundation Mapping
- Hydrology and Hydraulics for Dam/Levee Design and Risk Assessment

Megan Daubenmier, EIT

As a Water Resources EIT, Ms. Daubenmier is involved in a variety of projects and supports hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, stormwater management, and environmental remediation efforts. Ms. Daubenmier also studied Spanish in school and enjoys supporting efforts with translation needs.

Eric Dove, PE

Mr. Dove has Bachelor and Master Degrees in Civil Engineer from the University of Nebraska and is a Sr. Water Resources Project Manager with HDR in Springfield, Missouri. He has 25 years of expertise that includes a wide range of water resources projects such as levees, dams, natural channel design, culverts, storm sewers, trails, boat ramps, floodplain modeling and green infrastructure projects. Aesthetics and public recreation amenities are a vital component of many of Mr. Dove's projects in order to deliver diverse multi-purpose benefits to the community. Mr. Dove is also on the board of directors of the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks which is a non-profit committed to protecting regional water quality. He is a professional engineer registered in Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma.

Chris Dunnaway, PE

Chris graduated in 2006 from the University of Missouri-Rolla with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. After graduating he was hired by Olsson Associates, where he worked for nearly seven years on a variety of land development and water resource projects. In 2013 he began working for the City of Springfield Public Works Department where he managed stormwater capital improvement projects. In 2015 Chris was promoted into his current position of Principal Stormwater Engineer where he oversees the Stormwater Services Division at the City. Prior to attending UMR, Chris served two years in the U.S. Army in the field artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. While attending school Chris continued to serve in the Missouri Army National Guard and was deployed to Tikrit, Iraq in 2003-2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Josiah Holst, PE, CFM

Josiah Holst serves as a Project Manager for HR Green in the Water Resources Practice of the Water Business Line. Throughout his 13-year career, Josiah has been heavily involved in the planning, design, and management of over 100 stormwater projects, including stream restoration, green and grey infrastructure design, and flood mitigation. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Engineering from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2005. Josiah is licensed as a Professional Engineer in the state of Missouri and is a Certified Floodplain Manager.

Elise Ibendahl, PE, CFM, ENV SP

Elise Ibendahl is the Jacobs Engineering US North Regional Water Resources Solutions Leader. She is a licensed engineer in the State of Missouri, Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) and Envision Sustainability Professional (ENV SP) and has over 21 years of water resources experience. She is a respected leader in the engineering community, currently serving as past-chair of the St. Louis Chapter of EWRI, a member of ASCE's National Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, and as Trustee for the ASFPM Foundation Board. Ms. Ibendahl often serves as a senior technical resource for the hydrology and hydraulic (H&H) components of Jacobs projects, specializing in urban flood analysis and mitigation design and serves as a project manager for FEMA Public Assistance Technical Assistance Contractor teams. She is experienced in hydrologic and hydraulic modeling in a variety of platforms for sewers and open channels and has expertise in both 1D and 2D modeling. She has performed design and analysis for projects locally and around the United States containing aspects of drainage and stormwater management studies, including stream restoration, flood control study and design, urban stormwater master planning, green infrastructure solutions, sediment transport, and floodplain permitting.

Chad Johnson, PE

Chad graduated in 1997 with a BS in Civil Engineering from Brigham Young University, and he graduated in 2000 with an MS in Civil Engineering from the University of Kansas. He is a Senior Engineer with Olsson and has over 19 years of experience in floodplain and stormwater management, stream and dam design, and a variety of geotechnical and stormwater management projects. He is involved in projects from initial inception to final construction and ongoing maintenance, including stormwater planning, river or system modeling, report preparation, design and construction document preparation, and construction engineering. He also provides on-call consulting to a number of local communities in the Kansas City area, and he has worked on everything from nuisance flow across a sidewalk to flooding along the Missouri River. He is currently leading projects for design and permitting of dams and reservoirs, urban stormwater rehabilitation, urban stream flood reduction, and asset management and regulatory compliance for municipalities.

Karen McHugh, BA, CFM

Karen McHugh, a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) and the Missouri State National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Coordinator, has over 20 years of experience in public service. She served as Chief County Assessment Officer in Hancock County, Illinois, where she was also the County Floodplain Administrator. She supervised three employees and interacted with the public as well as state and local government officials. She was responsible for issuing floodplain development permits, calculating substantial damage/substantial improvement estimates, and maintaining pertinent detailed documentation. She planned, organized, and carried out all floodplain management activities during the historic 1993 flooding event.

Karen moved to Jefferson City, Missouri in 2002. She utilized the extensive property management skills she had acquired as Chief County Assessment Officer in Illinois in positions in both the private and public sectors. In the fall of 2007 she was asked by the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) to apply her floodplain management skills on Missouri's behalf as the agency's Floodplain Management Officer, a position she held for 9-years. In the fall of 2016 she was promoted to SEMA's Floodplain Management Section Manager and State NFIP Coordinator.

