

Region 15 Lower Rio Grande Flood Planning Group Meeting
December 3, 2020
8:30AM

Meeting will be conducted via GoToWebinar at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5309644316173291021>

Agenda:

1. Call to Order and establish Quorum.
2. Welcome
3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting November 5, 2020.
4. TWDB Update
5. TWDB Presentation
6. Consider approval of bylaws as discussed by group and updated by TWDB.
7. Consider nominating and electing RFPG Vice Chair and Secretary (*as applicable, per group bylaws*)
 - a. Nominations for Vice Chair by members
 - b. Discussion and consider taking action to elect Vice Chair
 - c. Nominations for Secretary by members
 - d. Discussion and consider taking action to elect Secretary
8. Consider nominating and electing two members-at-large to serve on the Executive Committee (*as applicable, per group bylaws*)
 - a. Nominations for two Executive Committee members-at-large by members
 - b. Discussion and consider taking action to elect Executive Committee members-at-large.
9. Discuss whether a river authorities interest exists in the region and, if applicable consider authorizing the Hidalgo County Drainage District No 1 to initiate solicitation process for individuals to fill the position.
 - a. Public Comments (Public comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker)
 - b. Discussion and consider taking action
10. Discuss and consider action to add additional voting and non-voting positions that may be needed to ensure adequate representation from the interest in the region:
 - a. Public Comments (Public comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker)
 - b. Discussion and consideration of additional voting and non-voting positions.
11. Consider authorizing the Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 to initiate RFPG solicitation process for individuals to fill any new voting or non-voting positions created under Agenda Item 10.
 - a. Public Comments (Public comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker).
 - b. Discussion and consideration of solicitation issues.
12. Update from Planning Group Sponsor regarding status of Regional Flood Planning Grant contract with the TWDB
 - a. Discussion on status of application for Regional Flood Planning Grant funds
 - b. Discussion of technical consultant procurement process
 - c. Discussion on Scope of Work posted with TWDB RFA
13. Consider a means by which the RFPG will develop and host a public website (required per §361.21(b)).
14. Consider a means by which the RFPG will accept written public comment prior to and after meetings (required per §361.21(c)).

15. Discussion of the required solicitation for persons or entities who request to be notified of RFPG activities (required per §361.21(e)).
16. Public comments – limit 3 minutes per person
17. Consider date and agenda items for next meeting
18. Adjourn

If you wish to provide written comments prior to or after the meeting, please email your comments to jaime.salazar@hcdd1.org and include “Region 15 Lower Rio Grande Flood Planning Group Meeting” in the subject line of the email.

If you choose to participate via the webinar link below, you will have the opportunity to provide comments during the designated portion of the meeting.
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5309644316173291021>

Additional information may be obtained from: Jaime J. Salazar, 956-292-7080, jaime.salazar@hcdd1.org.

Meeting Minutes
Region 15. Lower Rio Grande Flood Planning Group Meeting
November 5, 2020
1:00 PM
GoToWebinar Virtual Meeting

Roll Call:

<u>Voting Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present (x) / Absent () / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Jose "Joe" Angel Hinojosa	<i>Agricultural interests</i>	X
David A. Garza	<i>Counties</i>	X
Daniel Lucio, Jr.	<i>Electric generating utilities</i>	X
Hudson DeYoe	<i>Environmental interests</i>	X
David L. Fuentes	<i>Flood districts</i>	X
Plinio Joey Trevino	<i>Industries</i>	X
Vanessa Rosales-Herrera	<i>Municipalities</i>	X
Joe A. Califa	<i>Public</i>	X
Jose Luis Caso	<i>Small business</i>	X
Sonia Lambert	<i>Water districts</i>	X
Riazul I. Mia	<i>Water utilities</i>	X

<u>Non-voting Member</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Present(x)/Absent()/ Alternate Present (*)</u>
Willy Cupit	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	X
Tim Frere	Texas Division of Emergency Management	X
Nelda Barrera	Texas Department of Agriculture	X
Adrian Perez	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board	
Shonda Mace	General Land Office	X
David Ramirez	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	X
Megan Ingram	Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)	X

Quorum:

Quorum: **Yes**

Number of voting members or alternates representing voting members present: **11**

Number required for quorum per current voting positions of 11: **6**.

Other Meeting Attendees: **

James Bronikowski, TWDB (Meeting Facilitator)
 Kathleen Jackson, TWDB Board Member
 Reem Zoun, TWDB
 Matt Nelson, TWDB
 Morgan White, TWDB
 Annette Mass, TWDB

Megan Ingram, TWDB
 Richard Bagans, TWDB
 Anna Gonzalez, TWDB
 Hayley Gillespi, TWDB
 Sarah Backhouse, TWDB
 Jean Schlitzkus, TWDB
 Jennifer White, TWDB

Chanel Borrego
Miles Bullion
Phil Bullock
John Byrum
Rick Carrera
Jim Carrillo
Stephanie Castillo
Manuel Cruz
Raul Gomez
Stephanie Griffin
Jena Hanson
Derek Katznelson
Deanna LeVrier
Kristina Leal
Deborah Morales
Michael Moya

Travis Pruski
Tom Ray
Paul Robinson
Jaime Salazar
Carlos A Sanchez
Augusto Sanchez Gonzalez
Tony Smith
Mark Yates
Kate de Gennaro
Camille Cotsakis
Lauren Gonzalez
Amin Kiaghadi
Ricardo Pedraza
Gustavo Sa
Robert Saenz
Raul Sestin

**Meeting attendee names were gathered from those who entered information for joining the GoToWebinar meeting.

All meeting materials are available for the public at:

<http://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/planning/regions/schedule.asp>.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Call to Order

James Bronikowski called the meeting to order at 1:10PM. A roll call of the planning group members was taken to record attendance and a quorum was established prior to calling the meeting to order.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Welcome, Meeting Facilitation Information and Instructions

James Bronikowski and Director Kathleen Jackson welcomed members to the meeting. James Bronikowski provided meeting facilitation information and instructions.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Member Introductions

Each present voting and non-voting member of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG introduced themselves.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Regional Flood Planning Overview Presentation

James Bronikowski presented an overview of the regional flood planning process.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Discussion of group bylaws and consider adopting group bylaws

James Bronikowski presented the model bylaws provided by the TWDB for the RFPG to consider adopting and opened discussion on adopting group bylaws.

After discussion, the bylaws were edited to replace "Model RFPG" with "Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG".

Additionally, the members discussed and made edits to the model bylaws regarding the following topics: selection of officers, solicitation of nominations to fill vacancies, and amending the bylaws.

The members discussed the maximum number of voting members, limits to the number of terms a member may serve, quorum, executive committee composition, and designation of alternates. No changes were made regarding these topics.

A motion was made by David Fuentes to adopt the bylaws.

The motion was seconded by Joe Califa.

The vote to adopt the group bylaws passed by a vote of 11 Ayes and 0 Nays.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Consider nominating and electing regional flood planning group Chair or Interim Chair

James Bronikowski described the Chair/Interim Chair election process and opened the floor to nominations for the Chair or Interim Chair position.

A nomination of David Garza as the Chair was made by David Fuentes and Riazul Mia.

The nomination of David Garza as the Chair was approved by unanimous consent.

Chair David Garza requested that James Bronikowski continue with facilitation of this meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Consider selecting a planning group sponsor to act on behalf of the regional flood planning group

James Bronikowski opened the floor to public comments.

Travis Pruski (Nueces River Authority) stated the interest of the Nueces River Authority in serving as Planning Group Sponsor.

John Byrum (Nueces River Authority) stated the interest of the Nueces River Authority in serving as Planning Group Sponsor.

Manuel Cruz (Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council) stated the interest of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council in serving as Planning Group Sponsor.

James Bronikowski listed the entities that had expressed interest in serving as the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG's planning group sponsor. These interested entities included:

Cameron County

Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1

Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC)

Nueces River Authority

James Bronikowski asked if any there was anyone in the audience that represented a political subdivision that was interested in acting as the planning group sponsor.

Raul Sesin stated that Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 was interested in serving as the planning group sponsor.

James Bronikowski opened discussion on selecting a planning group sponsor to act on behalf of the RFPG.

No points nor comments/concerns were brought forth during open discussion.

A motion was made by Hudson DeYoe to select Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council as the designated planning group sponsor for Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG.

The vote to select the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council as the planning group sponsor to act on behalf of the RFPG received 4 Aye votes and 4 Nay votes. Jose Hinojosa, David Garza, and David Fuentes abstained from the vote.

A motion was made by Sonia Lambert and Riazul Mia to select Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 as the designated planning group sponsor for Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG.

The vote to select Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 as the planning group sponsor to act on behalf of the RFPG passed by a vote of 8 Ayes and 2 Nays. David Fuentes abstained from the vote.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Consider additional, region-specific public notice requirements, if any, that might be necessary to ensure adequate public notice in the region per 31 Texas Administrative Code §361.12(3).

James Bronikowski described existing notice requirements and opened discussion on identifying additional, region-specific public notice requirements.

David Garza opened the floor to public comments. No public comments were given.

David Garza opened discussion on consideration of additional, region-specific public notice requirements, if any, that might be necessary to ensure adequate public notice in the region per 31 Texas Administrative Code §361.12(3).

The members discussed opportunities to effectively reach the public.

No action was taken. David Garza closed discussion on AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Consider authorizing the RFPG sponsor to apply for grant funds and enter into a contract with the TWDB on behalf of the RFPG

David Garza opened discussion on authorizing the RFPG sponsor to apply for grant funds and to enter into a contract with the TWDB on behalf of the RFPG.

No points nor comments/concerns were brought forth during open discussion.

A motion was made by Joe Califa to authorize the RFPG sponsor to apply for grant funds and enter into a contract with the TWDB on behalf of the RFPG.

The motion was seconded by Riazul Mia.

The vote to authorize the RFPG sponsor to apply for grant funds and enter into a contract with the TWDB on behalf of the RFPG passed by a vote of 11 Ayes and 0 Nays.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: Discussion of necessary additional voting and non-voting positions that may be needed to ensure adequate representation from the interest in the region

James Bronikowski provided background regarding the addition of voting and non-voting positions that may be needed to ensure adequate representation from the interest in the region.

David Garza opened discussion additional voting and non-voting positions that may be needed to ensure adequate representation from the interest in the region.

The members discussed potential recommendations for additional membership, including: the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States Geological Survey, additional members to represent counties interest category (including potentially from Willacy County and Starr County), and additional members to represent flood districts (including potentially from a drainage district from Cameron County).

