



Regional Flood Planning Update

March 2026

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A Message from Reem Zoun, Assistant Deputy Executive Administrator

Dear Regional Flood Planning Stakeholders,

Happy 2026! It's already March and we have hit the ground running. All 15 regional flood planning groups submitted their Technical Memorandums in January, and all were found to be administratively complete. Congratulations! TWDB staff are hard at work reviewing the Technical Memorandums and will deliver informal comments in the summer. These comments will help you continue to develop the draft 2028 regional flood plans. We are also planning to take the second amendments to the 2023 Regional Flood Plans by 14 regions to the board for consideration at the March 31st, 2026, board meeting. The next big milestone is coming up – Task 5B submittals. This will be TWDB's first ever effort to perform FMEs on behalf of small and rural communities with limited resources – an endeavor that is several years in the making. I sincerely appreciate your dedication to statewide flood planning and reducing the impacts of flooding on lives and property. As always, reach out to us with any questions or concerns!

Sincerely, Reem

TWDB Staff Updates: New Hires and Promotions

NEW Flood Planner—Belle Gonzalez

Belle joined the Regional Flood Planning department in January. She was previously a Flood Outreach Specialist in the Flood Science and Community Assistance Division at TWDB, where she assisted communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Before that she joined the agency as an Agricultural Water Conservationist, specializing in grant management, education, and

outreach. Belle has a double major in Geography and Sustainability Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. Outside of work, Belle's hobbies include wildlife photography (especially bird photography), knitting, crochet, embroidery, cross-stitch, sewing, reading, and hiking.

NEW Flood Planner—Luz Lumb

Luz joined the TWDB in February coming from the Coastal Bend Council of Governments, where she supported communities through water and infrastructure planning and technical assistance. She previously worked as a coastal geoscientist at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, where she supported large-scale resiliency planning along the Texas coast. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in environmental science from TAMU-CC and spent several years teaching high school physics and astronomy in Central Texas. When she's not working, Luz loves camping, hiking, and enjoying the water with her two elementary-aged kids, as well as exploring good food and coffee whenever she gets a chance.

NEW Flood Planner—Alexis Morganroth

Alexis joined the TWDB in February. She began her professional career in the federal sector with the Bureau of Reclamation in Denver, Colorado, where she worked in the Instrumentation Group supporting dam safety initiatives. Originally from San Antonio, Texas, she joined the U.S. Navy immediately after high school and served for five years as an Electrician's Mate aboard the USS John C. Stennis. She earned her bachelor's degree in environmental engineering from Colorado School of Mines and is currently pursuing an ME in Civil Engineering with a focus on Water Resources. Outside of her professional and academic pursuits, Alexis enjoys weightlifting, hiking, collecting unique tchotchkes, and painting.

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Recent Presentations and Testimony

Flood Organizing Group (FLOG): TWDB partnered with the University of Texas at Austin's Planet Texas 2050 to host the third annual in-person workshop of the FLOG. FLOG was formed in July 2021 to facilitate coordination between state and federal agencies on flood activities in Texas. The goal of the FLOG is to share information about flood projects in Texas, collaborate and coordinate flood activities, and avoid overlap of those projects and activities. This workshop came on the heels of historic flooding and tragic losses during the weekend of July 4th, 2025. FLOG members partnered with Planet Texas 2050 to address the extraordinary challenges arising from those flood events – how can we do better? Representatives of five universities (Texas Tech, Texas A&M, Lamar, UT San Antonio and UT Austin) came together with the FLOG to seek to answer that question. How might we build on these networks to develop a framework for a better informed and more resilient Texas during future flood emergencies?

Texas Gulf Coast Infrastructure Coalition (TGIC) Coastal Forum: Reem Zoun was a panelist at the Texas Gulf Coast Infrastructure Coalition (TGIC) Coastal Forum where she discussed navigating regulatory and environmental processes. TGIC is a non-profit association of Texas private sector companies who support a transparent approach to the construction and financing of public infrastructure that is critical to serve the state's growing economy and population. TGIC was founded as a resource for federal, state, and local officials as they navigate complex issues surrounding public infrastructure and local governance. The 2026 Coastal Forum served as a significant gathering for industry leaders, policymakers, and key stakeholders. The event focused on addressing the pressing challenges and emerging opportunities that affect infrastructure along the Texas coast. Special emphasis was placed on

identifying strategies to secure reliable funding for coastal projects, as well as facilitating discussions about ongoing and upcoming initiatives.

