



Regional Flood Planning Update

November 2025

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A Message from Reem Zoun, Assistant Deputy Executive Administrator

Dear Regional Flood Planning Stakeholders,

As we enter the holiday season, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to each of you for the important work you do to help make the state of Texas safer and more resilient to flooding. It has been a challenging year but each of you show up to add your expertise to the planning process – something that could not happen without you. We experienced firsthand the necessity of our collective efforts, and we will continue striving to ensure that both the regional and state flood plans are the strongest they can be.

TWDB is currently working on implementing [SB3](#), passed during 89th Legislature 2nd Special Session, a bill relating to outdoor warning sirens in flash flood-prone areas. Some of you—particularly those in counties included in the Governor’s disaster declarations—have received or will receive requests from us for feedback on this topic in the coming months.

We are also working to implement the Flood Management Evaluation (FME) for small communities effort during this planning cycle. The purpose of the TWDB FME effort is for the TWDB to perform a limited number of FMEs as identified and selected by the RFPGs and return the results of the studies to the respective regions and communities so they can identify and recommend flood mitigation projects.

I am pleased to share that nearly all 14 second 2023 Regional Flood Plan amendments have been approved and are scheduled to go before the Board in spring 2026. The information contained in these amendments will form the basis for the amended 2024 State Flood Plan.

Sincerely, Reem

TWDB Staff Updates: New Hires and Promotions

NEW Flood Data Analyst—Lizeth Perez

Lizeth joined the TWDB in October 2025 as a Flood Data Analyst. She holds a bachelor's degree in Environmental Geoscience from Texas A&M University and recently defended her master's thesis in Paleoceanography at University College London. Lizeth began her professional career as a data manager for the Surface Water Quality Monitoring program at the TCEQ. Outside of work, Lizeth enjoys being outdoors, traveling, and roller skating.

NEW FPPG Project Manager – Pamela Mugisha

Pamela joined the TWDB in July as a Project Manager in the Flood Protection and Planning Grants Team where she is managing a number of FIF projects. Pamela will soon graduate with a PhD in Environmental Engineering from Texas A&M University, Kingsville. Before joining the TWDB, Pamela worked in engineering consulting with roles in planning and design projects for storm and wastewater as well as transportation projects. When she's not at work, you'll find her watching Netflix and reading thriller books.

NEW Flood Data Analyst– Olga Bauer

Olga Bauer joined the Texas Water Development Board in 2019 as a Hydrologist in the Groundwater Department, where she conducted aquifer studies. In September 2025, she transitioned to a Flood Data Analyst role in the Flood Planning Division. Prior to joining the government sector, Olga began her career in the oil and gas industry. She holds a master's degree in Geosciences from the Arctic University of Norway in Tromsø. Outside of work, Olga enjoys spending time outdoors, gardening, and running.

NEW Regional Flood Planning Team Lead – Sarah Magana

Sarah Magana has been promoted to the Team Lead role on the Regional Flood Planning Team. Sarah holds a bachelor's degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology with a focus in Marine Biology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Sarah joined the TWDB in 2024 where she oversees the flood planning efforts for three regions: Region 7 Upper Brazos, Region 9 Upper Colorado, and Region 10 Lower Colorado. Before joining the TWDB, Sarah analyzed drinking water quality with the TCEQ. Outside of work, you'll find her trail running, gardening and two-stepping.

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Recent Presentations and Testimony

Reem Zoun, assistant deputy executive administrator at the Texas Water Development Board testified at the Texas Senate and House Committees on Disaster Preparedness and Flooding joint hearing at the Texas Capitol in Austin, Wednesday, July 23, 2025.

State Flood Planner Cynthia Nolasco and Regional Flood Planner Nick Collins presented on the Regional and State Flood Planning processes at the 2025 APA Conference in October 2025 in Bryan-College Station.

Reem Zoun attended and presented at the Region 11 meeting held in Comfort, Texas in September 2025. Reem served as a keynote speaker at the Texas Section American Society of Civil Engineers annual conference in San Marcos in September 2025 and represented Texas at the State Resilience Leaders workshop sponsored by American Flood Coalition in September 2025.

Reem also presented at the Environmental & Water Resources Institute San Antonio Workshop in July 2025, at the American Society of Civil Engineers Austin lunch meeting in September 2025 and

participated and presented at the Texas Watershed Coordinator Roundtable in Fayetteville Texas in November 2025.

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In Case You Missed It:

Survey on SOW Task 5B - Recommend a list of Flood Management Evaluations to be performed by the TWDB: Attendees at the September technical conference call expressed interest in learning what other RFPGs are considering as metrics to determine “small and rural communities with limited resources” for Task 5B. The TWDB will facilitate a Chair-led call (Dec. 2025) to provide you with the opportunity to discuss and learn from the other RFPGs. Please fill out the [survey](#) by November 21, 2025.