The members discussed the importance of members representing their interest category, as it exists throughout the region.

David Garza opened the floor to public comments.

Rick Herrera stated the interest of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council to serve as a non-voting member.

No action was taken. David Garza closed discussion on AGENDA ITEM NO. 10.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: Receive general public comments (Public comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker)

David Garza opened the floor to public comments. No public comments were given.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12: Consider date and agenda items for next meeting

David Garza opened discussion to consider the date and agenda items for the next meeting.

After discussion, David Garza stated that the next meeting will be on December 3, 2020 at 8:30AM.

Potential agenda items include selection of additional officers and executive committee members and consideration of additional membership.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 13: Adjourn

Sonia Lambert made a motion to adjourn.

The motion was seconded by Jose Hinojosa.

The vote to adjourn passed by unanimous consent.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10PM by David Garza.

*Approved by the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG at a meeting held on **DATE**.*

FIRST AND LAST NAME, SECRETARY

FIRST AND LAST NAME, CHAIR

Texas Water Development Board Flood Planning Presentation Regional Flood Planning Group 2nd Meeting

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- Flooding 101 (20 minutes)
- Request for Applications Process & Contract Details (5 minutes)
- RFPG Responsibilities: Scope of Work Overview(20 minutes)

Flooding 101

(20 minutes)

Flooding 101: Watersheds

Flood planning regions follow Hydrological Unit Code (HUC-8) watershed boundaries.

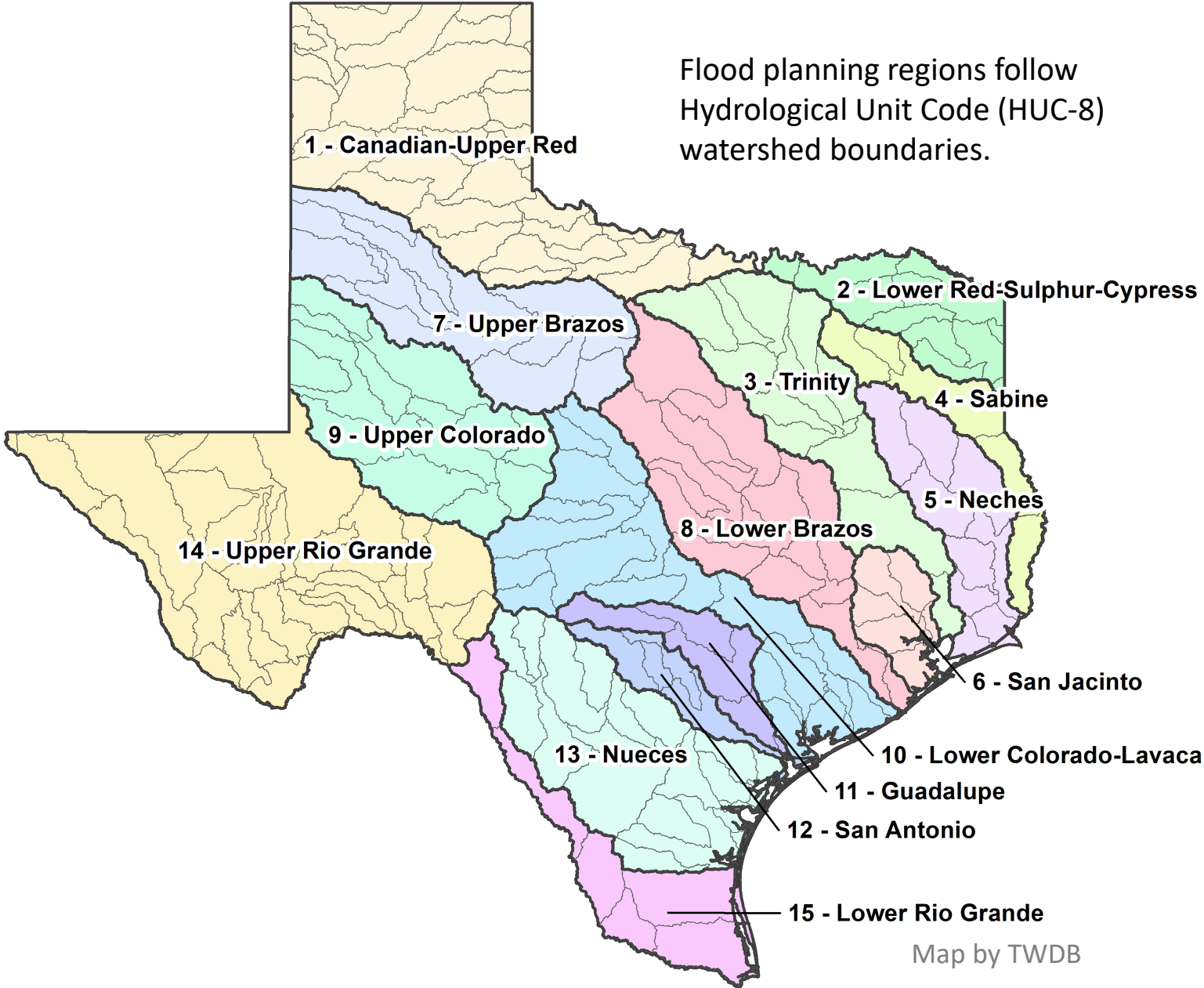
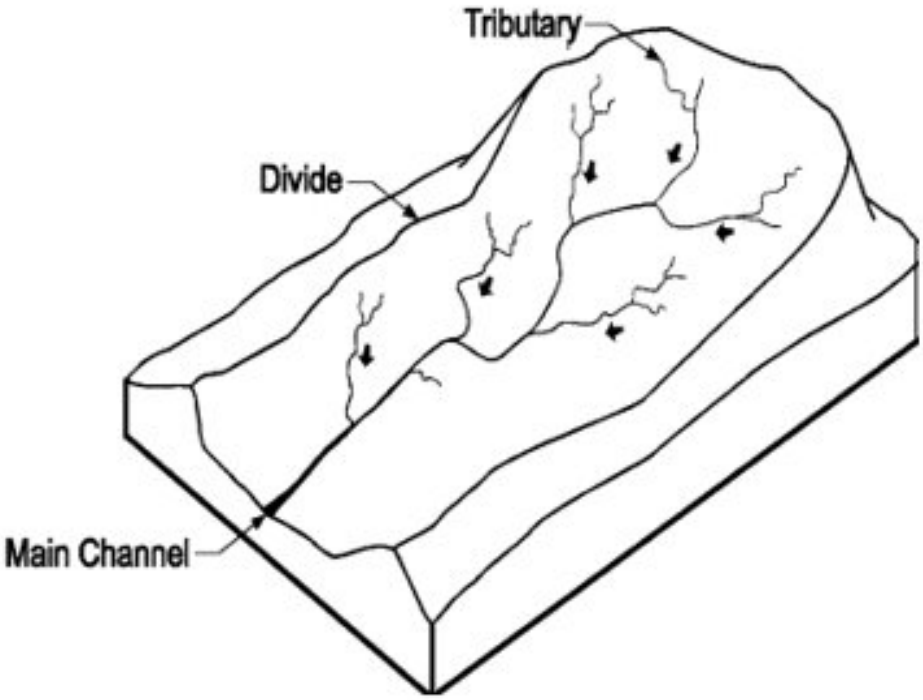
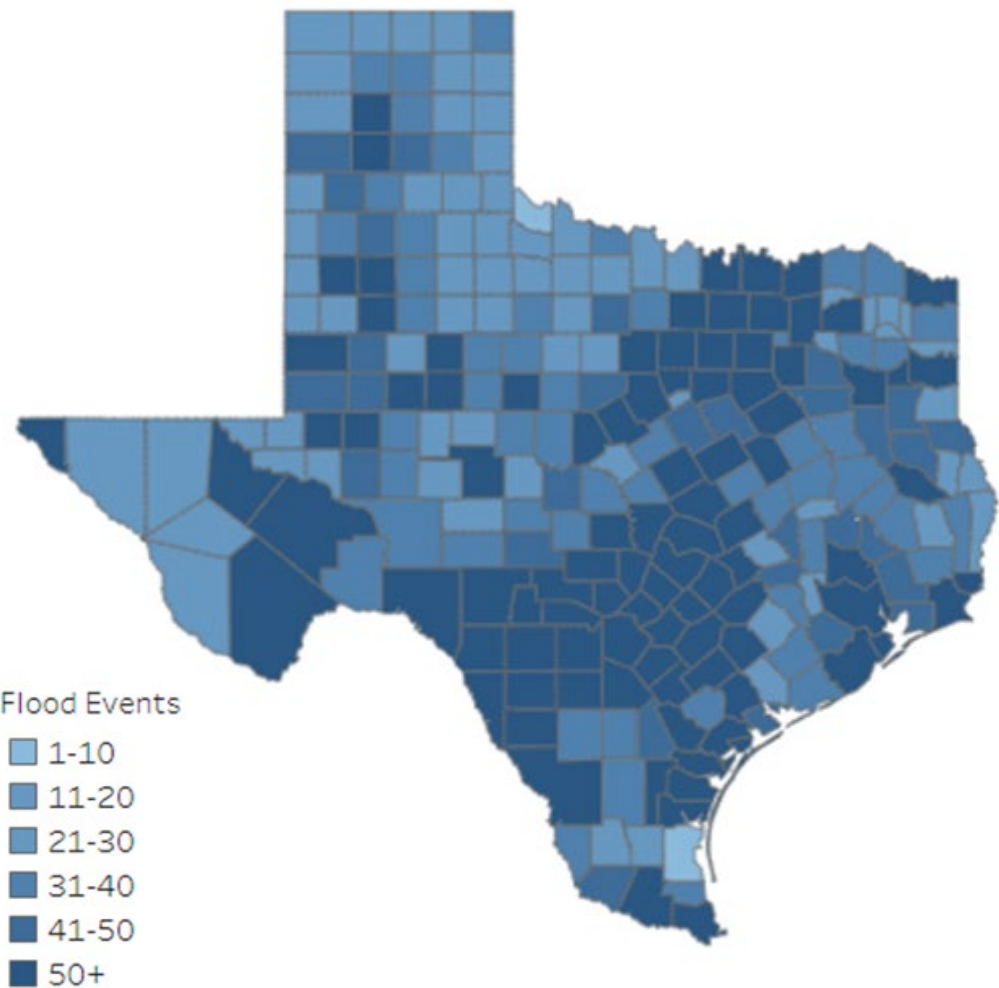


Figure 1-2. Riverine Watershed and Floodplain
Image by FEMA

Map by TWDB

Flooding 101: Flooding in Texas



Map: FEMA

Data: NOAA Storm Event Database 1996-2020

State Flood Assessment

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

86TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

STATE FLOOD ASSESSMENT

Texas Water Development Board

Flooding 101: What is a Flood?

