FEMA Releases First-Ever National Tribal Strategy

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WASHINGTON – FEMA released a national tribal strategy -- the agency's first ever -- to better address its responsibilities to federally recognized tribal nations when responding to and preparing for disasters affecting tribal lands.

The "2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy" provides FEMA with a roadmap to refine and elaborate on major strategic goals and objectives we are working to achieve. It includes information requested and recommended by tribal nations through extensive outreach sessions led by FEMA National Tribal Affairs Advisor Denise "Bambi" Kraus. Key issue areas were added to address requests from tribal nation members, to include tribal-specific technical assistance and tailored resources to support tribal emergency management programs.

Through this new strategy, FEMA will initiate a national study on tribal emergency management capacity and capabilities, develop a comprehensive FEMA Guide of programs, develop tribal-specific technical assistance resources, regularly convene an annual meeting of national and regional tribal liaisons and expand training opportunities for tribal nations, and other related objectives.

"On his first day in office, President Biden called on all federal agencies to advance racial equity and support underserved communities nationwide. The FEMA workforce remains committed to this critical mission by instilling equity as the foundation of emergency management and always putting people first," said FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell. "FEMA's first-ever National Tribal Strategy will be key to achieving this ambitious goal, which represents a significant milestone for the agency and reflects our deep commitment to better partner with and serve all 574 federally recognized tribal nations."

The "2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy" follows the structure of the "2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan," and better aligns FEMA capabilities to the needs of tribal governments as they lead their communities to a future that is more prepared for and resilient against disasters. Both documents position FEMA, and

the emergency management community at large, toward a future where it must embrace its expanding role in a quickly changing landscape.

The strategy implementation is channeled through deliberate actions designed to foster stronger collaboration and information sharing between FEMA and tribal nations, including, among other initiatives:

- Initiate a national study on tribal emergency management capacity and capabilities.
- Develop a comprehensive guide of programs and assistance that FEMA offers.
- Create a new FEMA Tribal Affairs Work Group, which will serve as an internal body tasked to ensure the agency's approach during the engagement and service of tribes is elevated, coordinated, resourced and matured across all FEMA mission areas.
- Review and revise FEMA training opportunities for tribal nations and develop and/or update resources to address the specific tribal training needs identified by tribal nations.

FEMA understands that sovereign tribal nations have unique needs, capabilities and roles in emergency management. Inherent to the aspirations of the new National Tribal Strategy is a focus on improved engagement, partnership and service between FEMA and the 574 federally recognized tribal nations it serves.