

# CONNECT 4

DECEMBER 2015

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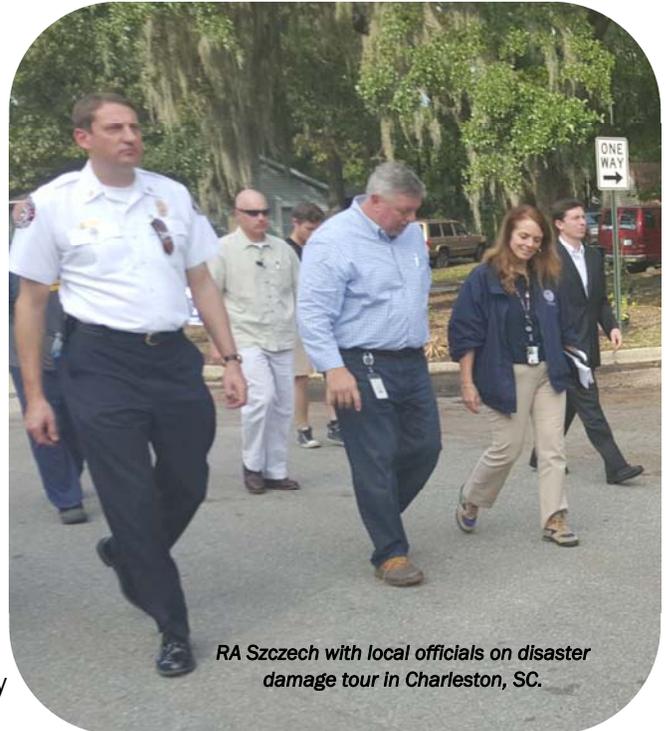
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## SZCZECH IT OUT

### We are all Emergency Managers

**I** want to take a moment to thank each of you for your hard work and dedication in 2015.

The recent Region IV deployments to North and South Carolina were a good opportunity to show our work as emergency managers. Staff from the National Preparedness, Mitigation and Grants divisions who often do not deploy to disasters served in RISM positions in the RRCC or in IM positions on the ground working to support response and recovery. Being ready to handle these assignments would not have been possible if we weren't all emergency managers.



*RA Szczech with local officials on disaster damage tour in Charleston, SC.*

“Every Employee is an Emergency Manager” defines our FEMA workforce. As prepared emergency managers, we are better able to meet the needs of survivors, both individuals and communities. For us here in Region IV, being an emergency manager means:

- Knowing your specific job during disasters and having an FQS title;
- Having operational equipment and all FEMA passwords up-to-date;
- Being ready to deploy on short notice;
- Being able to quickly transition steady-state projects to co-workers;
- Completing required training;
- Making sure your loved ones, pets and personal affairs will be okay while you're away from home.

Administrator Fugate has challenged each of us to be survivor-centric, expeditionary, ready to handle catastrophic disasters, work to reduce disaster risk, and find new ways to strengthen FEMA's organizational foundation.

Those are our goals and I know they are ones we will meet— together as a team— should El Niño or other events challenge Region IV. We have done well this year, but there is work to do. You are a part of the team that will make it happen and I look forward to your contributions to our success in 2016.



## JEFFREY BREWER'S DEPLOYMENT SHOWS EVERY EMPLOYEE IS AN EMERGENCY MANAGER

**W**hen Jeffrey Brewer, a Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program Specialist in the FEMA Region IV Mitigation Division, was asked to deploy as a future planning specialist in support of DR-4241-SC, he thought that it would be both the opportunity of a lifetime and a great challenge. During RRCC activations, his collateral duty is planning specialist, and following the most recent RRCC activation, Planning Section Chief Jim Trone approached him about joining the future planning team in SC.

Although excited for the challenge, he did have some reservations. "I had only deployed to a disaster as a Hazard Mitigation Branch Director and I began thinking to myself, "What have I gotten myself into this time? How am I going to do this?" said Jeffrey. "I quickly changed my mindset and said to myself "Ok...we got this...Don't embarrass the family!"

