



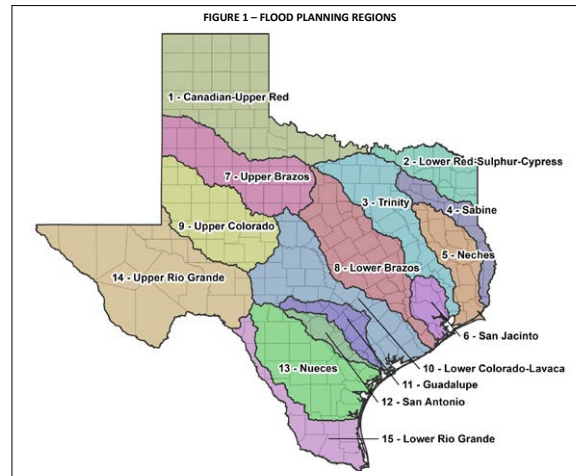
Regional Flood Planning in Texas

The Texas Legislature greatly expanded the Texas Water Development Board's (TWDB) role in 2019 by initiating the first statewide, region-based flood planning effort. The TWDB is responsible for administering the newly developed state and regional flood planning process and established 15 flood planning regions (Figure 1) based on the state's major river basins.

Each flood planning region has its own regional flood planning group (RFPG), which coordinates the flood planning process for their respective region. Each RFPG is composed of volunteer voting members representing a variety of interests, including agriculture, industries, river authorities, counties, municipalities, water districts, flood districts, electric generating utilities, water utilities, environmental interests, small businesses, the public, and more. In addition, each RFPG includes seven non-voting members from the following state agencies: the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, General Land Office, Parks and Wildlife Department, Department of Agriculture, State Soil and Water Conservation Board, Texas Division of Emergency Management, and a dedicated TWDB staff member who provides ongoing support to the group. Each planning group approved bylaws to govern its methods of conducting business and designated a political subdivision, such as a river authority, district, municipality, county, or council of governments, to administer the planning process and manage any contracts related to developing regional flood plans.

The overarching goal of this flood planning process is to develop a regional flood plan that adequately provides for the protection of life and property without negatively affecting neighboring areas. The first regional flood plans are due to the TWDB January 10, 2023, and every five years thereafter. The state flood plan will be based on the adopted regional plans and is due from the TWDB by September 1, 2024, and every five years thereafter.

The approach to the state's regional flood planning process is similar to the successful regional water planning process. However, the need for flood planning is very different from that of water planning, which seeks to plan for adequate water supplies during drought. The most significant differences



between the two planning processes are the planning regions' boundaries and the types of considerations and technical approaches used.

All planning group work must be performed, and all deadlines must be met in accordance with statute, agency rules, and the grant contracts with the TWDB. The RFPGs conduct all business during open meetings in a transparent and participatory manner during the process of developing their plans. These public involvement opportunities are important to each group's planning efforts.

Development of the regional flood plans requires the RFPGs to consider a wide variety of available, relevant information, including historic flood records, infrastructure and transportation data, hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, floodplain management practices, and watershed protection plans. Planning groups perform flood risk analyses in their region, evaluate current floodplain management practices, establish flood-risk reduction goals, and identify, evaluate, and recommend ways to meet those goals. These recommendations include flood management evaluations (FMEs), flood management strategies (FMSs), flood mitigation projects (FMPs) to address flood risk, and include administrative, regulatory, and legislative recommendations to facilitate floodplain management and flood mitigation planning and implementation. The RFPGs also consider the impacts and necessary financing of their regional flood plan. The RFPGs are not regulatory entities, and the information and policy recommendations presented in regional flood plans are not enforceable by the RFPGs. Regional flood plans are high-level plans aimed at addressing a variety of flood risks throughout the flood planning region.

Once the RFPG adopts its regional flood plan, the plan is sent to the TWDB for approval. The TWDB then incorporates information from the approved regional flood plans and other sources to develop the state flood plan.

For additional information on the regional flood planning process and current activities, please email FloodPlanning@twdb.texas.gov or visit www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/planning.