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Coming Up

Regional Flood Planning Virtual Information Session | DRAFT SFY 26-27 FIF IUP: The TWDB Regional Flood Planning staff is planning a courtesy information session once the draft SFY 26-27 FIF IUP is released for public comment (TBD). This information session will provide a brief overview of the draft SFY 26-27 Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF) Intended Use Plan (IUP), including any major proposed changes from the previous iteration (SFY 24-25 FIF IUP), as well as answer any questions regarding the existing contents of the draft IUP. The information will be presented by staff from Program Administration and Reporting, the TWDB unit responsible for administering the FIF program. We encourage stakeholders to submit comments via the upcoming public comment process. An updated invitation will be sent to correspond with the draft IUP public comment period in the coming weeks.

Nature-Based Solutions for Flood Resilience Guidance Manual: TWDB contracted with Freese and Nichols and the Nature Conservancy to create a Nature-Based Solutions for Flood Resilience Guidance Manual with the goal of synthesizing information on the use of nature-based flood mitigation solutions into a single, statewide manual for Texas communities. The intent of the guide is to help address flood risk, water quality, groundwater recharge, habitat improvement, and community enhancement goals as independent nature-based solutions or in combination with traditional flood mitigation infrastructure. There have been many studies on this subject; however, more focused guidance that considers the efficacy of nature-based solutions within the various geographic regions of Texas was needed to support regional and statewide flood planning efforts and to help guide Texas communities to better understand and utilize these approaches. Representatives from the project team are attending RFPG meetings to present an overview of the manual which is anticipated to be available by the end of Summer 2026.

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In Case You Missed It

Agricultural Flood Loss Tool: There have been many studies on economic losses on agricultural lands due to drought. However, there is little knowledge of economic losses due to flooding events. The TWDB contracted with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to create a model for calculating economic losses due to flooding events on agricultural lands. For their first task, AgriLife Extension performed an extensive literature review on existing methods. Using their findings, AgriLife Extension created a Microsoft Excel-based tool for estimating economic losses due to flooding events. This tool will help farmers and local planners better assess potential economic damages due to flooding on agricultural lands. See the link below for more details about the tool and a guide on how to use it. Please note, this tool is not required to be used by RFPGs. <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/flood/research/Agricultural-Flood-Loss-2022/index.asp>

Senate Bill 3 and the Flash Flood Warning Siren Guide: Since its inception, much progress has been made on SB3. All 30 counties included in the bill received their grant agreements on December 17, 2025. The grant agreement must be approved by each respective county and returned to TWDB. Once

counties submit their signed grant agreements, they can submit their project plans. The template is available on the SB3 webpage: <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/about/sb3/index.asp>.

The TWDB has developed best management practices and guidance for the installation, maintenance, and operation of outdoor warning sirens, as required by [Senate Bill 3](#). The [Flash Flood Warning Siren Guide](#) is now available and outlines requirements that all systems must meet as well as broader recommendations for effective system design and implementation. The TWDB hosted informational sessions on January 15th and 29th, 2026. On March 3, 2026, the TWDB Board approved the provisional flash flood risk areas identified across the 30 counties included in SB 3. This will allow staff at the TWDB to work with the affected counties to develop the final maps that will identify where outdoor warning sirens are warranted and allow the counties to move forward with requirements specified in the bill. Visit the [TWDB SB 3 Flood Sirens Program](#) webpage to see the latest resources and information. The TWDB is working to implement SB 3 on a highly accelerated timeline, and updates are posted online as they are made available.

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Administrative Updates

TWDB Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI)

TWDB does not allow AI applications—such as AI meeting note takers, AI assistants, AI chatbots or AI deepfakes—to be utilized during TWDB meetings. If a TWDB employee is attending an externally-hosted meeting and notices an AI technology join the meeting, staff may ask the meeting host to ‘pause’ the meeting and request the AI technology to be removed from the meeting. If the meeting organizer cannot remove the AI technology from the meeting, the TWDB employee may refrain from discussing any TWDB-related information during the meeting or leave the meeting. While RFP staff understand the convenience and functionality of utilizing AI during RFPG meetings, we kindly ask that you refrain to allow our staff to fulfill TWDB policy requirements.