A general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land area from overflow of inland or tidal waters or from the unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source.



Agricultural flooding damaging crops and hay.

Flooding 101: Floodplains

The area of land subject to periodic inundation by floodwaters.

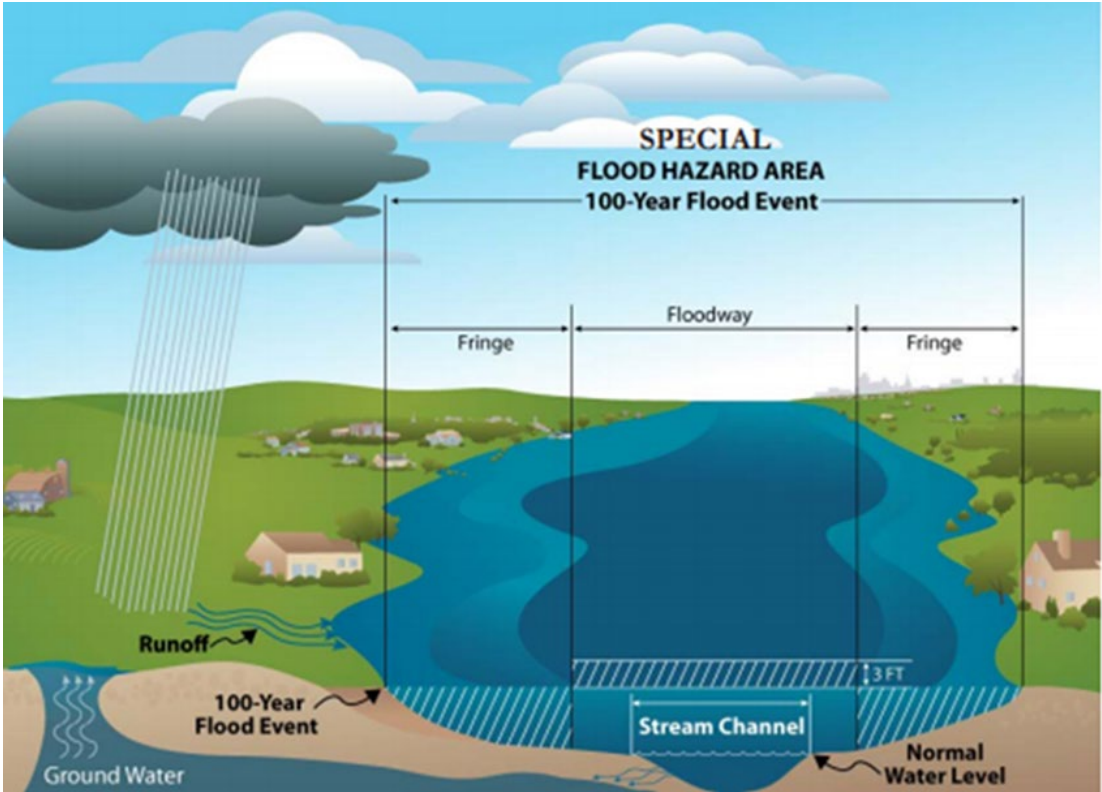


Image: FEMA



Image: FEMA

Flooding 101: Benefits of Floods

When floodplains are preserved in their natural state, they provide many benefits:

- Reduce severity of floods by storing floodwaters, reducing flood velocities, and curbing sedimentation and erosion
- Contribute to groundwater recharge
- Provide recreation and quality of life
- Create habitats for many plants and animals.

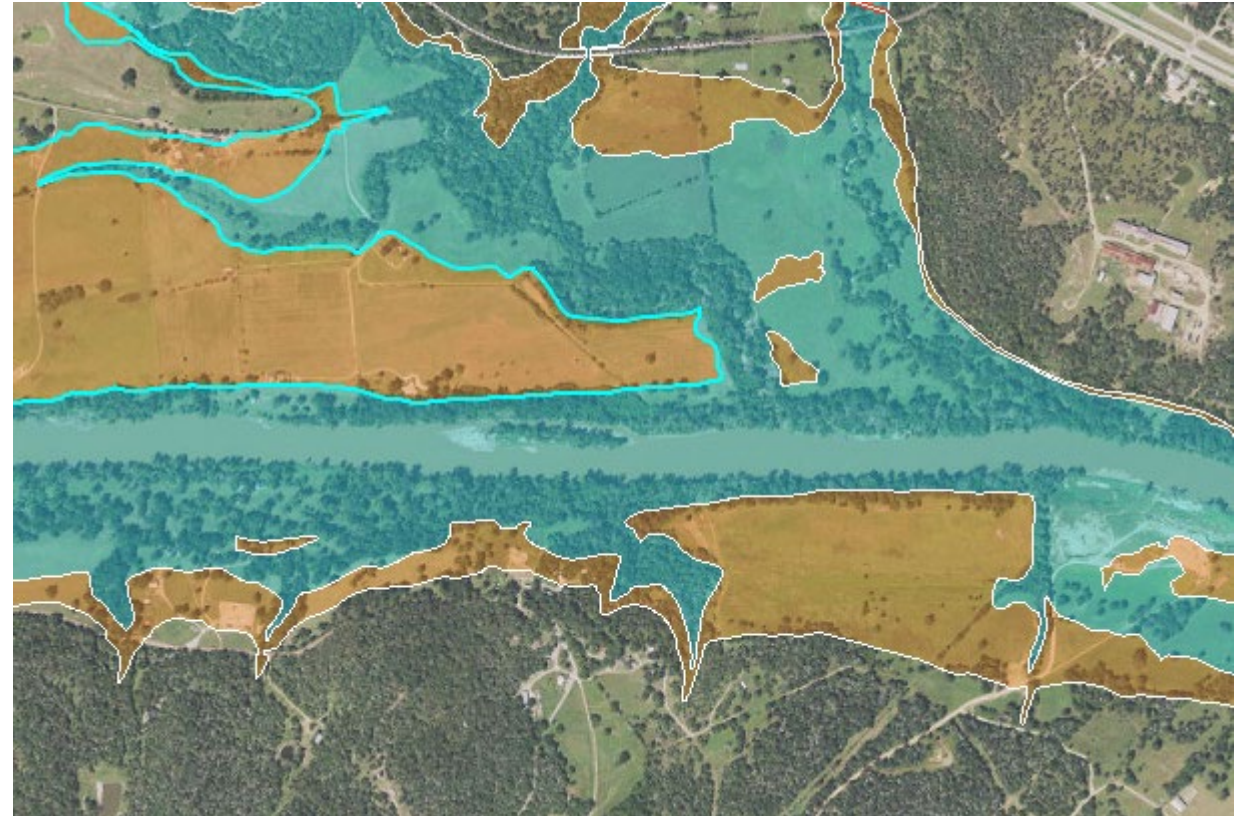


Wetlands at Galveston Island State Park provide natural ecosystem services.

Image: [Yinan Chen CC-PD](#)

Flooding 101: Quantifying Flood Events

- 1.0% annual chance flood event
 - flood event having a 1.0% chance of happening in any given year = **every year**
 - also referred to as the "base flood" or "100-year flood"
- 0.2% annual chance flood event
 - flood event having a 0.2% chance of happening in any given year
 - also referred to as the "500-year flood"



The 1% annual chance floodplain is shown in blue.
The 0.2% annual chance floodplain is shown in orange.
Image by FEMA

Flooding 101: Types of Flooding



2019 Lake Dunlap Spillway Failure.
Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority



Texas National Guard, Houston, TX
Texas National Guard CC-BY-2.0



Blue Hole Park, South San Gabriel River,
Georgetown, TX. FEMA



Flash flooding in San Marcos, TX. [CC-BY-SA-3.0](#)



Cadillac Ranch sculpture near Amarillo, TX.
© Rachel Goad, used by permission.



Coastal flooding in Galveston, TX
[pixabay](#), no attrib. req.

Flooding 101: Flood Mitigation

The implementation of actions, including both **structural** and **non-structural solutions**, to reduce flood risk to protect against the loss of life and property.



Mangroves on the Texas Coast stabilize shorelines and help absorb storm surge; an example of a non-structural flood mitigation solution.

Photo by Univ. Of Texas Marine Science Institute



Galveston Seawall, a structural flood mitigation solution. Image by [Yinan Chen CC-PD](#)

Flooding 101: Structural Solutions to Flooding

Examples include the construction of levees, dikes, floodwalls/seawalls, dams, channel alterations, culverts, flood gates, and detention and retention basins.



Anzelduas Dam on the Rio Grande near Mission, TX. Image: TWDB



Storm Drains



Streambank Stabilization in Austin, TX. Image by City of Austin Watershed Protection

Flooding 101: Non-Structural Solutions to Flooding

Examples include open space preservation, property buyouts and relocation, zoning and building codes, wetland restoration, elevated structures, flood warning systems, educational campaigns, and participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.



Homes that survived the ~20-foot-high storm surge of Hurricane Ike in Bolivar Peninsula, near the community of Caplen.
Image: TWDB



Turn Around, Don't Drown educational campaign.
Image: Weather.gov



Engineered Wetlands in the Houston Audubon Society's The Oaks Nature Preserve . Image: TWDB

Flooding 101: National Flood Insurance Program

Based on an agreement between local communities and the federal government.