TWDB Soliciting Input from Stakeholders with Flood-Related Expertise: The has been charged by Governor Abbott with facilitating [Senate Bill 3](#) to identify flash flood-prone areas with a history of severe flooding that warrant outdoor warning sirens within the 30 counties (portions of Flood Planning Regions 8-15) included in the disaster declaration issued July 2025. TWDB is requesting responses to the [survey](#) by November 21, 2025.

MS2 Model Upload Workshop: The TWDB Flood Planning staff hosted an MS2 Model Upload Workshop with Texas Disaster Information System (TDIS) on Wednesday, November 5, 2025. The recording can be found on the [RFPG 2nd Cycle Documents page](#) under Conference Calls and Webinars.

September Technical Conference Call: The TWDB Regional Flood Planning staff hosted a September Technical Conference Call on Friday, September 12, 2025, to discuss the technical memorandum due to the TWDB by January 7, 2026. We also covered some preliminary aspects for TWDB performance of FMEs for small communities. We provided the following documents relevant to Task 4B in an email on September 30th: Technical Memo Checklist and Technical Conference Call Q&A. The slides and recording are available on our [Second Cycle Documents Webpage](#) under Conference Calls and Webinars.

June Technical Conference Call: On June 25, 2025, the TWDB hosted a [technical conference call](#) during which we discussed aligning the 2029 State Flood Plan with the 28-29 Flood Infrastructure Funding (FIF) cycle. To help RFPGs conserve time and funds to develop their 2028 Regional Flood Plans, the TWDB will align the 28-29 FIF cycle so that those projects recommended in the 2028 Regional Flood Plans (and subsequently included in the 2029 State Flood Plan) will be eligible for funding under the 28-29 FIF cycle. The TWDB therefore does not anticipate a second amendment to the 2024 State Flood Plan. For more information you may view a recording of our June 25th Technical Conference Call [online](#).

For questions about the FIF program, please email FIF@twdb.texas.gov or call Sara Sopczynski (FIF Program Coordinator) at 512-936-0852. For questions about any current FIF Category 1/FME, please contact Melissa Hislop at Melissa.Hislop@twdb.texas.gov.

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Administrative Updates

Second 2023 Regional Flood Plan Amendments

The TWDB Flood Planning team received 14 second 2023 Regional Flood Plan Amendments by the April 1, 2025, deadline. The first and second requests for information (RFI) responses have been received and reviewed. Your regional flood planner will reach out if more information is requested or they will provide an acceptable email once amendments are approved. The second plan amendments will be presented to the Board in spring 2026.

Technical Memorandum

The Technical Memorandum is due January 7, 2026. There is a 7-day public notice requirement for the RFPG to vote on the approval of the submission of the deliverables to the TWDB.

It was brought to our attention that FMX-related Exhibit C Tables were not explicitly included in the Technical Memorandum administratively complete checklist distributed on September 30, 2025. The checklist has been updated to show that Exhibit C Tables 12, 13, and 14 fulfill the requirements for “written lists of potentially feasible FMX as identified by the planning groups, as applicable.” A **Clarification on Technical Memorandum Checklist email** was sent to Chairs, Sponsors, and Technical Consultants on November 11th.

The updated Technical Memorandum Administrative Completeness Checklist is available on our [Second Cycle Documents Webpage](#) under Administrative Documents.

Exhibit C Technical Guidelines

The TWDB has made minor changes to the Exhibit C Technical Guidelines, available now on our [Second Cycle Planning Documents webpage](#).

1. Section 2.2.A.3 (Page 31), Table 4. Summary of existing condition flood risk (by county): Updated the units for Agricultural Areas from square miles to acres to align with the geodatabase.
 - a. Exhibit C Tables template workbook, Table 4. Summary of existing condition flood risk (by county): Updated the units for Agricultural Areas from square miles to acres to align with the geodatabase.
2. Exhibit C Table 26 No Negative Impact (standalone table): Added additional guidance within the template on providing engineering judgement descriptions and when to use “Yes” and “No” in the ‘No Negative Impact’ and ‘No Negative Impact Determination’ columns.

As a reminder and per Exhibit C, the summary tables are intended to be generated directly from the geodatabase.

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FME for Small Communities

On October 2, 2025, the TWDB Board approved an item related to Scope of Work Task 5B - to negotiate and execute contracts for consultants to perform FMEs for small and rural communities as selected by the RFPGs.

