HUD’S FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT AND WETLAND PROTECTION REGULATIONS

Tribal Consultation
June 28, 2021

Join WebEx at https://ems8.intellor.com/login/839472
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• **Note that the webinar (including spoken comments) will be recorded.**
HUD Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grant Programs

Kevin Bush
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grant Programs
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Environment & Energy

Liz Zepeda
Policy Lead/Senior Environmental Protection Specialist
Office of Environment & Energy
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Zach Carter
Senior Environmental Protection Specialist
Office of Environment & Energy
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Office of Environment & Energy
Homepage: https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/environmental-review/
Mailbox: EnvironmentalPlanningDivision@hud.gov
Office of Native American Programs (ONAP)

Danielle Schopp
Program Environmental Clearance Officer (PECO)
Office of Native American Programs
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Office of Native American Programs
Homepage: www.hud.gov/codetalk
Mailbox: Codetalk@hud.gov
Background

• **January 30, 2015:** Executive Order (EO) 13690, Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input
  • EO 13690 amends EO 11988, Floodplain Management (1977) and establishes new approaches to define the floodplain

• **October 28, 2016:** HUD published a proposed rule revising Part 55 and implementing FFRMS
  • This proposed rule was withdrawn in 2017 and never went into effect

• **May 20, 2021:** EO 14030, Climate-Related Financial Risk, reinstated EO 13690 and FFRMS
  • These Orders have no effect on HUD grantees until HUD publishes a final rule to put them into effect for HUD projects
  • HUD hopes to have a proposed rule implementing FFRMS published in the Federal Register early in 2022 with a final rule in effect early in 2023
HUD’s Climate Priorities

- EOs 13990 and 14008 call on the Federal government to address impacts of the climate crisis using current science
- This includes considering and addressing the environmental justice impacts of climate change
- Improving floodplain management and increasing flood resilience is an important component of this response
Overview of HUD’s Environmental Regulations

• Part 50: Procedural requirements when HUD performs environmental reviews

• Part 51: Manmade hazards
  • Noise
  • Explosive and flammable hazards
  • Airport clear zones

• Part 55: Floodplain management and wetland protection

• Part 58: Procedural requirements when responsible entities (REs) perform environmental reviews
In May 2018, HUD initiated Tribal consultation on its efforts to streamline its environmental regulations.

- This rulemaking focused on Parts 50 and 58.
- HUD shared a draft proposed rule with Tribes in August 2018.

HUD is not currently pursuing that rule, but intends to revisit revising Parts 50 and 58 soon.
24 CFR Part 55 – Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection

- Implements 2 Executive Orders (EOs)
  - EO 11988, Floodplain Management
  - EO 11990, Wetlands Protection
- Requires 8-Step Decisionmaking Process to evaluate alternatives to actions that would occupy or modify floodplains or impact wetlands
Consultation Timeline

Submit early comments by **Tuesday, July 18**

Draft proposed rule will be circulated to Tribal Leaders for an additional 60-day comment period **later this summer**

HUD plans to publish a proposed rule in the Federal Register for broader public comment in **early 2022**
Due to the ongoing COVID-19 National Emergency, please submit all comments, recommendations, and questions electronically to: EnvironmentalPlanningDivision@hud.gov
HUD’s Rulemaking Goals

Currently include...

- Implement FFRMS (defining floodplain)
- Revise procedures to identify wetlands
- Provide clearer instructions for the 8-Step Process
- Reorganize Part 55 for clarity
Implementing FFRMS

- Under FFRMS, Federal agencies have the option of choosing from three approaches to define the floodplain:
  1. Climate-Informed Science Approach (CISA): Utilizing best-available, actionable data and methods that integrate current and future changes in flooding based on science,
  2. Freeboard Value Approach (FVA): Two or three feet of elevation, depending on the criticality of the building, above the 100-year, or 1 percent-annual-chance, base flood elevation (BFE), or
  3. 500 Year Flood (0.2 Percent Flood): 500-year, or 0.2 percent-annual-chance, flood elevation.

- In 2016, HUD chose to rely on the FVA approach because it could be applied using existing FEMA maps without special expertise
  - However, this may not be the case on Tribal lands
Freeboard Value Approach (FVA)

FFRMS would expand the floodplain both **vertically** (by adding to the base flood elevation) and **horizontally** (by enlarging the horizontal area of interest commensurate with the vertical increase)

- This is the approach HUD proposed in 2016
- New construction and substantial improvement projects would be required to elevate 2 feet above BFE
Defining Floodplains

• HUD is considering adjusting its approach in this rule to rely on CISA and/or the 500-year floodplain
  • Either in addition to or instead of the FVA approach

• We want to define an approach that will be effective and reliable on Tribal lands

• Questions
  • What methods do you use now to define the floodplain where FEMA maps are not available? Are there any best practices you would suggest to HUD and/or other Tribes?
  • How can Part 55 improve the process for Tribes?
  • What approach to FFRMS would work best on Tribal lands?
  • What resources would help Tribes identify and define floodplains?
Defining Wetlands

• What tools or methods do you use now to identify wetlands?
  • National Wetlands Inventory?
  • Other Tribal, Federal or State maps such as soil surveys?
  • Services of a wetlands biologist?

• What are wetlands identification best practices or workable solutions that HUD should encourage or facilitate through 24 CFR 55?
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