

Meeting Notes



Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) External Stakeholder Working Group (ESWG) 2018 Q3 Meeting

August 14-16, 2018 | Denver (Lakewood), CO | FEMA Region VIII Offices

ESWG Participants

- Chris Blinzinger (Provo City, Utah)
- Donna Boreck (FEMA Region VIII HMA)
- Dorothy Cook (FEMA Region VI EHP)
- Tracy DePew (Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians)
- Kaylynn Gresham (Oneida Nation)
- Paula Gutierrez (Santa Clara Pueblo of New Mexico)
- Karen Helbrecht (FEMA HMA HQ)
- Tom Hughes (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
- Jennifer Walker (East Central Intergovernmental Agency [Iowa])
- Sarah White (Commonwealth of Massachusetts)

Other Participants

- Kayed Lakhia (HMA Division)
- Jennie Orenstein (HMA Grants Policy)
- Nicole LaRosa (HMA Grants Policy)
- Sarah McGarvey (HMA Grants Implementation)

Guest Speakers

- Lee dePalo (FEMA Region VIII)
- Mike Hillenburg (FEMA Region VIII HMA)
- Richard MacDonald (Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation)
- Mike Willis (State of Colorado, Office of Emergency Management)
- Steve Boand (State of Colorado, Office of Emergency Management)
- Scott Baldwin (State of Colorado, Office of Emergency Management)

Facilitators

- Hunter Gray (CG Strategy)
- Jess Fleck (Dewberry)

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

- FEMA Region VIII Regional Administrator Lee dePalo welcomed the ESWG and provided opening remarks, noting that mitigation is and remains a top priority. Additionally, FEMA is focused on the goals and objectives in the FEMA Strategic Plan (2018-2022) at a federal and state level. There is ownership across the board from senior executives to the broader workforce.
- ESWG Chair Karen Helbrecht kicked-off the meeting and provided opening remarks, highlighting that the group is moving into a period of transition as some members roll-off and new members roll-on soon. As the ESWG continues, HMA will look to involve the ESWG in more conversations and increase how much it uses the ESWG as a sounding board.

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- HMA Division Director Kayed Lakhia welcomed the ESWG and provided opening remarks, focusing on two major topics – the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) and mitigation via Stafford Act Section 406.
 - o DRRA is focused on emphasizing and moving mitigation forward. The DRRA bill is moving through Congress now. If it passes as currently written, it will mean significant changes for mitigation, including the potential for \$500M-\$600M each year being made available for mitigation that is not impacted by annual budget/appropriations cycles as current mitigation program funding is.
 - o Within FEMA HMA Headquarters (HQ), a 406 Mitigation Branch is being stood-up. There is a sense that 406 mitigation has not been getting the attention it deserves, which may partly stem from questions of ownership. Currently 406 activities fall under Public Assistance (PA) and HMA must coordinate closely with PA, however it would be better characterized as being HMA-driven and PA-owned. Kayed's vision for 406 is for it to be incorporated into daily practice for professional mitigators in much the same manner as 404 activities are.

2. Regional Tribal Liaisons Annual Meeting Call-In

The ESWG remotely joined the FEMA Regional Tribal Liaisons (RTLs) Annual Meeting (in Region X this year):

- Jennie Orenstein (HMA Grants Policy) posed a few key questions to the group:
 - o What HMA tools and resources do you use with tribes in your Region?
 - o What webinars and/or other products would you like created as a resource for tribes?
 - RTLs mentioned that they would like to see project ideas that other tribes around the country have been working on.
 - Region IV would like to use their hazard mitigation (HM) officer from tribes that have an approved HM Plan.
 - Region VIII tribes have trouble connecting to webinars and have requested instead that FEMA send staff out and conduct more face-to-face engagement and technical assistance with tribes one on an in-person basis.
- Tribal ESWG Members provided a summary of and their takeaways from the recent HMA-Tribal Engagement Working Meeting in Washington, DC.
 - o Tracy DePew noted that certain messaging from Region X staff about “don’t contact us until XYZ date” doesn’t build relationships well and came off as unnecessarily abrasive.
 - o Tracy also noted challenges with having to re-orient FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT teams) on the importance of cultural and natural resources to tribes. He experienced firsthand having to retrain new IMAT team members on the importance of cultural and natural resources every 2-3 weeks while responding to disasters (wildfires). Tracy recommended exploration of how best to include impacted tribes in the IMAT and Cooperator process, specifically for wildfires, as fire suppression efforts progress to suppression repair.

3. Guest Speakers: State of Colorado

The state of Colorado (CO) Director of Emergency Management Mike Willis and State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) Steve Board provided a briefing on mitigation in Colorado:

- Colorado is increasingly becoming an urban state. The 10-county metro area is expected to have massive migration and growth over the coming years and will transition from a more rural community, to a more urban community.
 - o Colorado is under home rule local government.
 - o Homeowners are expected to figure out their own hazards.