When the planning team arrived at the EOC in Columbia, they hit the ground running. "At the Tactics meeting, we got our first orders. Working as a team under Jim's direction, we developed the Advance Operations Plans (7-day outlook) and the Strategic Plan (6-month target) for the JFO," said Jeffrey. Jeffrey's mitigation knowledge came in handy, as he was assigned to compile inputs from the Mitigation and EHP sections for both the Advance Operations plans and the Strategic Plan. Jeffrey was their POC, and answered any questions they had while developing the inputs to the plans. Jeffrey teamed with Noriko Boston to analyze and categorize inputs, and after Jim's review, provided reports to the Planning and Operations Section Chiefs.

Jeffrey's experience in working in the RRCC and participating in trainings on "Stand Down for Training Days" prepared him well for the deployment as a future planning specialist. Not only did he meet the



Jeffrey Brewer



South Carolina EOC

planning team during deployments and trainings, but those opportunities helped him develop working relationships. "Actually, by the time we made it to the JFO, it was as if we had been working together for years," Jeffrey offered.

Embracing his role as an Emergency Manager, Jeffrey called the deployment to DR-4241-SC to support Planning, a great challenge and wonderful experience!

## IMAT TEAMS SUPPORT REGIONAL FLOOD RELIEF EFFORTS

**A**s early October brought heavy rains and life-threatening floods to South Carolina, Region IV deployed its IMATs, one of many tools to provide help and hope to disaster survivors and communities living throughout the Palmetto State.

“Our state partners were in full response mode, and to know that we were helping to ease their burden made all the difference,” said Glen Sachtleben, IMAT 1 Acting Team Lead. “We served as liaisons in the state Emergency Operations Center, helped to move resources like bottled water, meals and blankets to the ISB, assisted with communications planning and helped to establish the Joint Field Office.”

According to IMAT 2 Team Lead Fred Choi, one of the biggest advantages for the teams was that it was a great learning opportunity, giving members the added skills and confidence needed for future deployments. “We faced many challenges and ever-changing conditions working in the field,” said Choi. “Whether running the branch office, finding the best locations for DRCs, or quickly adjusting our DSA patterns, we always found creative ways of completing the mission and those experiences will serve us well in the future.”

Key to IMAT readiness will be the process of analyzing the South Carolina disaster and discussing ways of improving the various response capabilities that the IMAT brings to an incident. “We don’t know where or when disaster will strike, but we want to be ready when it does,” said Sachtleben. “Our goal is always to enhance our knowledge base, to sharpen our skills and to ensure that we are ready for the next event.”



MEMBERS OF IMAT 2

## TOYS FOR TOTS—FILL THE BOX!



**T**his year we continue the tradition of supporting the US Marine Corps’ Toys for Tots collection drive for needy children. The local U.S. Marine Recruiting Service spearheads the effort here in Atlanta. Thank you to **Russ Weinwurm** for volunteering to head up this effort for us again this year!

Region IV’s goal this year is to collect at least **250** toys. The toys donated by FEMA Region IV employees will be given to the Atlanta Toys for Tots Center. All donated toys should be new and unwrapped. Our target ages are 2-5 years old and elementary school age children. Please remember that all donations and participation are voluntary.

Collection points are on the first floor in the Rutgers Building near the elevators as well as locations in the Hollins and Duke Buildings. Please place your donations in the collection boxes by **COB December 17**. We will be delivering them to the Atlanta Toys for Tots warehouse and this will give the Marines time to transport the toys to their distribution points.



Collection Team: David Bicanovsky, Russ Weinwurm, Blondell Allen, Casey Rozemond

## FEMA REGION IV EMPLOYEES SUPPORT SAIPAN OPERATIONS

**B**ond Luddeke and Paul Williams, Region IV Response Division employees, deployed to Saipan to support response operations just days after Category 3 Typhoon Soudelor made a direct hit on the island on August 2. Typhoon Soudelor, knocked out power, disrupted water supplies, and destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses across Saipan, the largest island of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.