Karen has a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration with a degree in Management. In addition, Karen's professional credentials include serving on the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) Board of Directors as Treasurer and Secretary.

Chad Mason, PE

Chad Mason is a Project Manager in HR Green's St. Louis area office. He has worked on a wide variety of civil & environmental engineering and planning projects touching the fields of flood control, stormwater management, stream restoration, habitat conservation, potable water and wastewater. Chad has an engaging communication style and a talent for making complex ideas easy for the average person to understand. He excels at leading effective, happy and high-performing teams that finish their projects on-time and have fun in the process. Outside the office, Chad has authored three critically acclaimed books and hundreds of magazine and journal articles. He has also made presentations to diverse audiences at council meetings, public hearings, seminars and conferences on a wide range of subjects, both within and outside the field of engineering.

Melissa Mitchell, CFM

Melissa Mitchell is an ISO/CRS Specialist for FEMA's Community Rating System. Covering six states within three FEMA Regions; Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, and Nebraska. Within the six states, she manages 85+ CRS communities. She joined the ISO team in November 2014. Mrs. Mitchell has an AGS, VCE in Construction Management and is a Certified Floodplain Manager. Mrs. Mitchell served two terms as the Vice-Chairman for the Kansas Association for Floodplain Management and founded the MOKAN CRS Users Group in 2012. Originally from Southern California, she now calls Kansas City, Kansas home.

Rhonda Montgomery

Rhonda Montgomery is the Deputy Flood Insurance Advocate at the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration and has been in this position since October 2016. Prior to the Deputy Flood Insurance Advocate, Rhonda was on detail to the Executive Office of the President's Council on Environmental Quality as the Deputy Associate Director for Flood Preparedness. Rhonda lead CEQ's efforts for providing assistance to agencies as agencies implement EO11988 as amended and the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard.

Previously Rhonda served as the Executive Officer for the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration at FEMA. In that capacity Rhonda assisted FIMA leadership in its overall risk reduction goals. Prior to her Executive Officer work at FIMA, Rhonda was a member of the Floodplain Management Branch; the Floodplain Management Branch provides tools and resources to help communities navigate NFIP requirements and implement higher standards of floodplain management. Ms. Montgomery has held her Certified Floodplain Manager designation since 2000 and received her MPA from the University of Kansas.

Stephen Noe

Mr. Noe is currently the Program Manager for FEMA Related Services and Project Manager for several strategic flood control projects. He is a 1984 graduate of the University of Kentucky with a B.S. Agricultural Engineering. He continued his education with an additional 27 hours of advanced hydrology, hydraulics and sediment transport before moving to Florida in 1986. After 4 years of watershed studies in Florida, he moved back to Kentucky and has been with Wood and predecessors for 32 years. Mr. Noe has a wide range of water resource, hydraulic design and regulatory compliance experience. He has led the company into many programs including NPDES Phase I and II permits, statewide bridge scour programs (5 states over 13,000 transportation crossings), FEMA Map Modernization and Risk MAP programs (18 states, over 300,000 miles of stream models, and 1200 public meetings), as well as the FEMA Levee Certification program (over 25 systems nationally). He manages the development of the automated tools for the analysis and production of hydrology, hydraulics, mapping and certification deliverables. These tools are the backbone of Wood's operation and a reflection of the employee's entrepreneurial spirit. The new trends are in large 2D closed system and riverine modeling coupled with model result driven raster based risk analytics as decision makers summarize his current adventures. He was born in rural Western Kentucky on a grain and tobacco farm and continues to tobacco and watermelon farm on the weekends.

Neil Parks, PE, CFM

Mr. Parks has a Bachelor Degree in Civil Engineer from the University of Kansas and is a Water Resources Engineer and Certified Floodplain Manager with HDR in Springfield MO. He has over five years' experience in stormwater management including a variety of water resources projects including urban drainage, stream stabilization, detention, stormwater BMPs, floodplain mapping, and no-rise analysis' for a variety of private and public entities. Modeling experience includes 1D and 2D HEC-RAS, PCSWMM, Storm and Sanitary Analysis, HEC-HMS, and HEC-1.

Chris Parsons

Chris Parsons has 15 years of experience working with FEMA and the National Flood Insurance Program with both the Write Your Own Program and the NFIP Direct/Special Direct Facility. He has a Master's of Business Administration with undergraduate degrees in Communication and Spanish. He also served as a linguist in the Air Force and is a graduate of the Defense Language Institute.