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- CO SHMO noted that although the state has floods and fires and other known hazards, they mostly deal with flood, landslides, and wildfire hazards.
 - o CO has invested about \$90M in mitigation projects, with an estimated ROI of \$360M-450M.
 - o CO currently has 80 mitigation projects.
 - o CO has undertaken 300 acquisitions.
 - o CO mitigation budget is about \$80M from state and federal sources.
 - o There are 6 mitigation team members.
 - o CO has two tribal communities: Ute and Mountain Ute.
 - o CO is there to support them either on their own as an applicant or through the state as a sub-applicant. CO offers technical assistance to them.
- In June a wildfire occurred in Silverthorne, CO. Over the course of years prior, CO had embarked on a series of mitigation projects. The wildland-urban interface (WUI) gave the firefighters a place to make a stand against the fire.
 - o Over 500 people went home after that fire. That day, that fire is now barely talked about because the end result was that people stayed safe and got to return to their homes and lives as normal. The motto for CO mitigators is "we make nothing happen." Hazards having diminished impact on individuals or communities is a benefit of being well-mitigated and means they're more resilient.
- Mitigation has gone through the CO legislature recently (see "Colorado Disaster Emergency Act", Colorado House Bill 18-1394). The previous CO disaster act was light on mitigation, but now mitigation is a clear part of CO statute as a priority and key component.
- In 2013, \$3B dollars in damages occurred during a major flood event. It was the largest flood in the state since 1965. Highway 36 was rebuilt in 6 weeks.
- Last summer (2017), the CO SHMO was dispatched to California to support their work on wildfires.
 - o No PA worksheet could come through without 406 mitigation. The CO SHMO conducted QA/QC reviews. This practice is something the CO SHMO wants to bring into CO.
- Currently the state of CO is working toward Enhanced Plan Status for its State Hazard Mitigation Plan. However, there are challenges getting some grants management practices in place.
- The state of CO has a close working relationship with Region 8 - one of the best relationships the CO SHMO has had in his government tenure.
- HMGP Post-fire is difficult because the state of CO has a lot of interest in this. The counties directly related to this are saying they deserve it first, but the rest of the counties indirectly impacted say "US TOO." The state of CO is allocating money out of the disaster fund to partner projects (e.g., matching in Pueblo County), but the question is how do we allocate funds fairly and equitably?
- CO has considered and explored using Advance Assistance in the past but may look at again in more earnest after the Enhanced Plan status is completed.
- CO noted being currently under-staffed but that they try to maintain a basic level of staff in mitigation during recovery, but that that can be challenging. There's a continuing interest in doing 406 mitigation and an ongoing commitment to staff grants compliance. The number one problem during recovery is that there can be large waves of staff burnout and turnover following a disaster.
- CO has two individuals with relationships with tribal partners, who go in-person to tribes to explain and discuss mitigation issues with them and identify if they have projects that they may want to pursue (e.g., HMGP Post-Fire). Sometimes tribes seem challenged by getting ideas through the project identification stage.
- In terms of partnering with others to supplement funds, CO sees that as both a gift and a challenge. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding is interwoven and CO looks to leverage every federal dollar where possible.
 - o This has forced CO to rethink everything in order to maximize the dollars and use funding efficiently. Sixty (60) acquisitions were done using combined funding, but everyone gets really upset over this money. There are multiple agencies and perspectives involved which can make it

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extremely difficult. For example, the Environmental Assessment (EA) by HUD did not meet FEMA requirements. Those kinds of efforts are difficult to go back and re-do.

- CO also partners with EPA, NRCS, SBA, and FHWA among others.

4. Guest Speaker: Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation

The tribal Hazard Mitigation Officer of Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation provided a briefing on and answered questions about mitigation in the tribe:

- Richard has had experience working on behalf of the tribe for Individual Assistance, PDM, reimbursements, PA, and Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) efforts.
- How many individuals are in your department and how do you fund the position?
 - Richard is the only person in his tribe working on mitigation. Originally, his position was funded from HMGP state management costs, but he successfully lobbied for his tribe to continue his position and now he works under funding covered by indirect costs.
 - At one time, Richard had additional staff but as funding waned he has picked up more duties that once used to be delegated to additional staff.
 - This mirrors an experience echoed by other tribes which is that tribes feel like they're not given many funds to support positions and they feel like they're taking on the lion's share of the work.
- Can your tribe apply for EMPG funding?
 - Richard noted that the tribe can and has applied for EMPG funding, which they received roughly 4 years ago. The cost share was split 50/50, so the tribe covered \$25K.
- Tribe has had 3 direct disaster declarations – in 2010, 2011, and 2013.
 - In 2013, the tribe went as a subapplicant under the state and that was a positive experience.
- **ACTION: Richard MacDonald will share some stories and examples of mitigation successes, and challenges in his tribe with HMA/the ESWG.**
- Regarding creative ways the tribe has looked at fund matching:
 - Richard noted that for a lagoon projects, the tribe received some funding from Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Indian Health Service (IHS) which was then used to match FEMA funding.
 - In terms of cultural and historic preservation, his tribe's EHP office developed cultural awareness video for construction workers who would do work within tribal lands or for tribal government.
 - **ACTION: Richard MacDonald to share tribal cultural awareness video link/materials with HMA/the ESWG.**
- How can we (HMA/ESWG) improve communications?
 - Richard expressed general support for HMA communications and lauded the relationship he has with the state. They have weekly calls about next steps, which are helpful when they have a lot of questions about what is financially eligible.
- Richard highlighted that his tribe has a Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance/Office (TERO). This office employs a cost of doing business with the tribe, which is usually 5% of the cost of the project. This cost is a source of revenue generation for tribes for any construction work performed within tribal lands. This funding helps to keep Richard's department open and to ensure that projects are following the necessary rules.
- The tribe also has tribal hiring preference for large projects. They try to hire tribal first, and it may result in a TERO discount for some projects.
- Has the tribe done PDM projects unrelated to a disaster?
 - Richard noted that they've updated their HM Plan, but that they haven't been able to get follow-through on next steps. The money is available and waiting to be used.
- What tools and resources might be helpful?
 - Richard noted that weekly calls with FEMA HMA have been very helpful, and that he'd like to see that for PA (e.g., touchpoint call every 1-2 weeks).