Bond was manager of the staging area operations and tackled many transportation challenges due to the island's limited resources and remote location. He served for 28 days as the Staging Area Group Supervisor where he spearheaded ground transport, supply, receiving life sustaining air and sea shipments of meals, water, generators, tents, and cots for distribution.

Paul served 18 days as the Air/Sea Mission Group Supervisor where he coordinated resources and personnel movements to Saipan from the U.S. mainland, Hawaii, and Guam.

Generators and power poles were some of the highest priorities because power was knocked out island-wide and over 400 poles were destroyed or damaged. While they were resourced and shipped by Guam Power Authority, it was up to Bond and Paul to determine when they were going to arrive. The primary challenge of working transportation-related issues in Saipan is that unlike the mainland U.S., the island is small and located thousands of miles away from most major transportation carriers. Other challenges included limited and often poorly maintained ground transportation assets, reduced airport operating hours, limited in-transit visibility of cargo, and only one operator providing scheduled barge service between Guam and Saipan. Sea operations were hampered by storms and weather affecting shipping's ability to dock safely at the port. Through Bond's and Paul's efforts, these challenges were

overcome by sourcing support from vendors off the island, using Department of Defense assets, chartering aircraft, improving coordination and collaboration with the barge operator, and working closely with the FEMA Distribution Center in Guam.

Despite the many challenges, both Region IV employees found it to be a rewarding deployment and a great opportunity to see how another FEMA Region operates.



## FEMA RIV NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS DIVISION HOSTS TRIBAL GATHERING



**“S**trengthening our Partnership,” FEMA Region IV’s Tribal Nations 2015 Gathering, was held by the NP Division on September 22-23 at the Atlanta Marriott Century Center near the FEMA Regional Office.

The purpose of the two-day event was to build closer relationships, exchange information and ideas, and increase tribal capacities in emergency management. The Gathering consisted of briefings by both federal and tribal participants, inclusive roundtables, and networking sessions.

Representatives from five of the six federally-recognized tribes in the Southeast attended along with senior officials from the United South & Eastern Tribes, Inc., and the National Congress of American Indians—23 tribal officials were present. Federal partners from the CDP and FEMA HQ participated in the discussions along with a host of other federal agencies (Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Health Services, CDC, DOT, EPA, EDA, HHS, IRS, NRC, SBA, and USFS) and state partners from Florida, North and South Carolina.

The Gathering’s overarching goal was to hear directly from the tribes on the most important aspects and concerns related to emergency management for their governments, communities, families and individual members. Regional Administrator Gracia Szczech stated, “I personally gained a stronger appreciation of how we can jointly develop our emergency management capabilities to meet the collective challenges we face.”

FEMA Region IV will conduct the next Gathering in early summer of 2016 to continue the dialogue and build upon the theme of strengthened partnerships. The long-term aim is to collectively develop solutions for joint preparedness, effective mitigation, resolute response, and sustainable recovery across Indian Country.



*FEMA RIV Senior Leadership and Tribal Liaison with officials from the Catawba Indian Nation, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Poarch Band of Creek Indians, NCAI and USET.*

## REBECCA JENNINGS APPEARS ON WX GEEKS

**F**EMA Region IV Senior Hurricane Specialist Rebecca Jennings recently got to “geek out” as a guest on The Weather Channel’s weekly *WX (weather) Geeks Show*.



*WX Geeks* is a Sunday lunchtime talk show where the best and brightest minds in meteorology talk about weather in an unfiltered, pure science environment. Recent guests have included, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, National Weather Service Director Dr. Louis Uccellini, NOAA Administrator Dr. Kathy Sullivan, and our very own Craig Fugate.