- Local communities agree to adopt floodplain management regulations to reduce flood risks
- The federal government makes flood insurance and disaster assistance available to the community



Image by FEMA / National Flood Insurance Program



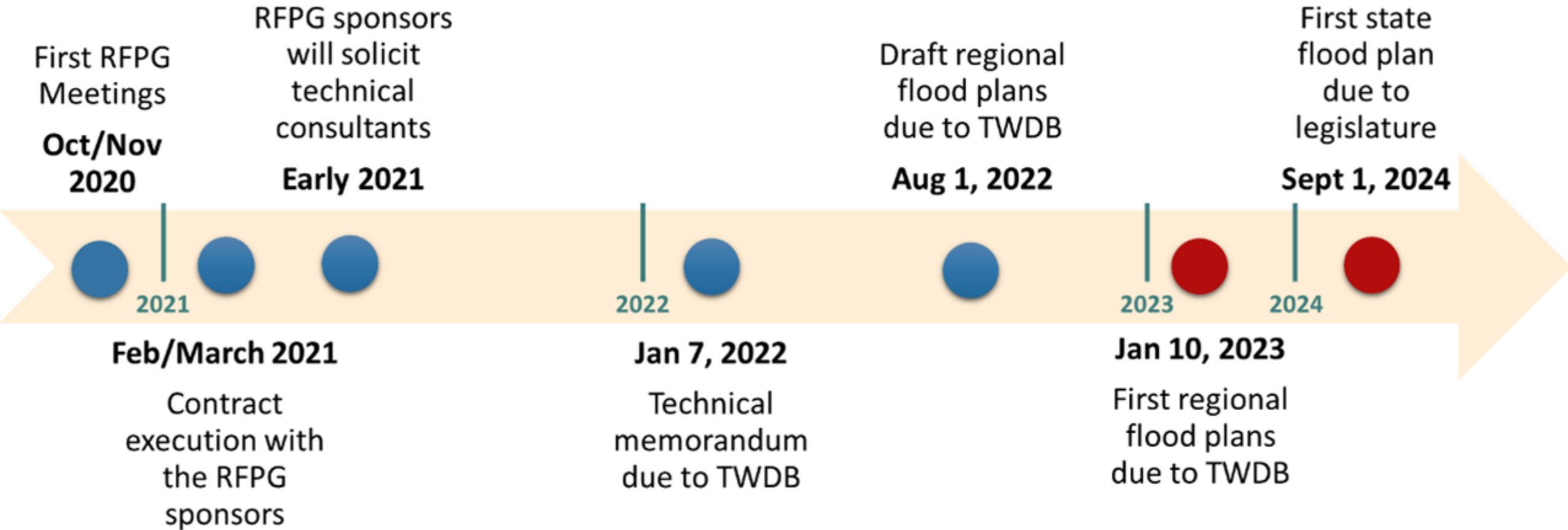
Image: Brent Hanson, U.S. Geological Survey. Public domain.

Questions? Comments?

Request for Applications Process & Contract Details

(5 minutes)

Flood Planning Timeline



Regional Flood Planning Grant RFA

- \$19.5 million in available funds to be allocated between 15 regions.
- Sponsors may submit applications November 20, 2020 - January 21, 2021
- Applications will be processed as received
- Contract execution (TWDB & sponsor) by March 31, 2020



Texas Water Development Board approved posting the Regional Flood Planning Grant Request for Applications on November 19th!

The Request for Applications and associated documents are now available on our website:

<https://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/planning/documents/2023/index.asp>

Regional Flood Planning Grant Application Documents:

- [Request for Applications Posting](#)
- [Application Instructions](#)
- [Application Checklist](#)
- [Draft Scope of Work](#)
- [Draft Contractor \(Planning Group Sponsor\) Task Budget](#)
- [Board item document](#)

These documents are available on our website at:

<http://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/planning/planningdocu/2023/index.asp>

Funding the Planning Process

Total \$19,500,000

Region	RFPG Name	Allocated Funds
1	Canadian-Upper Red	\$1,008,200.00
2	Lower Red-Sulphur-Cypress	\$910,400.00
3	Trinity	\$2,520,200.00
4	Sabine	\$947,600.00
5	Neches	\$1,148,900.00
6	San Jacinto	\$2,446,000.00
7	Upper Brazos	\$961,500.00
8	Lower Brazos	\$1,485,500.00
9	Upper Colorado	\$946,200.00
10	Lower Colorado-Lavaca	\$1,373,700.00
11	Guadalupe	\$961,300.00
12	San Antonio	\$1,295,000.00
13	Nueces	\$1,143,700.00
14	Upper Rio Grande	\$1,081,800.00
15	Lower Rio Grande	\$1,270,000.00



Image: Brent Hanson, U.S. Geological Survey. Public domain.

Questions? Comments?

RFPG Responsibilities: Scope of Work Overview (20 minutes)

General Document Cross-Reference

Regional Flood Planning Contract Document References			2023 Regional Flood Plan Chapter, Associated TAC Sections, and Content		
TWDB Contract Reimbursement Accounting Number ('CAS')	Exhibit A - Contract SOW Task	Exhibit C - General Guidelines for Regional Flood Plan Development	Regional Flood Plan Chapter Number	Primary TAC Section	General Content
1	1	1	1	§361.30; §361.31; §361.32	Planning Area Description
2	2A	2	2	361.33	Existing Condition Flood Risk Analyses
3	2B			361.34	Future Condition Flood Risk Analyses

Task 1 – Planning Area Description



Llano dam on the Llano river sits on the banks of the county seat.

Image: TWDB

A general description of the region, including:

- social & economic character
- flood-prone areas, types of major flood risks, and key historical flood events
- political subdivisions with flood related authority
- the extent of local regulation and development codes relevant to flooding
- existing or proposed natural flood mitigation features and constructed major flood infrastructure

Task 2A & 2B – Existing & Future Condition Flood Risk Analyses

Perform existing and future condition **flood hazard analyses** to determine the location and magnitude of both 1.0% and 0.2% annual chance flood events



Develop existing & future condition **flood exposure analyses** to identify who and what might be harmed for both 1.0% and 0.2% annual chance flood events.

Perform existing & future condition **vulnerability analyses** to identify vulnerabilities of communities and critical facilities

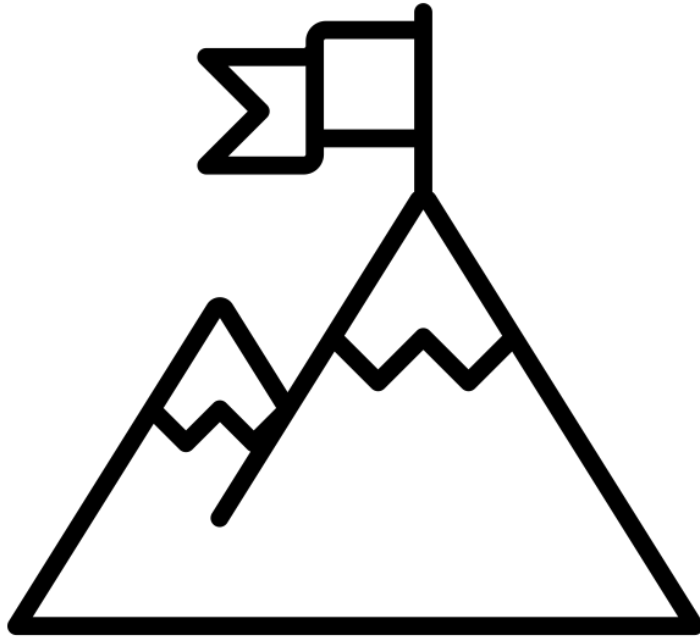
Task 3A – Evaluation & Recommendations on Floodplain Management Practices

- Consider how current floodplain management practices or regulations increase flood risks.
- Consider how the 1.0% annual chance floodplain and associated flood risks may change over time.
- Consider adopting minimum floodplain management/land use standards that an entity must adopt prior to including any evaluations, projects, or strategies in the regional flood plan.



West Fork San Jacinto River near Humble, Texas after Hurricane Harvey
Image: Steve Fitzgerald, Harris County Flood Control District

Task 3B – Flood Mitigation & Floodplain Management Goals

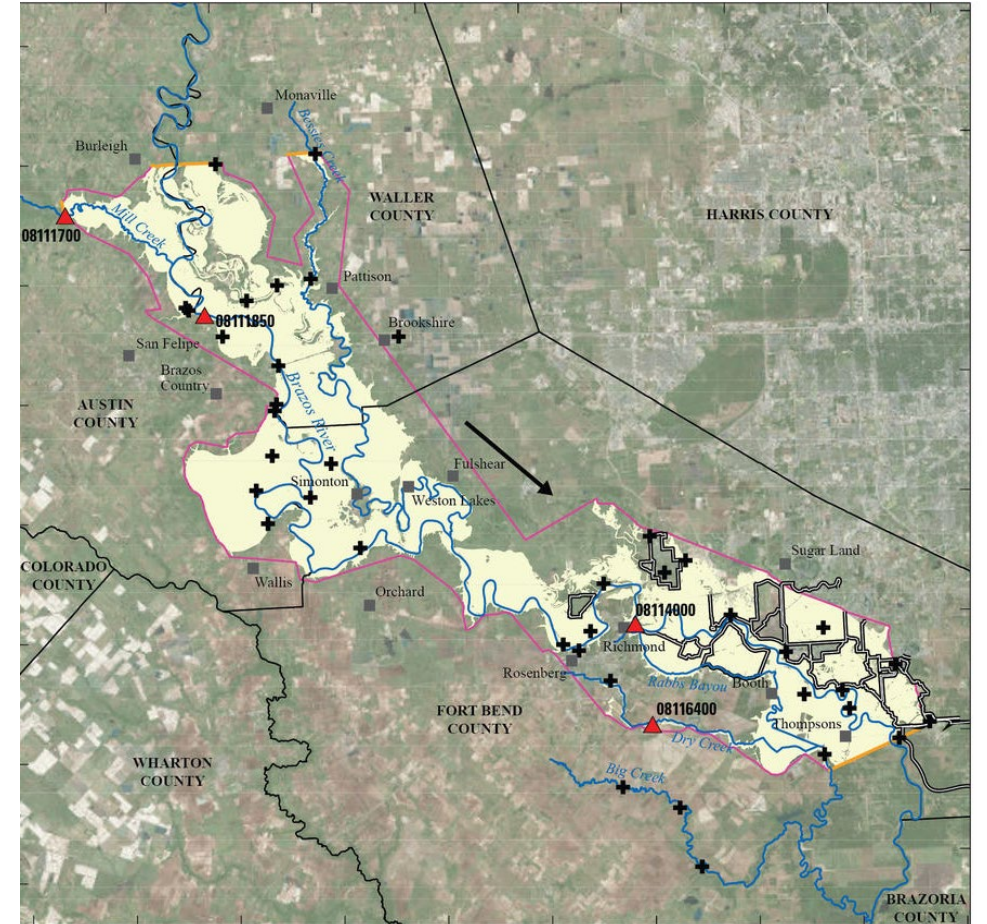


Created by Birckhead Creative
from Noun Project

- Identify specific and achievable flood mitigation and floodplain management goals
 - Short (10 year) & Long-Term (30 year)
- State the levels of residual flood risk after goals are fully met.

