

FEMA Funding in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

What's Funded?

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funded two FEMA grant programs that can support nature-based approaches to flood management. These programs are:

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA): \$3.5 billion over 5 years

Flood Mitigation Assistance is a competitive grant program that provide funding to states, local communities, federally recognized tribes and territories for projects that reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program. Priorities include:

- Project Scoping
- Community Flood Mitigation Projects
- Individual Flood Mitigation Projects
- Flood Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Technical Assistance

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC): \$1 billion over 5 years

BRIC makes federal funds available to states, U.S territories, federally recognized tribal governments, and local communities for hazard mitigation activities. It does so with a recognition of the growing hazards associated with climate change, and of the need for natural hazard risk mitigation activities that promote climate adaptation and resilience with respect to those hazards. Funded activities:

- Capability and Capacity Building Activities
- Mitigation Projects
- Management Costs

IIJA also provided \$500 million over 5 years for the Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation (STORM) program. This new program authorizes FEMA to provide capitalization grants to states or eligible tribal governments to establish revolving loan funds to provide hazard mitigation assistance to local governments to reduce risks to disasters and natural hazards. FEMA has yet to develop implementation guidance for this program.

How do FMA and BRIC work?

FEMA holds an annual competitive grant cycle for FMA and BRIC.

Who is eligible?

- Applicants: States, territories, Tribes
- Sub-applicants: Local Communities, tribes
- NGOs can receive pass through funding

Cost-Share:

- 75% federal/ 25% Non-federal
- 90% Federal/10% non-federal for rural and disadvantaged communities

Timeline:

- State application process varies by State. Consult with State Hazard Mitigation Officer for State process
- Annual Notice of Funding Opportunity published by FEMA in late Summer, Applications due Winter

FEMA defines Nature-Based Approaches as:

Nature-based solutions are sustainable planning, design, environmental management and engineering practices that weave natural features or processes into the built environment to promote adaptation and resilience. These solutions use natural features and processes to:

- Combat climate change
- Reduce flood risk
- Improve water quality
- Protect coastal property
- Restore/protect wetlands
- Stabilize shorelines
- Reduce urban heat
- Add recreational space



How can funding be directed to nature-based projects?

Actions FEMA can take:

- Prioritize nature-based projects in BRIC project scoring criteria
- Reform Benefit-Cost analysis to more effectively determine cost-effectiveness of nature-based projects
- Direct technical assistance funding to support for nature-based projects
- Encourage States, tribes and communities to integrate nature-based approaches in state and local hazard mitigation plans
- Prioritize large-scale buyout plans and programs that use equitable, community led processes
- Streamline administrative processes
- Fund restoration of buyout lands to natural conditions

Actions States and Local Communities can take:

- Add conservation experts to the state hazard mitigation planning teams
- Integrate conservation planning and nature-based projects in state and local hazard mitigation plans
- Think BIG- Watershed, state and reach scale
- Foster coordination and collaboration between multiple local governments

Actions River Conservationists can take:

- Provide technical and administrative support to local hazard mitigation staff
- Demonstrate flood risk reduction and resilience benefits
- Find match and diversify funding
- Build the business case for your NBA project and learn the FEMA BCA process

More Information

FEMA [Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants](#)

FEMA [Building Community Resilience With Nature-Based Solutions](#)

FEMA [Nature-Based Solutions website](#)

FEMA [Mitigation Action Portfolio](#)

Multiple Agencies [Federal Green Infrastructure Collaborative](#)

TNC [Promoting Nature-Based Hazard Mitigation Through FEMA Mitigation Grants](#)

Environmental Law Institute [Resources on Hazard Mitigation Planning](#)