Technical Memorandum

Technical Memorandums for all fifteen RFPGs were received by the January 7, 2026, deadline. RFP staff completed an administrative completeness review and issued notices to proceed to Task 5A on February 6, 2026. Informal comments and feedback will be provided in Summer 2026. These comments do not require formal responses unless specifically requested by staff as they are intended to support each region in producing a complete draft 2028 Regional Flood Plan that will meet all requirements.

Amended 2023 Regional Flood Plans

The Second 2023 Regional Flood Plan Amendments for 14 RFPGs will be considered by the TWDB Board for adoption at the March 31, 2026, Board meeting. These amendments provided 592 additional recommended flood risk reduction solutions bringing the total cost of all total recommended solutions to approximately \$61.1 billion. These flood risk reduction solutions will be included in an amended 2024 State Flood Plan which is anticipated to be presented for TWDB Board adoption in early 2027. Solutions included in these amended plans will be eligible for the FY26-27 Flood Infrastructure Fund program.

FMEs 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. A Chair-Led conference call was held on December 3, 2025, in response to a request by regions for insight on what other RFPGs are considering as metrics to determine “small and rural communities with limited resources” for Task 5B. The slides and recording are available on our [Second Cycle Documents Webpage](#) under Conference Calls and Webinars.

The time-ordered list of FME’s for the TWDB to perform and additional deliverables are due on March 26, 2026, and the SOW and community affirmation forms (optional) for all FMEs to be performed by TWDB are due on April 24, 2026. Please see our email blast on January 20, 2026, for details on what is required in the submittal. Submission instructions for submitting these deliverables were sent in an email blast on February 17, 2026.

We have received several questions related to “Task 5B - Recommend a list of Flood Management Evaluations to be performed by the TWDB”. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document was developed to help provide further information on this FME for Small Communities effort. Topics include background information, timeline, and general questions. Reem Zoun is available to provide an in-person or virtual presentation on this topic at upcoming RFPG meetings upon request. The FAQ is posted on our [Second Cycle Documents Webpage](#) under administrative documents.

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Recent 2nd Cycle Regional Flood Planning Data Updates

On November 20th, 2025, the Flood Data team provided details on the feature class updates listed below. Please see the email from FloodPlanningData@twdb.texas.gov for more information.

1. *ModelCoverage* feature class: Updated Valid Entry List for ‘Model Submission’ field
2. *ModelCoverage* feature class: New Fields Added – ‘Flood Planning Cycle’ and ‘Model Submission Date’
3. *FMS* feature class: Clarification on the ‘Equitable Comparison’ field
4. *FME*, *FMP* and *FMS* feature classes: Difference between ‘Equitable Comparison’ field in *FMS* feature class and ‘Associated’ fields in *FMX* feature classes

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Recent RFPG Inquiries

Q: How much liberty does the RFPG have in adjusting the scope of work for the TWDB FME performance?

A: The RFPGs are responsible for generating scopes of work for the FMEs to be performed. The SOW template provided by the TWDB is a template, not a scope of work. The TWDB anticipates receiving a well-developed scope of work with deliverables clearly identified for each task and sub-task for each proposed FME. Per the SOW template language, all FMEs must include the numbered/bold tasks, as applicable. However, the RFPGs have flexibility to modify the sample SOW as necessary and with an engineer’s judgement. For example, scope of work tasks that should not be removed include meetings with communities and RFPGs, alternatives analysis, etc. The goal of Task 5B is to perform FMEs on behalf of small communities resulting in potential FMPs or FMSs to include in regional flood plans.

Q: If the RFPG wants to include a reasonable project (meaning completed within a year, within allocated budget, resulting in FMPs) that is region wide and excluding the non-small/rural communities, would this be possible?

A: Yes. The RFPGs have discretion in choosing the FMEs to be performed by the TWDB given they meet TWDB (SOW and technical guidelines) minimum requirements, the RFPGs chosen metrics, and are within budget. Please make sure to provide clear metrics based on what the region recommended and show how each study meets TWDB (SOW and technical guidelines) requirements and region criteria. Please be mindful that the TWDB is attempting to complete the first two FMEs on the list in about 9 months so resulting FMP/FMS may be incorporated into the draft 2028 regional flood plans. Further, per the September technical conference call, the TWDB is requesting that the RFPG submit community affirmation forms for the first two FMEs on their list. You would need buy-in from all affected communities. Note, the RFPG can also choose to perform FMEs at their discretion for Task 4C.

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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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