For Jennings (and FEMA) the show was a great opportunity to highlight the National Hurricane Program’s tools, resources, process and scientific expertise that FEMA provides to state and local emergency managers. While on the show Jennings explained

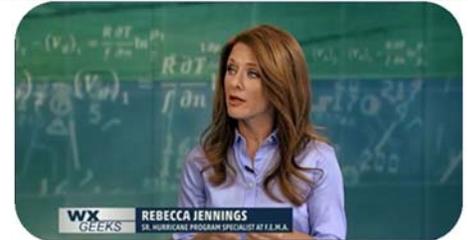
to viewers how the Hurricane Liaison Team plans are put into action before and during a real event.

“It starts with sound planning and that’s where our hurricane evacuation planning comes into play,” Jennings explained to *WX Geek* host Dr. Marshall Shepherd. “We have some modeling and as we get closer to landfall we’re able to refine from broad data using surge models to then really fine tune that for evacuation clearance times.”

During the more than eight minute segment, Rebecca also explained how FEMA’s Hurricane Evacuation Studies answer the key who-what-when-where-why questions related to evacuation planning, and provide the sound data for our states and locals partners to develop comprehensive hurricane operational plans.

So, how does a Georgia Tech trained meteorologist destined for the bright lights of television find her way to the Federal Emergency Management Agency?

For Jennings, it was the ever-so-important mission of protecting the public, shared by meteorologists and emergency managers, that drew her to FEMA. Specifically, it was her work creating new evacuation products for The Weather Channel during the 2004 and



2005 hurricane seasons. It became clear to Jennings that the time had come to combine her zeal for weather and emergency management and join FEMA.

Rebecca truly enjoyed her time on the *WX Geeks* representing Region IV.

“The most fun was the opportunity to really “geek out” and talk about my favorite weather topic our “cold air damming”,” Jennings said. “Throw in a little isentropic lift, lee cyclogenesis, and sometimes a back-door cold front and it results in all kinds of hard-to-predict and sometimes crazy weather!” Translation, *WX Geek* heaven.



## HURRICANE KATRINA +10

August 29, 2015, marked ten years since Hurricane Katrina made landfall in Hancock County, Mississippi. Events were held across the Mississippi Gulf Coast to remember those who lost their lives, recognize and thank first responders and volunteers for their contributions, acknowledge the resilience of Mississippians, and celebrate the progress of the state's recovery.

Administrator Fugate visited the coast, and on August 26th, met with local and school officials at the West Harrison County High School. The West Harrison County High School received a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant of \$8.1 million to build a FEMA 361 safe room that can house 2,567 people and withstand up to 200 mph winds. The Administrator toured the school that was built with backup water, sewer and electrical systems to care for occupants for up to 14 days. School officials briefed Fugate on the schools preparedness plans and regular drill schedule. To wrap up, the Administrator participated in a student led press conference where students asked about his background, interests, and actions they should take to be better prepared. After departing West Harrison County High School, the Administrator visited the newly constructed Hancock County EOC and met with local Mayors and EM staff.



*Administrator Fugate speaks with Mississippi EMA Director Robert Latham and Henry Arledge, Harrison County School Superintendent of Education*

## CONGRATULATIONS TO FEB CLASS OF 2015

Region IV is proud to announce that Grants Management Division Director Sharrie Abrams, Contract Officer Annette Wright and Hurricane Program Specialist Rebecca Jennings successfully completed the requirements of the Federal Executive Board (FEB) Leadership Government Class program on September 24, 2015.

Abrams, Jennings and Wright, along with 32 federal employees from various agencies each received a certificate of completion during a brief ceremony at the FEB's quarterly board meeting in Atlanta.

The FEBs leadership course was developed in 2003 to assist Atlanta area federal employees in developing essential leadership skills to better serve their agency. The one year program focuses on increasing the participant's knowledge and awareness of current and emerging issues that affect government such as emergency preparedness. To date, 15 FEMA Region IV employees have successfully completed the year-long program.