The purpose of the TWDB FME effort is for the TWDB to perform a limited number of FMEs as identified and selected by the RFPGs and return the results of the studies to the respective regions and communities so they can identify and recommend flood mitigation projects. It is anticipated that this new FME effort will provide each region with at least two completed studies (a total of 30 studies, and an unknown resulting number of identified FMPs) on behalf of smaller and/or rural communities during the current cycle of flood planning. The FMEs to be performed under this contract will be selected,

ordered, and submitted to the TWDB by the regional flood planning groups. The results of completed studies will then be included in the next regional flood plans. This ongoing program will continue to perform additional studies to identify additional FMPs during future planning cycles

The TWDB will strive to perform the first two FMEs from each RFPG's list between March 2026 and February 2027 so that RFPGs may vote to recommend any resulting FMPs or FMSs in their draft 2028 regional flood plans. The RFPGs have the flexibility to determine the metrics used to determine "small and rural communities with limited resources". The TWDB provided RFPGs with the documents below for Task 5B:

- FME SOW template
- Community Affirmation form
- FME one-pager template
- FMP one-pager template
- FMS one-pager template

These documents are available on our [Second Cycle Documents Webpage](#) under Contract Documents and Guidelines and Administrative Documents.

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Recent 2nd Cycle Regional Flood Planning Data Updates:

GDB Check Script: On October 14th, the Flood Data Team provided the script used to check the planning deliverables. They provided clarification on rounding errors of the "float" data type in ArcGIS for specific fields. An explanation of discrepancies between Exhibit D and the geodatabase was provided. Lastly, they requested that placeholders not be used in numeric or text fields. For questions regarding the script, please email floodplanningdata@twdb.texas.gov.

The **Water Surface Elevation Level (WSELs) dataset**, as a part of the 2025 Cursory Floodplain dataset for Scenario 3 and 5, was developed for the second cycle of regional flood planning and is available now using the link provided under the "Data Download" section on the [Flood Data Hub](#).

Exhibit D Update Summary Guidance: The Flood Data team has made updates to the [Exhibit D Update Summary Technical Guidance Doc](#). It includes the changes made in the most recent Flood Planning Data email blast sent on July 14th. The recent devastating Independence Day flood underscored the need of effective and functional Flood Early Warning Systems (FEWS) for our communities, as well as need for good floodplain management. An inventory of existing systems will be helpful in identifying needs. We request that you utilize the tool at your disposal and generate best available inventory of the State's FEWS coverage.

Infrastructure Assessment Toolkit: The [Infrastructure Assessment Toolkit](#) has been updated to include Flood Early Warning Systems (FEWS) as an Asset Type option. Please note, we are also working to update the Classification Guidance to include FEWS and expect this to be completed in the coming weeks. The updated toolkit can be found on the [RFPG 2nd Cycle Documents page](#) under Supporting Studies and Materials.

Recent RFPG Inquiries

Q: Does TWDB have a preference on how the area of effect for FEWS FMSs is set?

A: While we did not provide specific guidance on the flood warning system for FMSs, it would depend on the flood risk and need of the area. Following are two scenarios that are acceptable to TWDB.

If a FEWS has sirens/alarms/etc., as you identify in your question, it should include the area of coverage. However, an attempt should be made to cover high flood risk areas in the vicinity that need warning. If known, please identify the location/s of the alarm tower.

If a FEWS does not have sirens, or is used for stream gage readings, precipitation readings, reverse 911 systems, etc., and if the FEWS effectively covers and benefits an entire community, then it is acceptable to utilize the boundary of the community or area where FEWS is effective.

Exhibit C Map 19 requires a GIS coverage map showing the extent of all identified FMSs in the region, including applicable strategy area and areas that would benefit from the strategy. All identified FMSs should be included in Map 19, identified potentially feasible FMSs in Table 14, and all recommended FMSs need to be included in Table 18.

FMSs that point to a specific area should be represented by a polygon. FMSs may also represent a general strategy for an entire entity's jurisdiction. The RFPG should determine the extent of FMSs in the region, including applicable strategy area and areas that would benefit from the strategy.

Q: What are record-keeping expectations for RFPGs as they are subject to the Public Information Act?

A: TWDB does not currently provide guidance on the retention of documents for RFPGs. The RFPG is therefore able to determine the lifespan and accessibility of documents on the website but should consult with LNVA attorneys to determine what laws or rules governing the preservation of records would apply to the RFPG. Please also consider that this information is intended for public use and that maintaining access to these documents may help facilitate public participation and engagement. Note that the final Regional Flood Plans submitted to TWDB are required to be made accessible.

Q: If a community is Non-Participating or is Sanctioned from the NFIP, are they still eligible for the FIF grants and other funding opportunities with the State?

A: Yes, NFIP-level compliance is required of the applicant to be eligible for FIF. However, exceptions apply in certain cases:

- The applicant may still be eligible if they are seeking funding that will help them to achieve NFIP compliance (e.g., to develop floodplain ordinances).
- Communities that are non-compliant with NFIP may be included in a broader study area, if the applicants themselves meet the necessary standards.

Q: Does participation in the NFIP affect ranking in the prioritization of projects identified in the list of FMXs?

A: Participation in the NFIP is not one of the factors used as ranking criteria for FMXs. Please see page 189 of the 2024 State Flood Plan for the ranking criteria and associated weights used to rank recommended FMEs, FMPs, and FMSs. Ranking criteria may change for the 2028 State Flood Plan.

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*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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