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- Better coordination from PA. Currently no one is specifically assigned to help him/the tribe.
- More calls and check-ins with FEMA to help clarify expectations.
- Communication is difficult, especially when people just don't return emails and other outreach.
- Training FEMA puts on have been well-received.
- **ACTION: HMA/ESWG to share link to HMA IdeaScale with Richard MacDonald.**
 - <https://fema.ideascale.com/a/ideas/recent/campaign-filter/byids/campaigns/61038/stage/unspecified>
- Tracy DePew recommended that Richard look at:
 - Going direct to DHS for EMPG funding and that the tribe could potentially have up to \$355K per year through that.
 - Considering additional training opportunities through the Blue Lake Rancheria Resilience Training & Innovation Center (RTIC).
 - **ACTION: HMA/ESWG to share link to Blue Lake Rancheria RTIC with Richard MacDonald.**
 - <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2017/09/26/leaders-public-safety-fema-honors-11-individuals-organizations-community>

5. HMA Updates

ESWG Chair Karen Helbrecht and HMA Grants Policy Branch Chief Jennie Orenstein provided program updates:

5.1 HMGP Funding for Building Code Enforcement

- Puerto Rico has/had a total of 11 building code officials (78 municipalities).
 - If you don't have local capacity to enforce building codes for these large dollar projects, then it makes it difficult to actually build resilient infrastructure.
 - Assumption being made is that Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands will adopt latest building codes and gradually assume the cost of staff over time. To get there, federal funding will start at 100% then slowly decreases to 0% over five years.
 - HMA wants to build capacity at the local level, especially by providing training.
 - Unpermitted structures are not helping anyone and put many at risk.
- Are there ways to incentivize jurisdictions to maintain infrastructure and gain higher access or amount for FEMA funding?
 - Tom Hughes noted that substantial damage determinations could be paid for via emergency measures if necessary.
- Kayed Lakhia noted that few SLTTs had taken advantage of the fact that since May 2013 applicants don't have to wait for 6 months to get the HMGP lock-in. Instead, applicants can take 75% of any disaster estimate and use that as the floor for basing mitigation project identification processes.
 - FEMA will accept 75% of any estimate as reasonable floor.
 - Tom Hughes noted that Recovery Plans would need to be in place first if things are going to be accelerated.
- There are jurisdictions and states that have a robust land-use.
 - The building code truly falls in the mitigation realm - along with land-use planning (comprehensive plans) and the rebuilding process could be a lot stronger.
 - Substantial damage estimates can be made early on.
- How can HMA incentivize mitigation in recovery? How do we turn it around?
 - Looking at some issues in Texas after Hurricane Harvey. There were homeowners that wanted to be bought out, they wanted to be done with the flooding on their property. However, the state wasn't completely prepared for or positioned to be thinking about doing mitigation the day after disaster.

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- All communities should be thinking about mitigation during the preliminary damage assessment (PDA).
- Communities are encouraged to think about ideas for mitigation when the PDA is undertaken, or way before the event as part of the pre-disaster Recovery Plan.
 - Tom Hughes noted that Pennsylvania has/can develop templates at the state level for counties to use as starting points.
 - However, it would be good to consider also how to pay for the development of those Recovery Plan(s). Several avenues for that are Homeland Security Grant Program (HSPG), EMPG, and PDM funding.
- Additional issues complicating the process to expedite mitigation include:
 - Capacity and capability at state/local levels
 - Matching funds
 - Getting appropriate political support

5.2 General

- HMA asked if getting money faster to applicants is really the biggest problem that needs to be solved.
 - ESWG members noted that often the biggest issues are with capacity at the SLTT level.
- All federal agencies need to be on same page - everyone needs to be at the table, even though there may be different constraints on funding.
 - The JFO should help manage this and help explain what funding options are available and how they can overlap.
 - Multiple federal resources work together to figure out ways to leverage funding opportunities, working with USACE Silver Jackets is one example.
- When there are substantially damaged properties involved, HMA needs to fast track.
 - Mitigation component making it more comprehensive.
- State legislators can be strong advocates if you get out in front and get them on-board.
- Interesting article about work FEMA is doing with mapping technology in the context of significant events:
 - <https://www.ll.mit.edu/news/new-technology-aids-hurricane-response>
 -

5.3 Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) Program, Reimbursable Grant

- FMAG grants are the most common declaration grants.
- HMA has been reaching out via the Regions and Regional Tribal Liaisons.
- Two webinars are currently being planned and will be communicated, recorded, and posted publicly on HMA website:
 - One webinar on Tuesday, June 19 for state and tribal stakeholders
 - Another webinar will be held on Thursday, June 21 specifically for tribal stakeholders.

5.4 Natural Hazard Center Session Report Out

Tom Hughes provided a brief update of the recent 2018 Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop. Since 1975, the Natural Hazards Center has hosted the Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop. Today, the Workshop is attended by over 500 federal, state, and local emergency officials; representatives of nonprofit and humanitarian organizations; hazards researchers; disaster consultants; and others dedicated to reducing risk and alleviating the harm from disasters.¹ Several key points and questions were highlighted for the ESWG:

¹ <https://hazards.colorado.edu/workshop/2018>

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- Workshop has a clear emphasis on integrated collaboration, including working toward providing broad access to recovery resources.
 - o A challenging question to reflect on is - does everyone have equal access to recovery resources? This question contributed to the development of survivor rights, which emerged in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. More information on this concept can be found at the link below, which includes the audio of the keynote presentation from John Henneberger on how to bridge the divide in the communication.
 - <https://texashousers.net/2018/07/09/disaster-recovery/>
- The four identified Survivor Rights are:
 - o The right to choose;
 - o The right to stay;
 - o The right to equal treatment; and,
 - o The right to have a say.
- How do we take the mindfulness post disaster into advocating pre-disaster?
- How do we get people to think about pre-disaster?

6 HMA External Scan

ESWG Members reviewed the results of the 2016 HMA External Scan and discussed how the identified trends match with what ESGW members are experiencing or seeing today. What trends have changed? Which are now more relevant? Are there other things that have arisen that are more important (e.g., infrastructure)? Which trends have the highest priority now? Which trends have the highest impact now?