Abrams



Wright



Jennings

## MERS SUPPORTED DRC COMMUNICATIONS IN KENTUCKY AND SOUTH CAROLINA

**W**hen storms disrupt communications and a federal disaster is declared, the Thomasville Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) detachment is standing by to move quickly to assist in support of federal response and recovery efforts. Following devastating flooding in Kentucky and South Carolina, the Thomasville MERS was deployed to those states in order to establish infrastructures for Joint Field Offices and Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC).

“We think of ourselves as a Swiss Army knife,” said Saul Castillo, a Telecom Specialist. “MERS provides telecommunications, video-conferencing, internet, satellite, radio, television and power generation. In a nutshell, we fill in the gap between the time a facility opens and permanent services are installed.”



Saul Castillo



MERS “GREEN HORNET” EOY

Additional resources from MERS teams stationed in Maryland and Texas were called upon to assist because of the need to support multiple response teams and command post simultaneously. In all, over 40 personnel, 5 MEOVs, the Green Hornet, and 20 Mobile Communications Operations Vehicles (MCOVs) were used to provide temporary communications services to the Disaster Recovery Centers.

“When we arrive at a site, the first thing we have to do is to make sure there will be enough room for our vehicles and that there is a clear view of the sky for the satellite signal,” said Ollie

Burkes, MERS DRC field lead. “Once that is confirmed, we begin the work of wiring the entire building.”

While MERS teams in Kentucky have demobilized from their mission, MERS operations in South Carolina continue with several vehicles and the FEMA reservists who operate them to support field offices and DRCs in multiple locations.

Although no tropical storm or hurricane made direct landfall in the US this year, the rains that trailed many of these storms caused significant flooding and made for a busy end-of-the-summer for the Thomasville MERS.



MERS MCOV

## PROGRESSIVE HOLIDAY PARTY IN ATLANTA

**M**ark your calendars for feasting and fellowship as our Atlanta Region IV Team gets in the groove for the holidays. Our holiday celebration will be a fun, all-day, all-division “Whole Community” celebration – meaning it includes all our Atlanta campuses. **The event will be held from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 9.**



*For feasting we will have ...*

- [Breakfast](#) from 8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. (hosted by RCD and GMD) – in the Recovery Conference Room, Rutgers Building;
- [Mid-Morning Snack](#) from 10:00 – 11:00 (hosted by MTD) – in the Mitigation Conference Room, Duke Building;
- [Lunch](#) from noon – 1:30 p.m. – (hosted by MSD, NPD, RSD) – in the Duke Conference Room, Duke Building;
- [Afternoon Punch and Cookies](#) – from 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. – (hosted by ORA/EA) –in the Large Multipurpose Room, Rutgers Building.

*For fun we will have two contests!!*

[Decorate your Division:](#) Divisions are encouraged to decorate their common areas for the holidays. (Please remember that decorations in common areas should not be religious in nature, though you may have religious items displayed in your personal workspace.)

[Back by popular demand:](#) **The Ugly Sweater Contest!** Gracia and Robert will judge the winners!



*Come share  
some holiday  
fare and  
camaraderie!*

**COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN 2015****“The Difference Is YOU”**

2015

**Combined Federal Campaign****Greater Atlanta-Athens****Combined Federal Campaign**[www.cfcaaga.org](http://www.cfcaaga.org)

**T**hrough the Combined Federal Campaign, you can truly make a difference. You can give a little bit each week through payroll deduction or give a one-time cash, check, or credit card donation to support your favorite charities. With over 20,000 approved local, national, and international organizations, you can easily and efficiently support your favorite causes. You can make your CFC pledge online at [www.cfcnca.org](http://www.cfcnca.org) or contribute using a paper pledge form. No matter how you give or how much you give, you are truly making it possible.

**DONOR RECOGNITION LEVEL**

- EAGLES LEADERSHIP
- HERO
- PACESETTER
- PATRIOT
- PIONEER GIVER

**FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS (FEHB)  
OPEN SEASON AND HEALTH FAIR**

**T**his year's Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Open Season began Monday, November 9 and closes Monday, December 14. This is the time to elect to make changes in your health insurance and dental and vision. Changes made to your plans entered during FEHB Open Season will not be reflected on your Employee Personal Page (EPP) until the second week of pay period 01 in January.

