



FEMA

September 29, 2023

Re: Tribal Consultation

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) remains committed to its responsibility to engage in consultation and collaboration with tribal officials, consistent with [Executive Order 13175](#), *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*, reaffirmed by President Biden's "[Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships](#)."

In 2013, the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 (SRIA) amended the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act \(Stafford Act\)](#) to provide federally recognized Indian tribal governments (Tribal Nations) the pathway to request a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration. After consulting with Tribal Nations, FEMA released the [Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance in 2017](#), which serves as a resource for Tribal Nations on Stafford Act declarations, disaster assistance, and related requirements. The Guidance also includes the criteria that FEMA uses to evaluate declaration requests from Tribal Nations and make recommendations to the President regarding whether to declare an emergency or major disaster.

The [2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan Goal 1.2](#) includes a commitment to transform our service to Tribal Nations to acknowledge tribal sovereignty and respond to the needs of each Tribal Nation. The [2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy Goal 1.4](#) further commits FEMA to increase Tribal Nation's access to FEMA programs and resources by affecting policy changes.

Consistent with our responsibilities and commitments, FEMA invites Tribal Nations to attend a series of government-to-government listening sessions and tribal consultations on the Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance. You can find out more information, register for future consultations, and see past listening session information below.

Future Tribal Consultations on the Guidance:

In-Person Tribal Consultation at the [National Congress of American Indians Annual Convention](#)

Day/Time: November 13, 2023, 3:15 – 4:45 pm ET

Location: New Orleans, LA, [Ernest M. Morial Convention Center](#)

Past Tribal Listening and Consultation Sessions on the Guidance:

In Person Tribal Listening Session at the [National Congress of American Indians, Executive Council Winter Session](#)

Day/Time: February 23, 2023, 1:30 – 3:00 pm ET

Location: 1001 16th St NW, Washington, D.C. 20036

In Person Tribal Listening Session at the [2023 Tribal Nations Training Week](#)

Day/Time: March 15, 2023, 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 pm CST

Location: Center for Domestic Preparedness, Anniston, Alabama

Virtual Tribal Consultation

Day/Time: April 20, 3:00 – 5:00 pm ET

Location: Via Zoom and Phone

Virtual Tribal Consultation

Day/Time: May 4, 2023, 3:00 – 5:00 pm ET

Location: Via Zoom and Phone

In-Person Tribal Consultation at the [Inter-Tribal Emergency Management Coalition](#) Conference

Day/Time: August 17, 2023

Location: Tulsa, OK, [River Spirit Casino](#)

Tribal Consultation hosted by the [Alaska Federation of Natives](#)

Day/Time: October 20, 2023, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 pm ET

Location: William A. Egan Center, 555 W. 5th Avenue, Space 1/13-14, Anchorage, AK

Hybrid Tribal Consultation hosted by the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

Day/Time: October 25, 2023, 5:00 – 9:00 pm ET

Location: Generation Southeast Building (Auditorium Room), 3239 Hospital Dr., Juneau, AK and [Via Zoom and Phone](#)

The purpose of the government-to-government listening sessions and tribal consultations are to gather Tribal Nations' feedback on how to improve the Presidential disaster declaration process to ensure that Tribal Nations can access FEMA resources during and after disasters in Indian Country. A framing paper and additional information is available on the [FEMA Tribal Consultation webpage](#).

Tribal Nations can submit their written comments and any questions via email with the subject line "Tribal Declarations Guidance – Written Comments" to fema-tribal@fema.dhs.gov. FEMA will continue to accept written comments from tribal leaders.

We look forward to your participation and receiving comments and feedback as we work to support Tribal Nations before, during, and after disasters.

Sincerely,



Anne Bink
Associate Administrator
Office of Response and Recovery

Cc: Tribal Emergency Managers