

June 2024 Update

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Modifications to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) — Endangered Species Act (ESA) Integration in Oregon

Cooperating Agency Review

In May and early June 2024, Cooperating Agencies reviewed and provided comments on the draft Model Floodplain Management Ordinance and Draft EIS (DEIS) *Chapter 3: Description of Alternatives*.

In general, comments on the draft Model Floodplain Management Ordinance fell into three categories: 1) requests for clarification, 2) questions regarding applicability and 3) suggestions intended to facilitate community use and implementation of the model ordinance. Comments on Chapter 3 were similarly focused on requests for clarification and questions regarding applicability.

FEMA appreciates the time and attention that the agencies have taken to prepare these thoughtful comments. This input will be incorporated into the documents that will be available for public review during the 75-day DEIS comment period, currently anticipated to begin in early 2025.

Technical Reports

FEMA is preparing technical reports that provide detailed analysis of various environmental considerations, including aquatic and terrestrial species, economics, environmental justice, floodplains, and water quality. These reports will inform the effects analysis that will be summarized in the EIS.

NEPA Engagement Plan

In anticipation of a DEIS release in early 2025, FEMA continues to refine the details of the NEPA Engagement Plan. Three primary goals guide the Plan's outreach approach for engagement between FEMA and potentially interested and affected parties:

- **Goal 1:** The potentially interested and affected parties, especially floodplain managers and communities in the Action Area, are informed of the DEIS, Implementation Plan and associated technical guidance, and have meaningful opportunities to provide comments. Outreach will focus on the upcoming changes to NFIP implementation in the Oregon Implementation Plan area; DEIS purpose and need, alternatives, and impacts; and associated technical guidance.
- **Goal 2:** Comments and concerns from government agencies, Tribes, potentially interested and affected parties, and the general public are collected to inform FEMA's development of the Final EIS (FEIS) and Implementation Plan.



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<https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/region-10/oregon/nfip-esa-integration>



- **Goal 3:** FEMA and the Cooperating Agencies will work together and support coordination of engagement efforts for potentially interested and affected parties.

FEMA is planning four kinds of outreach that will occur during the DEIS's 75-day comment period: focus groups, in-person open house public meetings, virtual public meetings, and a virtual open house. Locations throughout the Implementation Plan area and times of day for outreach events will be planned to maximize participation.

- In-person and virtual focus groups will provide an opportunity for key audiences to ask questions about the NFIP in general, as well as changes to the NFIP as proposed in the Implementation Plan. Focus groups can serve as workshops to help prepare potentially affected and interested parties to provide meaningful comments on the DEIS. Up to five focus groups are anticipated.
- In-person public meetings will combine elements of open house and town hall style meetings. The open house portion will include informational boards on the DEIS, arranged throughout a large public meeting room with FEMA staff and consultants available to answer questions and for informal conversation. The town hall portion will be in a separate room and will offer opportunities for individuals to provide verbal comments into the record via court reporter. Written comments will also be accepted at the in-person public meetings and instructions will be provided for submitting electronic comments outside of the public meeting. Up to six in-person public meetings across the state are anticipated.
- The virtual public meetings will start with a FEMA presentation on the DEIS, followed by a question and answer (Q&A) period during which meeting attendees can talk with FEMA's technical experts. Following the Q&A, participants will be invited to provide their comments verbally into the record. The meeting facilitator will also explain how interested parties can provide written comments.
- A virtual open house will be running for the duration of the 75-day DEIS comment period. The virtual open house will include electronic versions of all materials available at the in-person meetings, as well as additional materials that may be useful. Participants will be able to provide written comments into the record via the virtual open house.

FEMA will consider comments received during the 75-day DEIS comment period as it identifies the preferred alternative and prepares the FEIS.

Next Steps

FEMA anticipates Cooperating Agency review of the draft Path B Checklist and Path C Guidance for Customized Community Plans in the summer of 2024. The EIS team will continue to analyze impacts associated with the Implementation Plan and alternatives through summer and into fall 2024. As technical reports and sections of the EIS are ready for preliminary review, FEMA will provide them to the Cooperating Agencies for review and comment. Publication of the DEIS is anticipated in early 2025.



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