Task 4A – Flood Mitigation Needs Analysis

- Identify locations within the region that have the greatest flood mitigation and flood risk study needs.
- Based on the analyses and goals developed by the RFPG under Tasks 2A through 3B

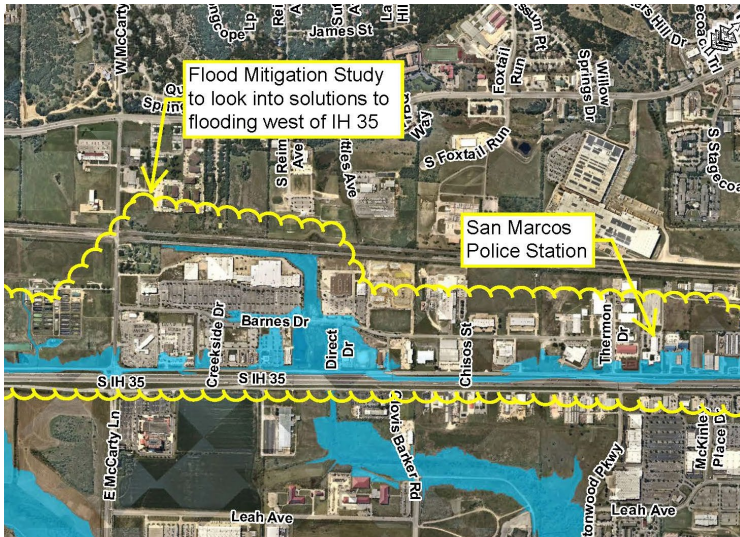


Map of inundated areas (yellow areas) on the lower Brazos River after Hurricane Harvey
Image: USGS

Key Terms for Tasks 4 & 5: FME, FMP, FMS

Flood Management Evaluation (FME)

- A proposed flood study of a specific, flood-prone area that is needed in order to assess flood risk and/or determine whether there are potentially feasible FMSs or FMPs.



Cottonwood Creek Flood Study, San Marcos, TX.

Image: City of San Marcos

Flood Management Strategy (FMS)

- A proposed plan to reduce flood risk or mitigate flood hazards to life or property (may or may not require associated FMPs to be implemented).



Exploration Green project, Clear Lake City, TX

Image: Texas Water Resources Institute

Flood Mitigation Project (FMP)

- A proposed project (structural and non-structural) that when implemented will reduce flood risk, mitigate flood hazards to life or property.

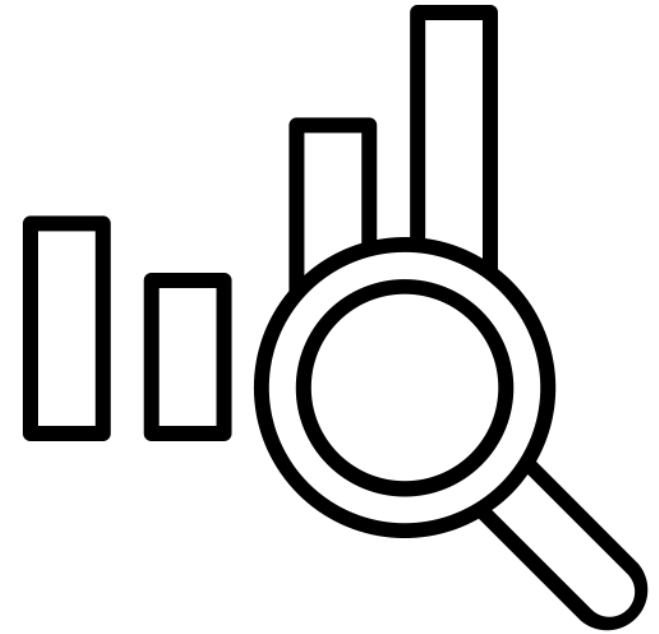


El Paso storm water project, El Paso, TX

Image: El Paso Water

Task 4B – Identification and Evaluation of Potential FMEs & Potentially Feasible FMSs and FMPs

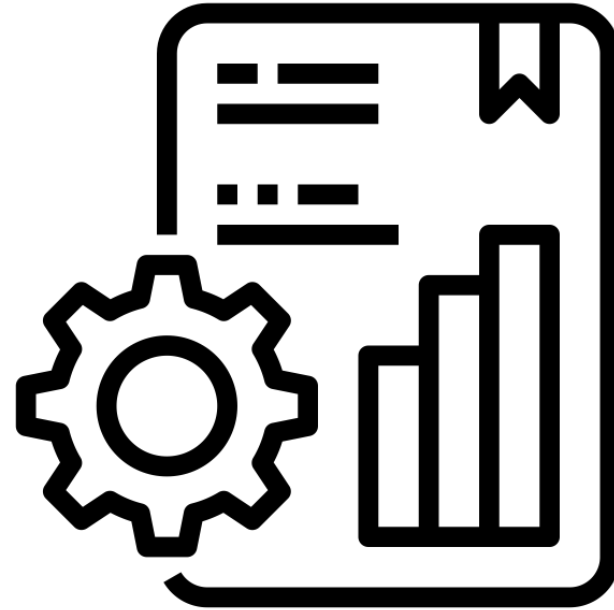
- Identify potential FMEs and potentially feasible FMSs and FMPs based on process developed with public input
- Evaluate potential FMEs and potentially feasible FMSs and FMPs based on a variety of factors described in rules and guidance.
- The FMPs should be permittable, constructible, and implementable.



Created by Pascal Heß
from Noun Project

Task 4C – Prepare and Submit Technical Memorandum

- Include all deliverables from Tasks 1 to 4B detailed in the Scope of Work
- TWDB Guidance Document will provide more information.
- Tentative Due Date: January 2022



Created by Komkrit Noenpoempisut
from Noun Project

Task 5 – Recommendation of FMEs, FMSs & FMPs

- Recommend FMEs that are most likely to identify potentially feasible FMSs and FMPs based on evaluations under Task 4B
- Recommend FMSs and FMPs to reduce the impacts of flood based on evaluations under Task 4B
- Recommendations should be based on comparison of alternatives



Created by Kwesi Phillips
from Noun Project

Regional & State Flood Planning Long-Range Planning Process



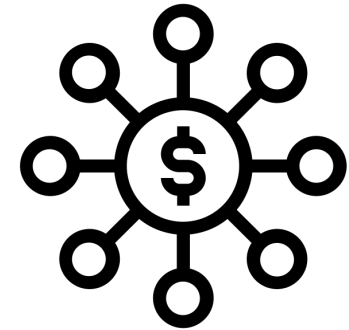
Created by Andrejs Kirma
from Noun Project

Regional Flood Plans will identify flood risk and recommend FMEs, FMSs, and FMPs within regions.



Created by Creative Stall
from Noun Project

State Flood Plan will rank recommended FMEs, FMSs, and FMPs statewide.



Created by Alice Design
from Noun Project

Future state financial assistance may be allocated using a to-be-determined prioritization criteria.*

*Funding to implement projects can also come from local, federal, or other sources.

Task 6A – Impacts of Regional Flood Plan

- Summarize the relative reduction in flood risk that implementation of the plan would achieve.
- Describe impacts of recommended FMSs and FMPs on environment, agriculture, recreation, water quality, erosion, sedimentation, and navigation.
- State that FMPs will not negatively affect neighboring areas.



Crops in the lower Rio Grande Valley
Image: TWDB



Recreational boating.
Image: TWDB



Dolan Falls
Image: TWDB

Task 6B – Impacts on Water Supply

- Summarize how Regional Flood Plan will affect water supply.
- How would FMSs and FMPs contribute to water supply?
- How would FMSs and FMPs impact water supply, availability, or projects in the State Water Plan?



© Texas Water Development Board

Task 7 – Flood Response Information and Activities

- Summarize existing flood response preparations.
- Coordinate with entities in the region to gather information
- RFPGs do not perform analyses or other activities related to disaster response or recovery.



Texas State Guard Hurricane Harvey emergency response.

Image: Texas State Guard

Task 8 – Administrative, Regulatory, and Legislative Recommendations

- Develop policy recommendations to implement and achieve the RFPG's stated goals and plans.
- Consider potential new revenue-raising opportunities to fund flood activities in the region.



Image: TWDB

Task 9 – Flood Infrastructure Financing Analysis

- Survey and report on how sponsors propose to finance recommended FMEs and FMPs
- Include recommendations on the proposed role of the State in financing FMEs and FMPs



Dam on the Llano River under Hwy 16 in Llano, Texas.

Image: TWDB

Task 10 – Public Participation & Plan Adoption

Administrative activities not included in other tasks, including:

- Meeting preparations, notices, agendas, materials, minutes, presentations, and public comments
- Website creation and maintenance
- Intraregional and interregional coordination and communication to develop the regional flood plan.



TWDB flood outreach meeting in Bastrop, TX.

Image: TWDB



Image: Brent Hanson, U.S. Geological Survey. Public domain.

Questions? Comments?



Region 15 Lower Rio Grande

Regional Flood Planning Group

Bylaws

Adopted November 5, 2020

(page is intentionally left blank)

Table of Contents

ARTICLE I.	Names.....	1
Section 1	Organization.....	1
Section 2	Flood Planning Region.....	1
ARTICLE II.	Establishment and Purpose	1
ARTICLE III.	Principal Administrative Office.....	1
ARTICLE IV.	Responsibilities	1
ARTICLE V.	Voting Membership	2
Section 1	Composition	2
Section 2	Terms of Office	2
Section 3	Conditions of Membership.....	2
Section 4	Selections of Members.....	3
Section 5	Attendance	4
Section 6	Code of Conduct.....	4
Section 7	Removal of Voting Members.....	5
ARTICLE VI.	Non-Voting Membership.....	6
Section 1	Mandatory Members	6
Section 2	Discretionary Members.....	7
Section 3	Code of Conduct.....	7
ARTICLE VII.	Designated Alternates	7
ARTICLE VIII.	Officers.....	8
Section 1	Officers, Restrictions, and Terms of Office.....	8
Section 2	Selection.....	8
Section 3	Removal of Officers.....	8
Section 4	Vacancies of Officers	9
Section 5	Duties of Each Officer	9
Section 6	Executive Committee	9
Section 7	Designated Alternates.....	10
ARTICLE IX.	Meetings.....	10
Section 1	Open Meetings and Notice.....	10
Section 2	Regular Meetings.....	10
Section 3	Called (Special) Meetings.....	11
Section 4	Agenda.....	11
Section 5	Quorum	11
Section 6	Applicability of Robert’s Rules of Order	11
Section 7	Public Meetings Required By Law.....	11
Section 8	Minutes.....	11
ARTICLE X.	Making Decisions	12
Section 1	Applicability; No Written Proxies.....	12
Section 2	Decision-Making Process.....	12

Region 15 Lower Rio Grande Regional Flood Planning Group Bylaws

Section 3 Approving Recommended Flood Management Evaluations (FME), Flood Management Strategies (FMS), and Flood Mitigation Projects (FMP) 13

Section 4 Final Adoption of Regional Flood Plan; Amendments 13

ARTICLE XI. Books and Records 13

Section 1 Required Documents and Retainment 13

Section 2 Inspection and Copying 13

Section 3 Availability of Reports 14

ARTICLE XII. Committees 14

Section 1 Establishment 14

Section 2 Membership 14

Section 3 Officers 14

Section 4 Meetings 15

Section 5 Books and Records 15

Section 6 Code of Conduct 15

ARTICLE XIII. Compensation/Reimbursement 15

ARTICLE XIV. Contractual Services 15

ARTICLE XV. Adopting and Amending the Bylaws 16

ARTICLE XVI. Resolution Adopting Bylaws 16

ARTICLE I. Names

Section 1 Organization

The official name of this organization shall be the “Region 15 Lower Rio Grande Regional Flood Planning Group” (hereinafter “Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG”).