- One recommendation was to shift language of “damage” to “impacts,” and similarly to change “risks” to “risks and impacts.”
- ESGW tribal members raised the issue that natural resources for tribes are cultural resources and that assigning a dollar value for remediation or payment quickly insults the inherent cultural value of those resources from the tribal perspective.
 - o **ACTION: HMA to schedule and facilitate conversation about inclusion of the value/significance of cultural resources, particularly for tribes, in the BCA as pre-calculated benefits.**
- Also of note is that risks in urban areas are different risks and that protecting developed and non-developed areas require different approaches to mitigation.
- Suggested addition: highlight and add-in a new trend around bioengineering and green infrastructure.
- Suggested addition: address acceptable uses of open space and ways.
 - o Specifically, how can applicants make sure allowable uses are contemporary? Will HMA allow applicants to make that judgment call?
- Suggested change: move “Extreme Heat, Drought, Wildfire, Flood” to Tier 1, given the increased risk and impacts of wildfire, urban wildfire, and resulting smoke and/or health risks.
- Suggested addition: prescribed burn.
- Suggested addition: Challenges working with communities with limited capacity and/or capability.
- Suggested addition: Co-benefits for items such as safe rooms which can withstand tornados but also but used to prevent active shooters (e.g., at schools).
- Suggested addition: Explore Advance Assistance for using LiDAR and technological updates.
 - o Think about how technological improvements can help us to do recovery and substantial damage assessments faster.
- Suggested change: Move “Private Sector trend” to Tier 1.

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7 FEMA Strategic Plan

ESWG Members discussed the FEMA Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and the stakeholder input process experienced by a few ESWG members. ESWG members who participated in the process highlighted a few observations and open questions:

- How does the whole community, but FEMA in particular, incentivize people to close the insurance gap?
- How do we maintain and communicate transparent expectations?
 - o There's an element for everyone of personal responsibility.
 - o Additionally, tribal ESWG members want to know more about what the rollout of FEMA Integration Teams will look like for tribes and when they will occur. Little information has been provided to date on this.
- Also noted was the maturing and maintenance of the National Disaster Recovery Framework, and the growing need for funding to support training and exercises.

Additionally, the ESWG reviewed the FEMA Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives and identified how each HMA ESWG Work Stream aligns with the various objectives. ESWG Members also decided to include reference to and alignment with FEMA Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives when new ESWG work arises.

ESWG Work Stream	FEMA Strategic Plan 2018-2022 - Alignment
1. Individual ESWG Member Outreach with Stakeholders	Objective 1.2 Objective 2.2 Objective 3.1
2. Mitigation Core Competency and Skills Analysis	Objective 1.4 Objective 2.1 Objective 3.1
3. Advance Assistance Outreach and Education	Objective 1.1 Objective 3.1 Objective 3.3
4. Tribal Engagement and Communications	Objective 1.3 Objective 1.4 Objective 2.1 Objective 2.4 Objective 3.3
5. Annual Hazard Mitigation Stakeholder Workshop Planning	Objective 1.4 Objective 2.1 Objective 2.4 Objective 3.4
6. Online HMA Knowledge and Support Forum (IdeaScale)	Objective 1.4 Objective 2.2

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8 HMA Guidance

ESWG Members shared feedback, particularly around usability and language, on the HMA Guidance:

- There is an inherent tension that plays out with information included (or excluded from the HMA Guidance) – the tension lies in finding the appropriate balance between being prescriptive and allowing for flexibility.
 - o ESWG members noted that it would be helpful to distinguish information that's flexible at the Regional level or by SLTT jurisdiction.
 - o Some of the issues are more Regional issues, which lead to the push for Regionally-specific guidance due to the way the program guidance is being administered.
 - Some Regions would like to see more cultural and geographical impacts.
 - o Some ESWG Members noted that if HM Plans are going to be reviewed at the Regional level, then it would make sense that the Guidance would also be more Regionally-specific. In essence, some Regions and stakeholders are looking for more certainty.
 - o Some ESWG members requested more flexibility based on jurisdictional type and the hazards they face. Regardless, ESWG members requested that HMA clarify what is and what is not up for applicant interpretation.
 - What's standard in duplication across HMA programs? How should the states interpret it? What is allowable?
- HMA is looking to incorporate updates from memos, other issued policy clarifications, guidance, and changes since the HMA Guidance was last updated in February 2015.
- ESWG members encouraged HMA to consider emphasizing the importance of documenting decisions throughout the process, and for all stakeholders.
- Another recommendation was for HMA to review the HMA guidance carefully and crosswalk with updates to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and to include links to the relevant sections.
- HMA ESWG member requested HMA include more guidance and direction on Applicant Administrative Plan, even if this direction came as a fact sheet or checklist that would be helpful.
- HMA HQ was encouraged to incorporate the Regions more into this process, since they own the relationships with applicants (states and tribes) and will have heard feedback as well.
 - o Another recommendation was to bolster the HMA Guidance Addendum, as a means to help the Regions have consistency in program implementation.
 - But at the tribal or state level you must decide the program requirements.
- Wildfire guidance needs to be updated.
- How should HMA handle totally new ideas?
 - o HMA may need a box to capture these so they can become a brand-new item or project.
- HMA is reviewing the full suite of products and resources (job aids, fact sheets, FAQs, etc.) in conjunction with the HMA Guidance update.
 - o Some resources should be triaged by their relevance to specific project types.

9 ESWG Membership Transition

ESWG Members discussed plans for the upcoming transition of some ESWG members rolling-off and new members rolling-on in 2019:

- Members rolling-off should help orient and support new members rolling-on, independent of SLTT group.
 - o State member rolling-off: Miles Anderson (State of FL)
 - Sarah White may also potentially roll-off by the end of 2018
 - o Regional members rolling-off: Donna Boreck (Region VIII), Dorothy Cook (Region VI).
 - o Tribal member rolling-off: TBD based on pool of applicants received.

