



Regional Flood Planning Update

May 2023

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Regional Flood Plan Amendment Submittal Guidance

As your group works to finalize the Amended Regional Flood Plan documents, please reference the *Submission Requirements for the Amended Regional Flood Plans* email from FloodPlanning sent on May 10th. This email contains an Amended Regional Flood Plan Checklist as well as specific submittal instructions.

Please especially note Item 16 referenced in the email, which states that each recommended FMP shall be accompanied by either a model, a previously signed and sealed report, and/or an explanation based on engineering judgement to affirm no negative impact. Please include a table based on the template provided to meet this request.

Please contact your TWDB regional flood planner with any questions.

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Additional Guidance on Flood Management Strategies

As your group works to finalize the Amended Regional Flood Plan documents, please reference the Additional guidance on Flood Management Strategies re Ranking email from FloodPlanning sent on April 27th. This email contains detailed guidance for populating the 'NRNC' (Non-recurring, Noncapital Cost) feature class field.

Some regional flood planning groups have recommended Flood Management Strategies (FMS) that were submitted in final regional flood plans but were not included in the example FMS ranking workbook

recently provided. As was briefly discussed during TWDB's [ranking webinar](#) held on March 22, 2023, only recommended FMSs with costs eligible for potential TWDB future funding (i.e., non-recurring, noncapital costs) will be ranked in the state flood plan. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

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Looking Ahead: Second Planning Cycle

Overall Timeline

TWDB currently anticipates the second cycle of regional flood planning to begin late 2023, with RFPGs possibly selecting their consultants in early 2024. The TWDB anticipates an update and simplification to the application process for planning group sponsors that is intended to minimize the documentation requirements and RFPG-Sponsor efforts and increase the process efficiency overall. The TWDB is currently working on the timeline and next steps for the second planning cycle and intends to provide more detailed guidance to all planning groups sponsors this spring or summer. Legislative appropriation of funds will determine the total funding available for RFPGs.

Selection of Planning Group Sponsor

Each regional flood planning cycle, Texas Administrative Code 361.12(a)(1) requires the RFPG to designate a political subdivision as their planning group sponsor. The planning group sponsor will be eligible to apply for financial assistance to be used by the RFPG for planning activities, will prepare and submit funding applications on behalf of the RFPG, and will be responsible for general management of the regional flood planning contract with the TWDB. RFPGs may choose to designate their current planning group sponsor to continue in that role for the 2nd cycle and the RFPG may, at its discretion, designate a different planning group sponsor at any time. Regardless of the decision, action must be taken during a regular RFPG meeting. We recommend this action occur prior to mid-September so that a planning group sponsor is in place to apply for the 2nd cycle of regional flood planning funding and execute an associated grant agreement.

Procurement of Technical Consultants

Texas Administrative Code 361.12(a)(2) and 361.72(c) require the planning group sponsor's and any subcontractor to obtain technical consultants and professional services only if the services are procured through a request for qualifications process in accordance with the Texas Government Code Chapter 2254. Additionally, planning group sponsors must follow their own procurement requirements in each planning cycle including all requirements of State procurement laws related to solicitation and procurement of professional engineering services. The requirement for RFPGs to select a technical consultant at the beginning of each planning cycle is intended to ensure an opportunity for the RFPG to evaluate technical consultants for the upcoming planning cycle based, for example, on qualifications and previous relevant experience.

Remaining First Cycle Budget

We are not advising Sponsors to hold significant regional flood planning grant funds for performing work beyond July 14, 2023, other than to perform follow-up work required to obtain TWDB acceptance and final Board approval of the amended regional flood plan. The RFPGs should work with their consultants to determine how to budget through the end of the contract reimbursable expense date (December 29,

2023 per Amendment No. 1, Section 5.C.).

Second Cycle Budget

RFPGs may meet and discuss any topic related to the 1st or 2nd cycle at any time. However, only work that is specified in the current contract will be reimbursed, with three limited exceptions: we anticipate possible allowances for limited costs associated with the procurement of the technical consultants, requesting funds from the TWDB, and for work performed at the contract initiation date for limited administrative costs associated with public notices. Scope of work items for the 2nd cycle should not be performed until the 2nd cycle contract is executed, with the limited exceptions noted above.

Amendments to the Regional Flood Plan

Once a regional flood plan is approved by the TWDB, then a RFPG may choose to amend their approved regional plan based on the RFPG's schedule and need at any time. We recommend that the RFPG carefully consider the need for the amendment including the time, RFPG's resources, limited funds, and contract requirements. It would be efficient to wait to amend a regional plan, less frequently, to incorporate as many changes as possible through a single amendment. Another factor to consider is how the RFPG intends to fund the work required to support and execute an amendment to a regional plan including performing project analysis and preparing amended regional flood plan content. RFPGs may choose to require the sponsors of individual projects looking to amend a plan to assist in paying for producing amendment materials if they request to amend a project into an existing regional plan (i.e., rather than waiting to add that project to the next regional plan). Such decisions are at the discretion of the planning groups and based on the resources that are available to the planning group.

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State Flood Plan: Q&A

1. What are the next steps for ranking for the state flood plan?

TWDB appreciates the thoughtful discussion and all feedback received from the stakeholders on the proposed TWDB State Flood Planning project ranking methods. The information shared with us are helpful and a critical part of our process. The input received will be reviewed and considered by TWDB when we finalize the draft ranking methods. Associated draft ranking will ultimately be included in the draft State Flood Plan which will also go out for public comment. The final ranking methods which will be used in the 2024 State Flood Plan are at the discretion of the Board.