Section 2 Flood Planning Region

The official name and boundaries of the flood planning region designated by the Texas Water Development Board (hereinafter “TWDB”) in accordance with Senate Bill 8 of the 86th Regular Texas Legislature on April 9, 2020 , shall be the “Region 15 Lower Rio Grande Flood Planning Region” (hereinafter “Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR”).

ARTICLE II. Establishment and Purpose

The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG was established by the TWDB on October 1, 2020, through the designation of initial flood planning group members. The purpose of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG is to carry out the responsibilities placed on regional flood planning groups as required by Texas Water Code Chapter 16 and TWDB rules, including 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapters 361 and 362.

ARTICLE III. Principal Administrative Office

The principal administrative office of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall be the principal business offices of the planning group sponsor. The administrative officer of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG for purposes of the Texas Open Records Act shall be an individual designated by the planning group sponsor. The Chair of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall ensure that the mailing address and physical address of the principal office and administrative officer are provided to all members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG and the Executive Administrator of the TWDB.

ARTICLE IV. Responsibilities

The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall have the responsibility for performing the functions defined in Texas Water Code, Chapter 16 and in 31 TAC Chapters 361 and 362 related to regional flood planning for the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR. Foremost among those responsibilities shall be the development of a regional flood plan for the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR that identifies flood risks, establishes flood mitigation and floodplain management goals, and recommends evaluations, strategies, and projects to reduce flood risks.

ARTICLE V. Voting Membership

Section 1 Composition

The initial voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall be comprised of the initial flood planning group members as designated by the TWDB on October 1, 2020. The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may subsequently add additional voting members through a process in conformance with these bylaws, specifically Section 4 of this Article.

The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPGs shall at all times, maintain each of the required voting positions listed in 31 TAC §361.11(e). However, if the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR does not have an interest in one of the categories, then the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall so advise the Executive Administrator of the TWDB and an individual member designation may not be required.

The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall provide a current list of its voting and non-voting positions and the individual member name that fills each position to the TWDB.

The voting membership of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall not exceed 18 members.

Section 2 Terms of Office

The terms of all initial voting members shall expire on July 10, 2023. Upon the expiration of the initial terms, all voting members shall draw lots for additional terms of five years or two years, such that half of the voting members' terms will expire in two additional years and the other half in five additional years. If there is an odd number of voting members at the time that lots are drawn, one more than half shall draw lots for the two-year terms.

Except for the initial terms of the initial voting members and the two-year terms described above, all subsequent terms of office for voting members shall be five years, the goal of staggering the terms of office having been accomplished.

There are no limits to the number of terms a member may serve. Upon the expiration of a member's term, a majority vote of the total voting membership shall be required for the member to continue to serve for a subsequent term. If a member fails to be affirmed for a subsequent term, then the voting members shall initiate procedures to appoint a successor utilizing the process set forth under Section 4 of this Article.

Section 3 Conditions of Membership

In order to be eligible for voting membership on the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG, a person must be capable of adequately representing the interest for which a member is sought, be willing to participate in the regional flood planning process, attend meetings, and abide by these bylaws.

Section 4 Selections of Members

4.1 Filling Vacancies

No later than ninety calendar days prior to the expiration of a voting member's term, or within forty-five calendar days after the removal of or unanticipated resignation of a voting member, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall post public notice on its website and any other relevant websites and notify via email the county clerk in each county located in whole or in part in the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR soliciting nominations for a successor, identifying the particular interest for which the nomination is sought, stating the conditions of membership, delineating the method for submitting nominations, and establishing a deadline for submission of nominations within fifteen days from the date that public notice was posted. Members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may also submit nominations in the manner prescribed in the public notice.

The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG Executive Committee shall receive and process the nominations and, no sooner than ten calendar days after the deadline for submitting nominations, shall recommend a nominee to the voting membership as a whole, giving strong consideration to a consensus nominee from those individuals and entities that collectively represent that interest. The Executive Committee shall not be bound by the nominations received and may consider any person who meets the conditions of membership as a nominee. The voting membership as a whole shall not be bound by the recommendation of the Executive Committee and may consider any person who meets the conditions of membership as a nominee.

The voting members shall attempt to select a successor by consensus. If efforts to reach consensus fail, the Chair shall call for a vote on a nominee. A majority vote of the voting members present shall be required to appoint a successor. If the voting members fail to select a successor, the voting members shall consider other nominations until a successor can be selected by consensus or majority vote of the voting members present.

4.2 Adding and Removing New Voting Positions

In addition to selecting successor voting members to fill vacancies caused by removal or the expiration of a term, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may, at any time, add additional voting positions including in any new interest categories or additional representatives of the required interest categories in Texas Water Code §16.062(c) and 31 TAC §361.11(e), that the RFPG considers appropriate for development of its RFP. The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG must use the selection process set forth in this section for filling vacancies.

Adding any new voting position that increases the total number of voting positions may only occur upon a two-thirds vote of all existing voting positions (31 TAC §361.11(i)).

If a new voting position is created, the existing voting members shall select a nominee to fill the new position by majority vote of the voting members present and shall determine by consensus, but not less than agreement of a majority of

the voting members present, the exact applicability of the membership term provisions and restrictions to the new member at the time of the new members selection.

The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may, at any time, remove a voting position as long as the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPGs maintains each of the required voting positions listed in 31 TAC §361.11(e). Removal of a voting position requires a majority vote of all existing voting positions. If there is currently a member serving in the voting position to be removed, that member will be removed from their position and the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG is not required to remove the voting member by the process set forth in Section 7 of this Article.

If upon the designation of initial flood planning group members by the TWDB on October 1, 2020, there is a vacant voting position for one or more of the required interest categories in 31 TAC §361.11(e), the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall solicit nominations by generally utilizing the selection process set forth in this section, A nominee may be selected to fill the vacant voting position upon a majority vote of the voting members present.

In both the consideration of nominees and the selection of new voting positions and members, the Executive Committee and other voting members shall strive to achieve geographic, ethnic, and gender diversity.

4.3 *Outgoing Members*

Outgoing voting members shall be given the opportunity to fully participate in the selection process for their successors and shall serve until their successors take office. However, no member shall participate in a vote in which he or she is a nominee.

Because initial members continue to serve for additional terms of either two or five years at the end of their initial terms as set forth under Section 2 of this Article, this Section 4 shall not apply to the regular expiration of the initial terms of the initial members; however, this section shall apply to the selection of a successor for a removed voting member during the initial terms.

Section 5 Attendance

All members shall make a good faith effort to attend all Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG meetings. Records of attendance shall be kept by the Secretary at all Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG meetings and hearings and presented as part of the minutes. Voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG that have recorded absences from three consecutive meetings and/or hearings, or at least one-half of the sum of all meetings and hearings in the preceding twelve months, shall be considered to have engaged in excessive absenteeism and shall be subject to removal from membership under Section 7 of this Article.

Section 6 Code of Conduct

Members and designated alternates of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall conduct the business of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG in an ethical manner and shall avoid any form or appearance of a conflict of interest, real or apparent, by observing the following:

(a) No member or designated alternate of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFG shall:

- (1) Solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from suppliers or potential suppliers of services, materials, or equipment, including subcontractors under recipient contracts; or
- (2) Participate in the selection, award, or administration of a procurement where the member or designated alternate has a financial or other substantive interest in the organization being considered for award. Such conflict may be due to any of the following having a financial or familial relationship with the organization:
 - (i) the member or designated alternate;
 - (ii) the member's or designated alternate's family;
 - (iii) the member's or designated alternate's business partner(s); or
 - (iv) a person or organization that employs, or is about to employ, any of the persons listed in (i)-(iii), above.
- (3) Participate in any deliberation, decision, or vote that would constitute a conflict of interest under federal, state, or local law.

(b) Potential conflicts of interest shall be clearly stated by the voting member or designated alternate prior to any deliberation or action on an agenda item with which the voting member or designated alternate may be in conflict. Where the potential conflict is restricted to a divisible portion of an agenda item, the Chair may divide the agenda item into parts, at the Chair's discretion, for deliberation and voting purposes. An abstention from participation in deliberations, decisions, or voting and the reasons therefor shall be noted in the minutes.

Section 7 Removal of Voting Members

(a) Grounds for Removal of Voting Members. The following shall constitute grounds for removal of a voting member:

- (1) engaging in excessive absenteeism as defined under Section 5 of this Article
- (2) any violation or attempted violation of the Public Information Act (Government Code Chapter 552) or the Open Meetings Act (Government Code Chapter 551);
- (3) failure to abide by the code of conduct provisions set forth under Section 6 of this Article;
- (4) change in status so that the member no longer represents the interest he or she was selected to represent;
- (5) falsifying documents;
- (6) any other serious violation of these bylaws as may be determined by the voting members; or
- (7) the voting member's designated alternate engages in any acts described in subdivisions (2), (3), (5) or (6) of this subsection.