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- Local member rolling-off: TBD, **ACTION: Chris to follow-up with George regarding his interest and availability to stay on ESWG.**
- FEMA HMA HQ chair rolling-off; Karen Helbrecht, Jennie Orenstein will be the new ESWG chair.
- Materials to share with new members as part of roll-on process;
 - HMA ESWG Member Directory
 - HMA ESWG Charter (most recent)
 - HMA ESWG Work Streams Roster
 - HMA ESWG – Key Meeting Notes (18Q2, last in-person, last virtual)
 - HMA ESWG travel FAQs/guide
- Materials shared with new members should be in conjunction with, not replacement of, member-to-member handoff.
- Prep call when joining and prior to first meeting is helpful, but things will begin to materialize once in-person relationships are started.
- ESWG members emphasized the diversity of Regions in the new member selection process.
- ESWG members rolling-off will become ‘alumni’ who the ESWG can regularly reach out to for input or to keep folks in the loop regarding the latest and great information from HMA. Alumni will also continue to build the broader HMA network.
- Additional next step: **ACTION: HMA ESWG Support to gather and share handoff materials package or a briefing book that can be handed over from outgoing members to incoming members, in addition to pre-meeting communications.**
- Application Distribution.
 - **ACTION: HMA HQ to send out HMA ESWG Membership Application 2018 via the FEMA Weekly bulletin, to the FEMA Regions directly, and to the FEMA Regional Tribal Liaisons.**
- Application Selection emphases: willingness to manage; willingness to share thoughts, and provide honest feedback

10 ESWG Work Stream Brief-Outs

10.1 Mitigation Core Competency and Skills Analysis

Tom Hughes provided a brief update on the status of tasks about and led discussion on this work stream:

- There is still interest in pursuing an introductory “New mitigator” / “HM101” entry-level training on how to be a professional mitigator. Content would include information such as, but not limited to:
 - Grant management process and cycles
 - Project management
 - Advice on how to conduct outreach and education in order to get projects moving
 - Overview of political aspects (e.g., highlighting how staffs can be helpful resources)
 - Staffers won’t call the FEMA Region, they’re more likely to reach out to SHMOs directly with inquiries.
 - Identification and sharing of available and useful resources –Tom noted that the following areas may include the kind of content that ultimately goes into a course:
 - What are good resources that you should have?
 - What courses are already out there, and how do they still align with or overlap with what this course might look like?
 - What handouts / job aids would be most helpful
 - Potential idea for consideration: include a resource page designed for SHMOs on the FEMA site
 - Mapping
 - Risk analysis

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- What do SHMOs and THMOs need in order to be brought up to succeed?
- Guidance around capacity building and managing time
- Job descriptions: hazard mitigation manager, hazard mitigation project officer
- Opportunities for peer support and training, particularly for questions during closeout
- **ACTION: Tom and Karen/Tara Seibold (HMA Grants Data & Analytics) will be responsible for next steps regarding course development include:**
 - Creating a list of what content would actual go into the course and resources that could be used to develop the course
 - For example, how would the content differ for new mitigators from refresher for more experienced mitigators? This distinction could lead to basic and advanced level courses in a series.
 - Clarifying the delivery mechanism for the course
 - Developing a work plan and who will be responsible for what
- NOFO FY18 Feedback
 - An ESWG member highlighted that since the release of the FY18 NOFO information, communications with their particular Region have not been particularly collaborative or inviting. The ESWG member received notification via two emails that the stakeholder shouldn't call the Regional HMA staff until the Region has had a chance to complete some large set of work and then Region will call)
 - Capacity issues at Regional and state level
 - Part of the curriculum could be around building capacity

10.2 Advance Assistance

Sarah McGarvey provided a brief update on the result of discovery research for Advance Assistance (AA):

- In 2017, the ESWG identified a desire to see FEMA communicate more clearly about how Advance Assistance works and how it can be used in application development.
- Between April and May 2018, 17 individuals across 8 Regions were interviewed about their experience with Advance Assistance or about their perception of it if they were not familiar with it firsthand. All Regions except for Regions 7 and 9 were represented.
 - 8 SHMOs (or State reps), 4 Regional HMA Branch Chiefs, and 5 Regional HMA Staff.
- Interview Guides were created to facilitate the interview process both in order to keep interviews consistent and gather measurable rankings and outcomes.
- The interview responses were confidential, so people could speak freely.
- Several key themes/trends were identified.
 - Trend 1: Limited Funding – Advance Assistance reduces available HMGP funding for other projects
 - The issue of how Advance Assistance impacts the funding of projects, or in other words, reduces the amount of dollars that could be used for projects was a recurring theme in interviews with stakeholders. Advance Assistance funding comes from the overall or general HMGP pool of funds referred to as the “ceiling.” Since funding is often oversubscribed (i.e., there are more projects submitted than can be covered with available funding), some applicants find it hard to justify reducing HMGP funding available for other projects within the ceiling.
 - Even when it can be justified, it may be a perception or optics issue for the Applicant when ranking projects.
 - Interviewees pushed for funding to be pulled from other sources (i.e., PDM and FMA), and noted that Advance Assistance utilization was also impacted by state match policies and often lengthy procurement procedures. After the interviews concluded, FEMA

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announced Advance Assistance funding will be available via FMA and PDM for the fiscal year 2018 (FY18) HMA application cycle. Specifically, the following changes were made for Advance Assistance funding in FY18:

- FMA: Up to \$100 thousand per applicant, with a \$2 million national cap
- PDM: Up to \$200 thousand per applicant, with a \$25 million national cap
- For both FY18 PDM and FMA, an application for Advance Assistance must be submitted in a planning sub-application with an eGrants code of 904.2.
- Trend 2: Lack of experience, best practices, and data sharing.
 - AA has not been used by many applicants nationwide. This limited pool of applicants experienced with AA has resulted in a lack of expertise, best practices, and data sharing. Multiple interviewees highlighted that limited experience with AA leads to the lack of best practices and data sharing, in addition to other factors.
 - Stakeholders expressed diverse opinions as to how and when they should utilize Advance Assistance, and many expressed confusion as to the limitations of the program, particularly in regard to the specific projects that are uniquely suited for their Region or geographic area.
 - Some people did not see the difference between AA, the 5% initiative, phased projects, and potential overlaps with management costs.
- Trend 3: Outdated materials in various places and the need for new/refreshed resources
 - The outdated AA materials yield a number of challenges for stakeholders looking to learn more. These challenges include:
 - AA information located in multiple, disparate places without reference to other available materials.
 - Current AA materials can be confusing to find.
 - Some existing AA resources are inaccurately titled or lack clear distinction.
 - Other AA materials are no longer aligned with the most recent guidance from HMA.
 - Ultimately, outdated and hard-to-find materials add confusion for stakeholders searching for answers to AA questions on FEMA.gov.
- Myths and Misconceptions
 - These encompassed the gamut of: Who, What, When, Why
 - A few include:
 - Locals cannot use AA. The applicant sponsors one application for AA, but it can support many subapplicants. This relationship is sometimes hard to articulate for both FEMA and the applicant.
 - HMA could provide an example of how to show frontloading EHP with AA for historic districts with GIS mapping.
 - Overlaps (including similarities and differences) with management costs, phased projects, and the 5% initiative.
 - Projects cannot be submitted after 30 days. This is not accurate. Some thought projects have to be submitted within one month. Procurement processes take longer than one month.
 - Someone thought funding was capped at 7%.
 - Is funding taken away if the project is not feasible? No.
 - Do projects that use AA have to be submitted under this DR cycle? No. They can be submitted under this DR or other future funding streams.
- Recommendations and next steps under consideration

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- Update AA-related content in HMA Guidance, applicable HMA job aids, Advance Assistance FAQ, and sample HMA Advance Assistance application.
- Common request: Provide a completed sample AA application populated with budget, milestones.
- Show overlap and differences with management costs, the 5% initiative, and phased projects.
- Additional options may include:
 - Webinar learning opportunities
 - Panel discussion at HMA Workshop to share best practices and to identify helpful examples for updated job aids
 - Update website content with simplified information, callout boxes, videos etc.
- **ACTION: Once materials updated/refreshed, HMA HQ to provide link to existing AA resources for ESWG members interested in learning more**

10.3 Tribal Engagement and Communications

Tribal ESWG members provided an update on recent and ongoing efforts related to HMA-Tribal engagement:

- In late June 2018, a working session was held in DC to:
 - Clarify tribal engagement objectives
 - Articulate a vision for success
 - Identify and analyze key stakeholders and partners
 - Gain a shared understanding of the challenges tribes encounter with HMA tools, resources, and general program requirements
 - Gain a shared understanding of the constraints HMA encounters with providing HMA tools and resources to tribes, such as issues with:
 - Capacity
 - Resources
 - Power/authority
 - Knowledge and usability of HMA programs
 - Cultural understanding
 - Identify key information tribes need in order to be successful with HMA
 - Inventory existing or gaps in HMA tools and resources that would be beneficial to tribes
- Several key questions also emerged from discussion, such as:
 - How can HMA leverage and improve communication with tribes, without having to solve for all federal-tribal relationships?
 - What tools already exist that can be easily transferred and promoted to tribes?
 - To what extent are tribes included in State Administrative Plans?
 - How best can HMA encourage tribes to utilize and spend money that's already been set-aside?

10.4 Online HMA Knowledge and Support Forum (IdeaScale), Phase 2

Nicole LaRosa provided an update on recent and ongoing efforts related to HMA Grants IdeaScale forum:

- Now that the HMA Grants Forum is live, how does the ESWG want to pivot on what comes next? How does the message get out there?
 - Also worth considering is the question: what is the ESWG messaging trend? Is it, we have this product and how do we get the word out on it? Or something else?
- Tracy recommended sharing some information identified during the HMA-Tribal Engagement Working Meeting, particularly information around some of the tribal partners. That information could provide general utility as public information and for some individuals in other agencies.

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- Nicole also noted that sending out information once and then not following-up again on that same information is not effective, sending the same message multiple times or from multiples sources is expected to yield better results. The challenge lies in encouraging various stakeholders to consume the information being pushed out. Some stakeholders/partners identified who might be able to share the mitigation message include:
 - o American Planning Association (APA)
 - o American Public Works Association (APWA)
 - o Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM)
 - o Community Rating System (CRS) working groups
 - o Community wildfire preparedness individuals
 - o Existing HMA paid-partners
 - o HAZUS working groups
 - o Higher education emergency management programs
 - o National Academies - disaster roundtables
 - o National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Firewise USA Program
 - o Natural Hazards Conference
 - o Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) – focused on tourism, infrastructure, power, trade, resilience
 - o ShakeOut (for seismic)
 - o Vocational / technical schools
- Ideas for what else should be addressed in phase 2:
 - o Identify and recruit peer moderators and contributors
 - o Develop easy-to-follow rules of engagement for who should respond to which posts on IdeaScale, particularly for questions that only FEMA could/would respond to or that moderators might not sure how to respond.
 - For example, what if someone in FEMA Region 6 poses project eligibility questions. Is FEMA HQ monitoring or are Regional members expected to respond?
 - While part of this would be dealt with from peer-to-peer networking, it would be beneficial to capture when someone from FEMA HQ should jump in, if at all.
 - o Continue developing content
 - ESWG should try to put topics up once a month or so
 - Mitigation projects should start going up

11 ESWG Involvement in Streamlining the HMA Application Process

ESWG Members discussed how to move forward with the proposed work stream to streamline the HMA application process:

- After going through articulating the perceived/desired scope and outcome of this work, the ESWG came to consensus that more information is needed about the broader FEMA Grants Management Modernization (GMM) effort before specific work can be scoped out accordingly.
- For now, the HMA ESWG will serve as a sounding board for GMM, where appropriate and feasible.
- Three clear next steps:
 - o Step 1: **ACTION: Get tribal ESWG members looped into the next GMM meeting**
 - o Step 2: **ACTION: HMA HQ to obtain a better understanding of the timeline and where GMM is in the overall requirements-gathering process for HMA programs, and share with ESWG**
 - o Step 3: **ACTION: FEMA HQ to prepare a brief on GMM to ESWG either at Q4 or earlier, as needed**

Meeting Notes



12 Mitigation Project Site Visits

ESWG members visited multiple mitigation projects in the Denver/Boulder, CO area:

- Project #1: Pedestrian bridge, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations, on University of Colorado Boulder campus.
- Project #2: Wildfire mitigation at multiple residential properties in Boulder County, CO.

13 ESWG Work Stream: Annual Hazard Mitigation Stakeholder Workshop Planning (2019)

ESWG Members discussed plans for the 2019 Annual Hazard Mitigation Stakeholder Workshop:

- Use the Monday (April 1st) to provide training; ESWG is proposing to lead the development and delivery of a Hazard Mitigation 101 “course” that could be piloted at the Workshop. **ACTION: Tom and Karen/Tara Seibold (HMA GDA)** audience: The course would be geared toward new mitigators (SHMOs, inexperienced tribal reps, new FEMA staff), specifically recommended for those with ≤ 2 years of mitigation experience.
 - o Course delivery: The course could be taught by experienced SHMOs, Tribal staff, and FEMA.
 - o Course content: The course would provide an overview of the skillsets and competencies needed to implement mitigation, the tasks typically performed at the State, tribal and FEMA level, and where to find resources and additional training.
- Workshop should officially start on Tuesday, April 2nd.
- Have the Regional breakout sessions earlier in the week (maybe Tuesday afternoon?), so folks from the same geographic area can meet up and share schedules, etc. ESWG suggested providing a rough discussion guide/recommended talking points to start the conversation.
- They appreciated the individual sessions repeating – but asked if they could be repeated at another time during the day, not back to back. This would allow the presenters to see some of the other sessions offered at the same time as theirs and give them a break between presenting.
 - o Specifically, they recommended not mirroring the breakout session blocks exactly (see table below for example).

	2018 HM Workshop Session Set-up (Illustrative)	2019 HM Workshop Session Set-up (Proposal #1)	2019 HM Workshop Session Set-up (Proposal #2)
Early AM block	A, B, C, D	A, B, C, D	A, B, C, D
Late AM block	A, B, C, D	E, F, G, H	E, F, G, H
Early PM block	E, F, G, H	A, B, C, D	A, C, E, G
Late PM block	E, F, G, H	E, F, G, H	C, D, F, H

- They recommend repeating the tribal roundtable session, having the ESWG host the session again. ESWG also requested that this conversation not be scheduled at the same time as other ESWG commitments (e.g., HMA 101 pre-Workshop course).
- Use the abstract notice to clarify what we are looking for in the sessions.
- The EventMobi app was generally helpful, though not all sessions had presentations materials available for download by attendees.
- ESWG would like to be included, at some point, in the review of abstract submissions.
- ESWG would like to see HMA HQ provide SHMOs/tribal POCs a list of who from their state/geographic area is attending.

Meeting Notes



14 Moving Mitigation Forward

14.1 HMA Satisfaction Survey

Jennie Orenstein provided a brief on a recently reinstated HMA satisfaction survey:

- HMA survey centered around questions with overall experience and satisfaction, particularly with areas such as:
 - o HMA Application Process
 - o Award management
 - o Application review
 - o BCA
 - o Helpline
- HMA is seeking help from the ESWG to obtain more responses and to keep the questions this year somewhat similar so that a baseline can be established.
 - o One challenge was with finding the right individual(s) to share the survey with who were well-positioned or well-informed enough to provide knowledgeable responses. This was partially attributed to the challenge of conducting a phone-bank poll.
 - Another proposed approach would be to conduct the survey via email with a phone-based follow-up if needed.
 - o HMA could build the survey into the closeout process.
- HMA is open to creative methods in which to deliver the survey.
 - o Another challenge, particularly for tribes, is that there may not be one singular, best point of contact who should receive the survey. This can happen when there isn't staff dedicated to mitigation or if the role has seen frequent turnover.
- NCEI public safety?
- Region 6 tribal list is up to date
- **ACTION: Jennie Orenstein to send list out to ESWG members of HMA satisfaction survey questions and ESWG Members to review and provide feedback.**
- There are several areas HMA would like to explore further this year, including:
 - o More about documents, training, and processes
 - o Use of tribal liaisons as a resource
 - o Test communication methodology
 - o How can you tap the resources of Regions?

14.2 Moving Mitigation Forward

HMA is looking at how to process potential projects more efficiently:

- Once project applications have been submitted to FEMA, what does efficiency look like to get potential projects through the review process?
- The pre-award phase is the longest, most challenging piece of the puzzle.
 - o There's a potential that FIT teams may help.
- HMA is particularly interested in moving through pre-award phase more quickly and to address RFIs.
- HMA asked the ESWG, if HMA was able to move funding more quickly into recipient accounts, would applicant be able to get projects going more quickly?
 - o ESWG members said that conditional awards would largely help address this.
 - o If a project has been awarded, applicants may not need to draw down on the money, because simply having the award allows applicants the chance to get a lot of other paperwork and grant agreements in place. Potentially, it could take 3 months off of the grants process.