Charles Patterson, PhD, PE, CFM

Dr. Patterson is Vice President and the Hydro Division Manager of Allgeier, Martin and Associates, Inc., Rolla, Missouri. He has 30 years of experience in hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, analysis, and design and is a current MfSMA board member. He is a member of the FEMA Scientific Resolution Panel (SRP) cadre of experts and was one of five experts who served on the first Panel.

Brian Rast, PE, CFM

Mr. Rast has worked in hydrology and hydraulics since 1993. He received a BS in Civil Engineering with a secondary major in environmental science from Kansas State University in 1994. He also earned his MS in Engineering Management from the University of Kansas in 2004.

Mr. Rast has been a planner and project manager in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City District, Planning Branch, since 2004. He has lead flood infrastructure, including levees. He lead several Emergency Streambank Protection projects to full construction. Since 2009, Mr. Rast has been the Lead Silver Jackets Coordinator in Kansas and Missouri. On August 21, 2012, the Kansas team won the 2011 State Team of the Year. He completed over ten FPMS Interagency Nonstructural projects, including several of the pilot projects. He worked directly for USACE Institute for Water Resources for two years addressing risk communication for national levee projects. Repeating project elements are flood forecast inundation maps (an interagency flood warning tool), emergency action plans, and flood management planning. He also worked closely with state hazard mitigation teams on improving efficiencies on strategic flood mitigation efforts. He was a co-founder of the Region VII Federal Partners Mitigation Work-group.

He is a registered Professional Engineer (PE) in Kansas since 1999, as well as a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) and a Project Management Professional (PMP).

Mr. Rast's projects increase awareness and enable tools for communities to continue work: Work elements include:

- risk analysis
- nonstructural and structural measures
- comprehensive floodplain management planning
- public outreach
- flood forecast inundation maps
- flood warning systems
- emergency action plans

George Riedel, CFM

George is currently working for the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) Foundation as the Donor Coordinator. He previously worked for Michael Baker International until December 2017. While at Baker, he oversaw Emergency Management, Floodplain Management, and Mitigation practice.

George retired from the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) in Missouri in December 2005, at which time he became the Deputy Executive Director at ASFPM. In this role he was able to build upon his knowledge and experience from SEMA to expand his broad-reaching and national network with FEMA National and FEMA Regions. George has a BS in Business Administration and Economics and is a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM).

Paul Rydlund Jr, PLS, CFM

Paul is the section chief over the Surface Water Hydraulics and Modeling Group for the USGS Central Midwest Water Science Center. In addition, he currently serves as an acting section chief over the Fluvial Mechanics and Geomorphology Group. Paul received consecutive bachelor's degrees in Business and Geological Engineering with a subsequent Master's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Missouri at Rolla. He has a background specializing hydrology, hydraulics, and geodetic surveying and has authored many publications in these disciplines.

Sarah Simon, PE

Ms. Sarah Simon is a Project Manager and Hydro Design Engineer with Allgeier, Martin and Associates, in Kansas City, Missouri. Sarah has over 15 years' experience in hydrologic and hydraulic analysis and design, and stormwater permit compliance. She has performed extensive work in hydrologic analysis of watersheds, and detailed hydraulic analysis of associated streams and stormwater structures. Design projects have included open channels, enclosed systems, culvert, bridges, dams, water quality, detention basins, and other structures. Sarah has extensive experience in floodplain mapping and has prepared dozens of FEMA Letters of Map Revision. Ms. Simon regularly provides solutions for water quality, streambank stabilization, and flood mitigation for both private and municipal clients. Her stormwater permitting experience includes Corps of Engineers 404 permits, NPDES permits, Land Disturbance, and MS4 compliance activities.

Todd C. Tucker, AICP

Todd Tucker is a Natural Hazard Program Specialist / Floodplain Management Crew Lead with FEMA Region VII, Kansas City. His professional experience includes eight years with FEMA focused on Floodplain Management, Substantial Damage determinations, and Hazard Mitigation Planning; and 23 years as a professional Land Use Planner specializing in current planning and hazard mitigation in various cities and counties west of the mighty Mississippi, the US Forest Service in the southwest, and tribal government in the Puget Sound. Todd recently returned from deployment to North Carolina assessing local governments efficacy in implementing Substantial Damage Determinations.

Josh Yarrow, PE, CFM

Josh Yarrow has worked as a water resources engineer for Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc. since receiving his BS in Civil Engineering from Kansas State University in 2008. He is a registered Professional Engineer (PE) and Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM). Josh has managed the hydrology and hydraulic phases of various floodplain mapping projects in Kansas and Missouri. Josh has applied his experience to a wide range of water resources disciplines including hydrologic and hydraulic modeling and mapping, dam breach, dam assessments and levee certification.