The annual Open Season Health Fair will be in the Rutgers Building, 3rd floor Multi-purpose Room, on December 9 from 9 a.m. to noon. Representatives from Blue Cross and Blue Shield, GEHA, Aetna, Kaiser, United Healthcare (Dental/Vision), United Concordia (Dental), Aflac, NARFE (retirement information), and the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program will be available to answer any questions.

If you would like to observe/compare the new plans before the Health Fair, please see the comparison tools on the EPP main page:

- FEHB: [www.opm.gov/fehcompare](http://www.opm.gov/fehcompare)
- FEDVIP: [www.opm.gov/fedvipcompare](http://www.opm.gov/fedvipcompare)

If you have any questions regarding Benefits or Open Season, please contact Kimberly Potter at [Kimberly.Potter@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Potter@fema.dhs.gov).



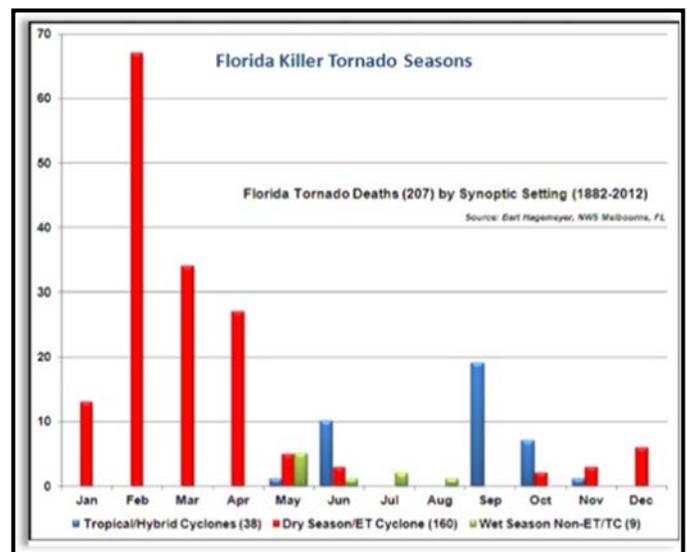
## EL NIÑO PLANNING & PREPAREDNESS

### Overview & Forecast

- The El Niño pattern developed in the spring of 2015 and is currently among the strongest on record.
- There is a 95 percent chance that El Niño will continue through Northern Hemisphere during the winter, gradually weakening through the spring of 2016.
- Moderate and strong El Niño patterns particularly influence winter weather in the U.S.
- El Niño, in general, increases the odds toward wetter and cooler-than-average conditions across much of the South, often accompanied by moderate to major flooding and severe weather events.
- Previous strong El Niño patterns occurred in 1982-1983 and 1997-1998 with significant weather impacts across the Southeast.

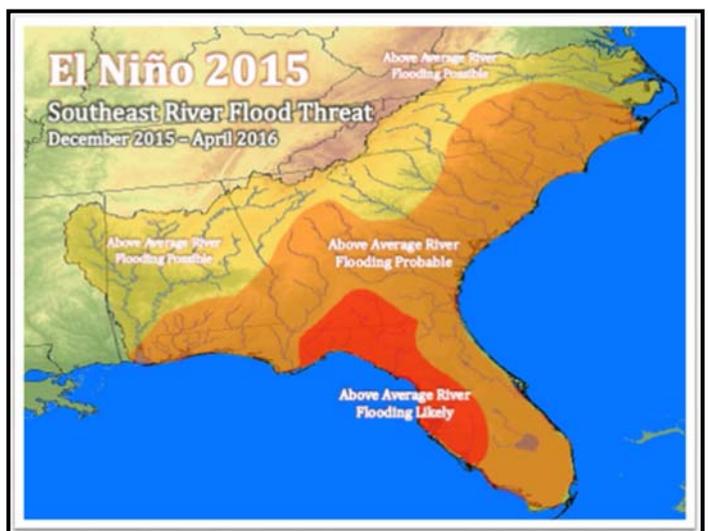
### Regional Impacts—Tornadoes:

- Severe weather, particularly the occurrence of strong tornadoes (EF2 and greater), in the Florida dry season have shown a striking relationship to extreme phases of ENSO in recent decades.
- Organized, strong tornado activity and severe weather during El Niño winters is known to occur, with February experiencing the most deaths due to tornadoes both during average and El Niño winters.
- The two deadliest Florida tornado outbreaks, responsible for 63 deaths, occurred during strong El Niño winter of 1997-98 and moderate El Niño of 2006-07.
- Many of these tornadoes occurred overnight and early morning, possibly contributing to increased fatalities for these events.



### Regional Impacts—Flooding:

- Previous El Niño patterns have contributed to increased precipitation across the southern portion of FEMA Region IV including Florida, Georgia and South Carolina. The following graphic, provided by Southeast River Forecast Center (Nov. 2015) depicts the Flood Threat potential across the southeast based on current data and previous events.
- Based on this outlook, significant portions of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina have the potential for above-average river flooding due to increased precipitation, with more probable flooding focused in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina.
- Many areas of Florida and Georgia experienced moderate to major flooding on rivers within the Southeast River Forecast Center basin coverage area during previous El Niño years.



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## HAILS

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**Welcome to our new employees and congratulations to those who are stepping into new roles within the region!**



### **Phillip Hall - IMAT Infrastructure Branch Chief, Response Division**

Phillip has long held his State of Florida Certified General Contractors license and has worked as a consultant, contractor, and in construction services for infrastructure improvements. Project management tasks have included storm water mitigation and retention; sewer lift-stations; generator back-up systems; multi-unit/multi-story building construction; and electrical utilities. Phillip holds a Masters of Business Administration degree (Nov. 2014) and his Bachelors of Science in Crisis and Disaster Management (Sept 2013) from Everglades University in Sarasota Florida.



### **Shelby Pay-Chaney - Public Assistance Appeals Analyst, Recovery Division**

Shelby was born and raised in the nation's oldest city, St. Augustine, Fla. She attended Florida State University where she received her Bachelor of Science in Sociology with minors in Psychology, Political Science, and Public Administration. After working for a local law firm in college, Shelby worked with the Florida Division of Emergency Management's Recovery Division as a Public Assistance Coordinator and Appeals Analyst. Shelby was recently married to her high school sweetheart.



### **Blondell Allen – IT Specialist, Mission Support Division**

Blondell was a FEMA Reservist that came onboard during Hurricane Katrina. He has worked as an IT Specialist and Network Manager with FEMA. Prior to that he was in the military and served in several conflicts Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom and others. Blondell Allen is from Jacksonville, Florida. He has three sons and three granddaughters.



### **Linda Keomanivong - Program Specialist, Grants Management Division**

Prior to becoming the Program Specialist, she worked with the Environmental Protection Division in the Air Branch. She was part of the Administrative and Finance unit where she assisted with grants, contracts, and state implementation plans. She has also worked with a non-profit child development center for eight years helping families and children. She developed her passion for helping people from her experiences at the non-profit organization. It inspired her to work towards a degree in psychology. She is expected to graduate spring 2016 with a Bachelors in Psychology and Human Services. She lives in Henry County with her 13 year old son and 11 year old daughter. She is thankful for the opportunity to be a part of FEMA where she can use her experiences and education to help those in need.

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**HAILS**

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**Jori O'Hanley - IT Specialist, Mission Support Division**

Jori recently relocated to Atlanta from Boston with her husband with over 10 years of experience in GIS. Jori started with FEMA Region IV Mission Support Division, GIS Section in September 2015, as a CORE employee. As a GIS professional, Jori has extensive experience working in multiple areas, to include; desktop GIS, web application development, client needs assessment, data management, and GIS staff training/guidance materials. Following Jori's BS degree in Environmental Studies/GIS focus in 2003, she earned an MS in GIS from Northeastern University in 2008 and a Masters Certificate in Web Application Development from Boston University in 2013.

**Ruben Brown - IMAT 2, External Affairs Officer, Response Division**

Prior to joining FEMA, Ruben spent 20 years with the American Red Cross as a Community Affairs Manager, Media Relations Specialist and Regional Communications Manager. Ruben also served as the primary spokesperson for the Atlanta Red Cross during some of its most notable disaster responses, including the Hurricane Katrina evacuation (2005), the Atlanta Tornado (2008) the Georgia Floods (2009) and numerous home fires. As a regional/national spokesperson for the Red Cross, Ruben provided interviews to all Atlanta television, radio and print outlets. His professional awards include the National American Red Cross Employee Excellence Award, the Atlanta Red Cross Employee Excellence Award and two-time recipient of the American Red Cross Partnership Award. Ruben received his bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Georgia and resides in Southwest Atlanta with his wife, Donna, and children, Ashley and Christopher.

**Mary Jupiter - Grants Management Specialist, Grants Management Division**

Mary earned an MBA from New York Institute of Technology, Graduate School of Business; Bachelors of Science, Biological Science, with a major in Community Health from SUNY College at Old Westbury; and studied accounting at Thomas Area Technical School. She has spent 27 years gaining professional competence with grants and accounting in federal government, not-for profit, and private sectors. While with FEMA she earned certification as a Grants Management Specialist and certification as a Contracting Officer's Representative III. After joining FEMA, she volunteered and received specialized training for collateral duty as RRCC Planning Specialist, Contracting Business Specialist, and Surge Capacity Specialist.

**Derek Fellows - Construction Management Specialist, Mitigation Division**

Mitigation Division, Risk Analysis Branch. Derek is assisting the Benefit Cost Analysis and Building Science teams. He is a Registered Professional Engineer with 13 years' experience in civil engineering. Derek received a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and a Masters of Business Administration. Derek previously worked as a Public Assistance TAC and in the Mitigation Division as a CORE. Prior to that, Derek spent seven years in the design and construction of commercial and industrial sites, transportation and highway engineering. Derek and his wife Peggy, have 11-year-old twins.

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## HAILS

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### Vincent Ramm - Fire Program Specialist, Grants Management Division

Vincent has been working with FEMA RIV at the FRC in Thomasville, Ga., since October 2003. As the Region's FPS, he is responsible for assuring quality in administering Fire Grants Programs, assisting in developing, implementing, interpreting, and monitoring policies and procedures. He has handled approximately 5,000 grants awarded since the program's inception in 2001. Before joining FEMA, Vince worked with the State of Maryland in Baltimore, at a state-owned airport, and supervised 12 Firefighters per shift as Station Captain and began his firefighting career with the Air National Guard.

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## FAREWELLS

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### Farewells

The following members of our FEMA Region IV family have moved on. We wish them the best in their new endeavors.

- ◆ Vincent Boyer – Response Division - Telecom Specialist
- ◆ April Cummings – Environmental and Historic Preservation – Environmental Protection Specialist
- ◆ Liz Given – Response Division – RRCC – EMS (Response) Night Watch
- ◆ Brian Glaviano – External Affairs - External Affairs Specialist
- ◆ Shawn Maiden – Response Division - IMAT CORE – Resource Unit Lead
- ◆ Rick Manion – Response Division – Emergency Response Planner
- ◆ Lisa Rink – National Preparedness Division – EMS (Preparedness)

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## WHAT'S YOUR STORY? HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER

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**D**o you have an idea for the next issue of *Connect 4*, our FEMA Region IV Newsletter? We are looking for the next great story to share. If you have a suggestion or idea for something you would like to see in the next quarterly edition of the newsletter, submit your idea to your division's representative on the Employee Engagement Subcommittee or email us at [fema-r4-external-affairs@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-r4-external-affairs@fema.dhs.gov).