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- Conditional awards would allow subrecipients and recipients alike better timeframes to get projects implemented sooner. For some, construction can only occur during certain times of the year so the timing of project approval and moving things forward can prove critical.
- Additionally, HMA has observed slow-downs after some projects are selected for further review and approval. Some of the FEMA-grantee pre-award and grantee-subgrantee pre-award actions could happen concurrently (e.g., preparing grant award agreements, taking preliminary steps for procurement, etc.).
- HMA is looking at various options for how conditional awards might be executed from a programmatic perspective.
- Other questions arose, such as:
 - With conditional awards, will applicants still have to do a quarterly report?
 - If applicants receive a conditional award, will HMA award the management costs?

15 Wrap-Up

ESWG Members reflected on the meeting and developed elevator pitches for how they would share what occurred at the meeting with other external stakeholders.

Meeting Notes



16 Action Items

#	Action Item	Owner	Due	Notes
1	Review and provide feedback on: - User-friendliness and functionality of HMA sites on FEMA.gov - HMA Guidance Send feedback to HMA Grants Policy mailbox (FEMA-HMA-GRANTS-POLICY@fema.dhs.gov)	All ESWG Members	9/28/18	
2	Review draft HMA satisfaction survey questions and provide feedback to HMA Grants Policy mailbox (FEMA-HMA-GRANTS-POLICY@fema.dhs.gov).	All ESWG Members	9/28/18	
3	Follow-up with George De La O regarding his interest and availability to continue membership on ESWG.	Chris Blinzinger	9/28/18	
4	Locate and share wildfire (hazardous fuels reduction) planning information – “Texas Wildfire Fuel guide”.	Dorothy Cook	9/28/18	
5	Share one-page summary of HMA programs with ESWG Members.	HMA	8/16/18	complete
6	Send out HMA ESWG Membership Application 2018 via multiple channels (e.g., FEMA Weekly Bulletin, to the FEMA Regions directly, and to the FEMA Regional Tribal Liaisons).	HMA	8/28/18	complete, ongoing
7	Connect with HMA BCA team about potential items to include in future updates for pre-calculated benefits: - Generators - Hazard fuels reduction - Ignition-resistant construction - Defensible space	HMA	9/5/18	information shared, complete
8	Share (1) link to HMA Grants IdeaScale Forum and (2) link to Blue Lake Rancheria Resiliency Training Innovation Center (RTIC) with Richard MacDonald.	Donna Boreck	10/19/18	
9	Obtain better understanding of the timeline and where GMM is in the overall requirements-gathering process for HMA programs, and share with/brief to ESWG	HMA	11/15/18	
10	For Advance Assistance and for HMA resources in general, review existing materials (FAQs, job aids, etc.) to see what’s easy to access and what needs updating.	HMA	Ongoing	
11	Once AA materials updated/refreshed, provide link to newly refreshed AA resources to ESWG members interested in learning more.	HMA Grants Implementation	TBD	
12	Gather and share handoff materials package or a briefing book that can be handed over from outgoing members to incoming members, in addition to pre-meeting communications.	Hunter Gray	2/1/19	
13	Schedule and facilitate conversation about inclusion of the value/significance of cultural resources, particularly for tribes, in the BCA as pre-calculated benefits.	Jeaninne Bruguier	TBD	
14	Submit ESWG tribal member names as POCs to be included/invited for Grants Management Modernization (GMM) conversations.	Jennie Orenstein	8/16/18	complete
15	Share draft HMA satisfaction survey questions with ESWG members for review and input.	Jennie Orenstein	TBD	complete

Meeting Notes



FEMA

16	Crosswalk HMA External Scan results with FEMA Strategic Plan 2018-2022.	Jennie Orenstein, Nicole LaRosa, Jeaninne Bruguier	11/15/18	
17	Reach out to Region VIII mitigation project site visit POCs to encourage them to share projects on the HMA Grants Forum (IdeaScale).	Karen Helbrecht	9/28/18	complete
18	Follow-up with Quentin Cummings to obtain and share 2018 HM Stakeholder Workshop presentation materials on substantial damage determinations with ESWG members.	Karen Helbrecht	TBD	In-progress
19	Check with FEMA regulatory lawyers regarding to what extent non-feds can contribute to HMA Guidance development/update.	Nicole LaRosa	TBD	
20	Share (1) stories and examples of mitigation successes, and challenges from Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation, and (2) tribal cultural awareness video link/materials with HMA/the ESWG	Richard MacDonald	9/28/18	
21	Discuss and determine next steps regarding HMA 101 pre-Workshop course development.	Tom Hughes, Karen Helbrecht/Tara Seibold	10/1/18	

Meeting Notes



17 HMA ESWG 2018 Work Streams

Work Stream	Team	Non-ESWG Contributors / POCs
1. Individual ESWG Member Outreach with Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • {all ESWG Members} • George De La O (Deputy, if needed) • Dorothy Cook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
2. Mitigation Core Competency and Skills Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Hughes (Lead) • Dorothy Cook (Deputy) • Chris Blinzinger • Sarah White 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
3. Advance Assistance Outreach and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Blinzinger (Lead) • Ryan Janda (Deputy) • Donna Boreck • George De La O 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah McGarvey • ESWG Support • Karen Helbrecht (supporting)
4. Tribal Engagement and Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paula Gutierrez (Lead) • Tracy DePew (Deputy) • George De La O • Kaylynn Gresham • Karen Helbrecht • Donna Boreck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jennie Orenstein (supporting) • HMA-Tribal Engagement Strategy Task Force
5. Annual Hazard Mitigation Stakeholder Workshop Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah White (Lead) • Karen Helbrecht (Deputy) • Tom Hughes • Paula Gutierrez • Kaylynn Gresham • Tracy DePew 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
6. Online HMA Knowledge and Support Forum (IdeaScale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George De La O(Lead) • Karen Helbrecht (Deputy) • Tom Hughes • Paula Gutierrez • Kaylynn Gresham • Tracy DePew 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •