

**NOTICE OF INTENT  
TO PREPARE A PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (PEA)  
FOR DAM SAFETY PROJECTS WITHIN FEMA REGION 4**

The Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announces its intent to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for dam safety projects in the states of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The PEA will evaluate the proposed repair, replacement, reconstruction, and/or removal of high hazard potential dams eligible for FEMA grant funding under the following programs: Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC); Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA); High Hazard Potential Dam (HHPD) Grant; Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP); and Public Assistance (PA). The notice is being published pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), FEMA Instruction 108-1-1, and other applicable environmental laws, including but not limited to the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Orders 12898 (Environmental Justice); 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), and 11988 (Floodplain Management) because the proposed action has the potential to affect historic, cultural, and archaeological resources; low-income and minority populations; floodplains; wetlands; and threatened and endangered species.

The potential for a dam failure or breach can have substantial consequences to human life and safety, nearby infrastructure, and environmental resources. At assessment, dams are assigned a hazard category: high; significant; or low. High Hazard dams are those where failure or mis-operation will probably cause loss of human life. Significant hazard potential classification are those dams where failure or mis-operation results in no probable loss of human life but can cause economic loss, environmental damage, disruption of lifeline facilities, or can impact other concerns. As dams age, the potential for listing as a high or significant hazard dam increases within Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The proposed repair, replacement, reconstruction, and removal activities for high and significant hazard dams is to reduce the potential for loss of human life and safety, nearby infrastructure, and environmental resource. FEMA will evaluate the proposed action to ensure that it meets all applicable federal, tribal, state, and local requirements for these activities.

The PEA will address the purpose and need for the proposed action, project alternatives considered (including the No Action alternative), affected environment, environmental consequences, and mitigation measures. A breakdown of the proposed dam repair, replacement, reconstruction, and removal actions are detailed in the Summary of Actions and includes, but is not limited to, structure stabilization, stream and/or river embankment stabilization, clearing and grubbing of vegetation, and seepage control.

In accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 C.F.R. §§ 1500.4(k) and 1501.11), the PEA will identify by project type, the potential adverse and beneficial effects associated with dam repair, replacement, reconstruction, and removal projects. The review of site-specific grant applications may be streamlined by tiering from the PEA regarding project types, alternatives, and effects. The PEA will allow FEMA to streamline their compliance responsibilities, focus site-specific reviews on a narrower scope and to eliminate repetitive discussions.

Comments to solicit input on the scope of the analysis, purpose and need, alternatives, and potential impacts are requested within 30 days following publication of this notice. Once completed, the draft

PEA will be available for public review and comment. FEMA will announce a final comment period through a notice of availability for the Draft PEA.

Additional information, including details on the PEA proposed actions and Federal, State, Tribal, and other interested party distribution list may be found on FEMA's website at: <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/environmental-historic/nepa-repository>, titled *Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Dam Safety Actions in FEMA Region 4, FEMA, 2024*.

Comments or requests for additional information about the PEA should be made in writing within 30 days of this notice by contacting Deana M. Rausch, Dam Safety Environmental Protection Specialist, FEMA Region 4, 3005 Chamblee Tucker Road, 4th Floor, Atlanta, GA 30341; or by email at [Fema-r4EHP@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Fema-r4EHP@fema.dhs.gov). The public; local, state, tribal, and federal agencies; and other interested parties are invited to provide comments on the purpose and need of the proposed action, alternatives, potential environmental impacts, and measures to reduce those impacts.