



# 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 state and regional flood planning process and established 15 flood planning regions 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 regions. 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 were submitted to the TWDB by January 10, 2023, and will be revised every five years. The 2024 State Flood Plan is based on the adopted regional plans, was delivered to Texas Leadership by September 1, 2024, and will be revised every five years.

The approach to the state's regional flood planning process is similar to the regional water planning process. However, the need for flood planning is different from 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 work must be performed and all deadlines met in accordance with statutes, 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 plan development. Public outreach and involvement are vital to each group's planning efforts.

Regional flood plan development requires that the RFPGs 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 existing and future 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 mitigation projects (FMPs), and flood management strategies (FMSs) to address flood risk. The regional flood plans also include administrative, regulatory, and legislative recommendations to facilitate floodplain management and flood mitigation planning and implementation. RFPGs consider the impacts and necessary financing of their regional flood plan, as well.

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 reducing the risk and impact of a variety of flood risks throughout the flood planning region.

Once RFPGs adopt their regional flood plans, the plans are 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 more information on the regional flood planning process and current activities, please email [FloodPlanning@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:FloodPlanning@twdb.texas.gov) or visit [www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/planning](http://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/planning).