(b) Process for Removing Voting Members. Voting members may be removed at any time for any of the grounds for removal of voting members set forth in subsection (a) of this section. Any member with knowledge or suspicion that a voting member or designated alternate has engaged in acts or that events have occurred constituting a ground for removal under subsection (a) of this section shall report such information or suspicion to the Chair. The Chair, upon

discovering or receiving such information, shall make a written request to that member to verify or refute the alleged acts or events. The member shall provide a written response to the Chair within fifteen calendar days from the date of receipt of the Chair's request. Within five calendar days of receipt of the member's response, the Chair shall forward copies of the response to the voting members. If the Chair believes that a ground for removal may exist or if the member fails to provide a timely response to the Chair's request, the Chair shall confer with the Executive Committee regarding the matter. The Executive Committee may vote to place an item on the next subsequent agenda addressing the possible removal of the member. If the Chair does not believe that a ground for removal exists and indicates that he or she will not place an item on the next agenda addressing the possible removal, then a written request from five voting members will be required to place an item on a subsequent meeting agenda addressing the possible removal of the member. At the meeting, all discussion and debate with regard to the possible removal shall take place in a closed, executive session, but the final vote on removal shall take place in an open meeting. During the executive session, the Chair shall lay out all of the correspondence and information that has been received related to the possible removal and the member subject to the possible removal may present evidence refuting or verifying the information presented. The voting members may remove the member by a majority vote of the voting members present. The member subject to the removal action shall not participate in any way in the removal vote, nor shall his or her membership count as part of the voting members present of calculating a majority vote.

ARTICLE VI. Non-Voting Membership

Section 1 Mandatory Members

The non-voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall include the non-voting members set forth in 31 TAC §361.11(f)(1)-(7). As necessary, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall include members designated by upstream or downstream RFPGs or members from neighboring RFPGs touching the Gulf Coast, as set forth in 31 TAC §361.11(f)(8)-(9). Such designees shall have no terms of office and shall serve until replaced by the designating entity. However, if the voting members decide by a majority vote of the voting members present, that a particular designee is hindering the regional flood planning efforts of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG, the Chair shall make a written request to the entity requesting the designation of another person to serve as the entity's designee.

In accordance with 31 TAC 361.11(f)(8), if there is an upstream or downstream FPR that is located within the same river basin as the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG must designate a non-voting member liaison to coordinate with the upstream or downstream RFPG.

In accordance with 31 TAC 361.11(f)(9), if Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG touches the Gulf Coast, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG must designate a non-voting member liaison to coordinate with neighboring RFPGs that also touch the Gulf Coast.

Section 2 Discretionary Members

The voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may choose to create a new non-voting position to represent a specific entity by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. The Chair shall make a written request within ten calendar days to the entity requesting the designation of a person to serve as the entity's designee. Such designees shall have no terms of office and shall serve until replaced by the designating entity or until the entity is removed as a non-voting member. However, if the voting members determine by a majority vote of the voting members present vote that a particular designee is hindering the regional flood planning efforts of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG and that the entity should remain as a non-voting member, the Chair shall make a written request within ten calendar days to the entity requesting the designation of another person to serve as the entity's designee.

In addition to creating new non-voting positions for specific entities, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may, at any time, create non-voting positions for specific interest categories that the RFPG considers appropriate for development of its RFP by a two-thirds vote of voting members present. The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG must use the selection process set forth in Article V, Section 4.

Section 3 Code of Conduct

All non-voting members shall comply with the code of conduct provisions under Section 6 of Article V of these bylaws.

ARTICLE VII. Designated Alternates

Each member shall designate an alternate to represent him/her when he/she is unable to attend a meeting. Each member must notify the Chair in writing of the name and appropriate contact information of the member's designated alternate at least forty-eight hours prior to the first meeting at which the designated alternate will appear on behalf of the member. If the member fails to provide such notice, the Chair may forbid the participation of the designated alternate at the meeting or hearing. The Chair shall not recognize the designation of more than one alternate per member at any given time. The Chair shall not recognize more than two alternate designations of any kind per member per calendar year unless the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG expressly decides to waive this provision.

The designated alternate shall enjoy the same voting privileges, or lack thereof, and shall be bound by the same duties, terms, and conditions as the member they represent, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws. However, a designated alternate for a voting member who serves as an officer shall not be allowed to serve in the capacity as an officer in the member's absence.

The Chair shall provide each member with a current list of all members and their designated alternates.

ARTICLE VIII. Officers

Section 1 Officers, Restrictions, and Terms of Office

Voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFG shall select from the voting membership a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary to serve as officers. Each officer shall serve a term of one calendar year. However, the terms of the initial officers selected under Section 2 of this Article shall expire when the regular officers take office as provided under this Article. Except as provided under Section 4 of this Article, an officer shall serve until his or her successor takes office. No two voting members representing the same interest shall serve as officers at the same time. Elections shall be held annually, with no restrictions on the number of consecutive terms an individual may serve as an officer other than those that apply because of his or her status as a voting member under these bylaws.

Section 2 Selection

(a) Initial Officers. No later than at the next scheduled meeting after the adoption of these bylaws, the voting members shall select initial officers. Nominations shall be made from the floor by voting members. The voting members shall select officers from among the nominees by consensus if possible, but not less than agreement of a majority of the voting members present.

(b) Regular Officers. Beginning in January 2022, regular officers shall be selected at the first meeting of each calendar year after the calendar year in which these bylaws were adopted. Written notice of the meeting to select officers shall be sent to all members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFG by the current Secretary thirty calendar days prior to the meeting. Nominations shall be made from the floor by voting members. The voting members shall select officers from among the nominees by consensus, but not less than agreement of a majority of the voting members present.

Section 3 Removal of Officers

Any officer may be removed from office for any of the grounds for removal of voting members set forth under Article V of these bylaws, or for repeated failure to carry out the duties of the office. Removal of an officer shall be decided by a majority vote of the voting members present. Removal of an officer shall be set as an agenda item at the next scheduled meeting upon written request signed by five voting members to the Chair or Secretary. The Chair or Secretary receiving the request shall notify the officer in writing that he or she shall be subject to a removal action at the next scheduled meeting. At the meeting, all discussion and debate with regard to the possible removal shall take place in a closed, executive session, but the final vote on removal shall take place in an open meeting. During the executive session, the presiding officer shall lay out the information that has been received related to the possible removal, and the officer subject to the possible removal action may present evidence refuting or verifying the information presented. If the Chair is the subject of the possible removal action, the Vice-Chair shall preside over the meeting during the agenda item concerning the Chair's removal. The officer subject to the removal action

shall not participate in any way in the removal decision, nor shall his or her membership count as part of the total membership for purposes of calculating a majority vote. The notice of the meeting shall be posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act and shall state that the issue of possibly removing the officer will be on the agenda. Any vacancy caused by the removal shall be filled as provided under Section 4 of this Article. Removing an officer from their office under this section does not remove the member from their voting position on the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG. To remove a voting member from their voting position, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG must follow to the removal process under Article V, Section 7.

Section 4 Vacancies of Officers

Whenever an officer vacancy exists because of death, resignation, or removal, the vacancy shall be filled within thirty days of the event causing the vacancy. Nominations shall be made from the floor by voting members. The voting members shall select a replacement officer from among the nominees by a majority vote of the voting members present. The next highest-ranking officer shall serve in the vacant position until a successor takes office, unless the office of the Secretary becomes vacant, in which case the Chair shall appoint a willing voting member to serve as Secretary until the successor to the Secretary takes office. The person selected to fill a vacancy for an officer shall serve for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office.

Section 5 Duties of Each Officer

(a) Chair. The Chair shall be the executive officer of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG. The Chair will preside at all meetings of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG and perform all duties provided by these bylaws. If the Chair is unable to carry out his/her duties, the Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair.

(b) Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair in the discharge of his/her duties and, in the absence of the Chair, shall assume the Chair's full responsibilities and duties. In the event the Chair is unable to carry out his/her duties, the Vice Chair shall serve as Chair until the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG elects a new Chair under Section 4 of this Article. The Vice-Chair shall perform other duties as assigned by the Chair, or these bylaws.

(c) Secretary. The Secretary shall maintain the minutes and take attendance of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG meetings. The minutes and attendance shall be kept as part of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG official records. The Secretary shall ensure that all notices are properly posted as provided in the bylaws, as required by law, and as required by the Texas Open Meetings Act. The Secretary shall perform other duties as assigned by the Chair or these bylaws. If the both the Chair and Vice Chair are unable to carry out the duties of the Chair, the Secretary shall assume the duties of the Chair.

Section 6 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall be composed of five Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG members, including the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and two voting members-at-large. No two voting members representing the same interest shall

serve as members of the Executive Committee at the same time. The two members-at-large shall be selected annually in the same manner and with the same terms as set forth for the selection of officers under this Article. Members-at-large shall be removed and their vacancies filled in the manner prescribed for officers under this Article.

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for carrying out the duties imposed on it in these bylaws. The voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may delegate administrative decisions to the Executive Committee unless provided otherwise in these bylaws.

All meetings of the Executive Committee shall comply with the provisions related to meetings generally as set forth in Article IX of these bylaws.

Section 7 Designated Alternates

A designated alternate of a member serving as an officer shall not serve in the member's capacity as an officer in lieu of the member. When an officer is absent or otherwise unable to serve, the next highest-ranking officer shall serve for the officer. If no lower ranking officer exists or can serve, then a member designated by the Chair or acting Chair shall serve for the officer.

ARTICLE IX. Meetings

Section 1 Open Meetings and Notice

All meetings of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG, its committees and/or sub-groups, shall be posted and open to the public in the manner of a governmental body under the Texas Open Meetings Act and as set forth in the TWDB rules. All actions of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall be deliberated and undertaken in open meeting, unless otherwise authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act. The time and place of meetings shall be set to facilitate, to the greatest extent possible, the participation of the public in the regional flood planning process. In accordance with TWDB rules, specifically, 31 TAC 361.21, copies of all materials presented or discussed shall be made available for public inspection prior to and following any meeting of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG.

Section 2 Regular Meetings

At least one regular meeting of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall be held in each quarter or more frequently. At the first meeting after the adoption of these bylaws and the first meeting of each calendar year thereafter, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall establish and adopt a regular meeting schedule for the ensuing year. The Secretary shall ensure that an advance notice and an agenda for regular meetings will be provided to the full membership of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG as set forth in TWDB rules. Supporting information and member-requested materials shall be distributed to the full membership with the notice and agenda or at the meeting, as deemed appropriate by the Chair.