2. Are all recommended Flood Mitigation Projects (FMPs)/ Flood Management Strategies (FMEs) going to be included in the SFP?

We anticipate that all recommended FMPs and FMEs in the Board-approved regional flood plans, and all recommended FMSs that have a non-recurring/non-capital cost in the Board-approved regional flood plans will be ranked in the SFP.

3. If an FMP is included in a Board-approved regional flood plan and the State Flood Plan, will the sponsor be eligible to apply for FIF funding (under the assumption there will be additional FIF funding)?

Any recommended FMP in the SFP that meets program requirements for FIF or other TWDB

administered flood funding programs could be eligible to apply for related financial assistance. Funding programs, such as the FIF program have requirements imposed by rules and statutes that inform eligibility.

4. Will the TWDB amend the SFP when regions have amended their RFP?

Similar to the water planning process, we anticipate that some amendments to the SFP may be necessary. The timing of potential TWDB funding programs and number of RFP amendments will be taken into consideration. However, the TWDB does not anticipate frequent amendments to the SFP but to, instead, take ‘batches’ of regional amendments at less frequent intervals which remain TBD.

5. Are other state agencies with flood grant funds (e.g., GLO) looking at inclusion of projects in the SFP as an eligibility requirement or even some sort of prioritization scoring criteria/boost? We are currently unaware of any such discussion or effort by other state agencies to include funding program requirements related to the SFP. We anticipate that the next State Hazard Mitigation Plan may be aligned with the State Flood Plan.

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Delays in Payment Requests

Due to a high volume of payment requests and TWDB staffing shortages, we currently anticipate payment processing to take about seven to nine weeks (approximately 3-5 weeks longer than normally expected). We apologize for any delays in receiving payments but the agency recognizes that timely responses are important to all contractors and subcontractors that depend on prompt payment of invoices, and the agency is carefully tracking payment requests to work towards minimizing the impact on Sponsors and their contractors in this process. Regional planning group sponsors and their Contractors are encouraged to continue submitting payments requests that are ready so that they can be placed in the payment request queue.

The agency is working to process all remaining payment requests received to date, and hope to resolve the backlog of payments and address the staffing issues causing current delays in payments as soon as possible.

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Flood Research Project Updates

The Flood Planning division is leading the following TWDB flood research projects:

Social Vulnerability Index Research Project

Development of a flood-specific social vulnerability index (F-SVI) for Texas, which can be used to guide

prioritization for flood planning and flood mitigation funding efforts. The TWDB is contracted with the University of Texas at Austin to complete this research.

The research team has completed a literature review and in the coming weeks, will be interviewing flood experts across the state to inform development of the F-SVI tool. TWDB is seeking individuals who are interested in participating on a review panel to support the work of this project. Please email Megan Ingram at megan.ingram@twdb.texas.gov with any questions.

Flood Infrastructure Assessment Methodologies and Toolkit Research Project

Development of a flood infrastructure assessment methodologies and toolkit, which can be used to develop readily usable planning level infrastructure condition assessment methods, including a toolkit for assessing the condition of flood infrastructure at a regional planning level for future planning cycles.

The project is expected to kick off in June 2023 and will include interviewing flood experts and communities across the state. TWDB is seeking individuals who are interested in participating on a review panel to support the work of this project. Please email Reem Zoun at reem.zoun@twdb.texas.gov with any questions.

Fathom Future Flood Risk

At the start of the first cycle of regional flood planning, the TWDB contracted with Fathom to generate statewide coverage of existing condition flood hazard data (Cursory Floodplain dataset) to the regional flood planning groups. The TWDB is beginning to work AECOM and Fathom to generate to with a consistent statewide future condition flood hazard dataset. TWDB intends to make this data available to the regional flood planning groups for the second cycle of regional flood planning. This future condition flood hazard information is intended to project to the year 2060 with consideration to: land use changes, future climate variability in collaboration with the office of the state climatologist at the Texas A&M University and associated rainfall patterns, sea level rise and land subsidence.

Please email Tressa Olsen at tressa.olsen@twdb.texas.gov or reem.zoun@twdb.texas.gov with any questions.

For more information on TWDB's flood research projects, please visit <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/research/index.asp>.

Progress Updates, Reminders, and Upcoming Events

To date, RFPGs and their committees have held over 500 public meetings! Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to this important effort.

As a reminder, the meeting at which the RFPG adopts their regional flood requires **14 days** public notice. For other types of actions and associated public notice periods, please reference our [Public Notice Quick Reference Guide](#).

As a reminder, please review your RFPG bylaws regarding voting members' terms of office. Per Section 2 of Article V of the model Bylaws provided by TWDB, 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 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. The decision on how the RFPG implements drawing lots is within the group's purview, however, we can share how two regions conducted their process of drawing lots:

- 1) One group counted the members needing and wrote 2 years and 5 years on slips of paper. Each member blindly selected a piece of paper. If a member was unable to attend physically, the chair pulled the paper slip on their behalf.
- 2) Another group input voting members into an Excel spreadsheet and allowed an Excel function to randomly generate 2 and 5 for each member.

We recognize that some RFPGs have revised this section of their bylaws, so please review Article V of your RFPG bylaws to ensure compliance.

Our next Planning Group Sponsors' Call is planned for June 7, 2023.

Our next Technical Consultants' Conference Call is to be determined.

Our next Chairs' Conference Call date is to be determined.

For more information regarding the TWDB Regional Flood Planning Program, please visit [our website](#).

Note: This email was sent to all RFPG members, sponsors, and technical consultants.

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