Section 3 Called (Special) Meetings

The Chair or a majority of the voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may call special meetings of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG. The Secretary shall ensure that advance notice and an agenda for the called meeting is provided to the full membership of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG as set forth in TWDB rules and the Texas Open Meetings Act. Supporting information and member-requested materials shall be distributed to the full membership with the notice and agenda or at the meeting, as deemed appropriate by the Chair.

Section 4 Agenda

The Secretary of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall ensure that an agenda is prepared and distributed for all meetings, in accordance with Sections 2 and 3 of this Article. Items shall be placed on the agenda by the request of the Chair or by the request of at least two voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG. Consideration for approval of the previous meeting's minutes, as applicable, shall always be among the first items on the agenda. Copies of the agenda and all supporting information shall be made available for public inspection prior to and following any meeting of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG, in accordance with TWDB rules.

Section 5 Quorum

A quorum of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall be a simple majority of the voting members or their designated alternates excluding vacancies. At least a quorum shall be necessary to conduct any business of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG.

Section 6 Applicability of Robert's Rules of Order

Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, meetings of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall be conducted under the provisions of the most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*. However, failure to follow *Robert's Rules of Order* shall not constitute grounds for appeal of an action or a decision of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG.

Section 7 Public Meetings Required By Law

The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall post notice and conduct public meetings that are specifically required by statute and TWDB rule, including those set forth for draft regional flood plan presentation, adoption of amendments to the regional flood plan, and final regional flood plan adoption, in accordance with the requirements of Texas Water Code Chapter 16 and TWDB rules, including 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapters 361 and 362. Notification requirements may be different than those specified in Section 1 of this Article and are specifically delineated in Texas Water Code §16.062 and 31 TAC §361.21.

Section 8 Minutes

(a) The Secretary shall ensure that minutes of all meetings of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG are prepared. The minutes shall:

- (1) state the subject of each deliberation;
- (2) indicate each vote, order, decision, or other action taken;
- (3) indicate those members in attendance, noting the presence of a quorum, and noting the presence of those members of the public who participate in the course of the meeting;
- (4) represent an accurate summary of the meeting's record; and state any other information required by these bylaws to be included in the minutes.

(b) The Secretary shall ensure that true copies of the minutes are provided to the full membership as soon as possible following the meeting, but no later than ten calendar days prior to the next regular meeting of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG.

ARTICLE X. Making Decisions

Section 1 Applicability; No Written Proxies

(a) Unless the method for making a particular decision is set forth in these bylaws, the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG, its committees, and subgroups shall make all decisions utilizing the process set forth in Section 2 of this Article.

(b) Written proxies shall not be allowed in any decision-making by the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG, its committees, or its subgroups. However, designated alternates shall be allowed to participate in decision making as set forth in these bylaws. Because it is important in achieving consensus for all members to participate actively, keep up-to-date on the progress of the group, and develop a common base of information, members shall in good faith attempt to minimize the number of times they are absent from meetings or are represented by their designated alternates.

Section 2 Decision-Making Process

(a) Use of Consensus. The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall attempt to make decisions using a consensus decision-making process. Consensus is an acknowledgement of agreement built by identifying and exploring all members' interests and by agreeing to a solution that satisfies these interests to the greatest extent possible. A consensus is reached when all voting members agree that their major interests have been taken into consideration and addressed in a satisfactory manner so that they can support the decision of the group, or at least not object. The process of building consensus involves the development of alternatives and the assessment of the impacts of those alternatives.

Consensus does not necessarily mean unanimity. Some members may strongly endorse a particular solution while others may accept it as a workable solution. A member can participate in the consensus without embracing each element of the solution with the same fervor as other members, or necessarily having each of his or her interests satisfied to the fullest extent. In a consensus, the members recognize that, given the combination of gains and trade-offs in the decision package and given the current circumstances and alternative options, the resulting solution is the best one the voting members can make at this time.

(b) Failure to Reach Consensus. If after good faith negotiations it appears likely to the Chair that the voting members will be unable to reach consensus, the Chair shall entertain a motion to put the issue to a vote to be conclusively decided by a majority vote of the voting members present.

Section 3 Approving Recommended Flood Management Evaluations (FME), Flood Management Strategies (FMS), and Flood Mitigation Projects (FMP)

The voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFGP shall finally approve each recommended FME, FMS, and FMP by a separate vote by consensus, but not less than a majority vote of the voting members present.

Section 4 Final Adoption of Regional Flood Plan; Amendments

The voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFGP shall finally adopt the regional flood plan for the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR, and any amendments thereto by consensus, but not less than a majority vote of the voting members present.

ARTICLE XI. Books and Records

Section 1 Required Documents and Retainment

Records of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFGP, including: a current membership list with addresses, affiliations, and phone numbers, if not unlisted; the current roster of officers; a copy of the written record of designation of the planning group sponsor political subdivision of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFGP; minutes; agendas; notices; contracts, subcontracts, annual financial statements, and any and all financial records and supporting information; bylaws; records of public hearing; correspondence; memoranda; phone logs; committee or subgroup recommendations or findings; draft and final plans; studies; data of any sort; computer records or models; executive summaries; other work products; and any other pertinent information of a public nature shall be kept at the principal office of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFGP for a period of at least five years or the period of time required of the political subdivision serving as the planning group sponsor, whichever is longer.

The storage and dissemination of all Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFGP records must comply with TAC §361.21(d) and Texas Government Code, Chapter 552 (Public Information Act) regarding the handling of confidential materials.

Section 2 Inspection and Copying

Records of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFGP shall be available for inspection and copying at the principal place of business of the planning group sponsor political subdivision during normal business hours. Procedures and fees for copying and inspection shall be the same as those used by the planning group sponsor political subdivision housing the principal office of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFGP for inspection and copying of its own public records, or as prescribed in the Texas Public Information Act.

Section 3 Availability of Reports

All reports, planning documents, and work products resulting from the regional flood planning grant funding provided by the TWDB and all supporting documentation for the development the regional flood plan shall be made available to the TWDB, the Texas Division of Emergency Management, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Texas Department of Agriculture, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, General Land Office and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality or their successor agencies. Electronic versions of the regional flood plan will be posted on the flood planning group website and the TWDB website.

ARTICLE XII. Committees

Section 1 Establishment

The Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG may by a majority vote of the voting members present establish committees, subcommittees, and subgroups to assist and advise the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG in the development of the regional flood plan, as set forth in 31 TAC §361.12(c). The committee, subcommittee, or subgroup may be formed to address specific issues assigned by the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG and may have a specified term of membership.

Section 2 Membership

Membership in the committees, subcommittees, and subgroups shall follow the requirements and procedures of Article V of these bylaws and 31 TAC §361.12(c). Appointment to committees, subcommittees, or subgroups shall be made by consensus, but not less than agreement of a majority of the voting members present. The terms of office for all members of committees, subcommittees, and subgroups shall be either upon the expiration of the term, if any, specified by the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG in the establishing motion for the committee, subcommittee, or subgroup, or upon the expiration of the persons membership in the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG.

If a RFPG creates a sub-regional committee, subcommittee, or subgroup to address issues related to a specific geographic area smaller than the full FPR, it shall, to the extent practical, define such sub-regional geographic areas based on boundaries that are conterminous with full HUC 8 watersheds located within the FPR. Sub-regional committees, subcommittees, or subgroups formed to address issues related to a specific geographic area smaller than the full FPR must include one voting member representing each of the interest categories listed in 31 TAC §361.11(e).

Section 3 Officers

The Chair, Vice-chair, and Secretary of a committee, subcommittee, or subgroup established by the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall be selected from the duly-elected members of the respective committee, subcommittee, or subgroup. The Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary of the committee, subcommittee, or subgroup established by the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall be elected

to their respective offices by a majority vote of the members of the committee, subcommittee, or subgroup. Additional committee, subcommittee, or subgroup officers with associated responsibilities may be created as necessary by a majority vote of the members of the committee, subcommittee, or subgroup. The additional officers shall be elected by a majority affirmative vote of the members of the committee, subcommittee, or subgroup.

Section 4 Meetings

Requirements and procedures for committee, subcommittee, or subgroup meetings shall follow those established in Article IX of these bylaws, including requirements for notice. Committees, subcommittees, or subgroups may adopt their own rules of procedure, if authorized by the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG and the rules are not in conflict with state law, TWDB rules, or these bylaws.

Section 5 Books and Records

Requirements and procedures for committee, subcommittee, or subgroup books and records shall follow those established for the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG in Article XI of these bylaws.

Section 6 Code of Conduct

Members of a committee, subcommittee, or subgroup are subject to the requirements of Article V, Section 6 of these bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII. Compensation/Reimbursement

Members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG are able to be reimbursed for eligible travel expenses, as authorized by the General Appropriations Act, and as limited by the TWDB regional flood planning grant contract for attendance at a posted meeting of the RFPG. All travel expenses must be documented by the members and submitted to the Chair and the planning group sponsor political subdivision designated by the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG to apply to TWDB for funding. The Chair of the RFPG must certify, in a public meeting, that the travel expenses are eligible for reimbursement and are correct and necessary before the planning group sponsor political subdivision contracting with the TWDB for the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG can compile the travel information from the members and submit reimbursement requests to the TWDB.

ARTICLE XIV. Contractual Services

The voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG shall approve, by a majority vote of the voting members present, persons or entities to provide contractual services for the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG, including all services related to preparation, development, or revisions of the regional flood plan for the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR. However, the voting members may delegate to the Executive Committee the authority to make all administrative decisions concerning amendments to TWDB grant contracts for

services related to regional flood planning, except those decisions concerning amendments related to scopes of work and budgets.

ARTICLE XV. Adopting and Amending the Bylaws

These bylaws shall have full force and effect upon approval and adoption by the voting members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG, acting on behalf of the interests comprising the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande FPR, and upon submission to the TWDB in compliance with 31 TAC §361.11(d). The voting members shall adopt and/or amend these bylaws by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present.

ARTICLE XVI. Resolution Adopting Bylaws

WHEREAS, no bylaws have been adopted governing the conduct of the internal affairs of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG; and

WHEREAS, the set of bylaws presented to and as otherwise modified by agreement during this meeting are suitable for the purpose and their adoption is in the best interests of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG; it is, therefore,

RESOLVED, that the members of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG this _____ day of _____, approve and adopt the bylaws presented to this meeting of members as the bylaws of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the bylaws be authenticated as such by the Secretary of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG and placed in its minute book, and that a full and true copy of the bylaws, certified by the Secretary, be kept at the principal office of the Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG for inspection by members or the public at all reasonable times during business hours.

(date)

(Signature of Secretary)