

Jan 11th, 2015

PUBLIC NOTICE OF INTENT TO PREPARE A PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (PEA)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is providing notice of its intent to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) to evaluate watershed restoration projects in the State of Colorado. We provide this notice to advise other Federal and State agencies, Native American tribes, non-governmental organizations, and the public of our intention as well as to obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to consider during the PEA planning process. These actions are part of our effort to comply with the general provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); NEPA regulations; other Federal laws and regulations, Executive Orders; and policies for compliance with those laws and regulations including 44 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 9 and 10.

Our PEA will focus on comprehensive watershed restoration activities in Colorado through river restoration, property acquisition and infrastructure improvements. FEMA and other Federal Agencies may provide funds in an effort to restore watershed functions and mitigate for future disaster events. The purpose of our PEA is to provide an assessment of the expected environmental impacts associated with implementing these projects. More specifically, it will address the purpose and need of the proposed projects; consider project alternatives, affected environment, environmental consequences, and the impacts of mitigation measures. The PEA would not address site-specific impacts, which would be evaluated prior to project approval.

The projects would be performed within existing rights of way to the extent practicable. However, because disaster events have disrupted original footprints there will be situations that warrant upgrading a site to meet existing codes and standards or to address conditions that have changed since the original construction. All Federally-funded projects will be completed in compliance with applicable Federal, tribal, state and local laws, regulations, Executive Orders, etc. Some specific items of work may include, but not be limited to:

- River Restoration: Channel shaping or re-profiling, bank stabilization, floodplain construction, overflow channel construction, riparian re-vegetation, in-stream habitat improvement.
- Property Acquisition: Acquisition of properties in areas of high risk due to geomorphic conditions such as erosional zones or in support of watershed functional restoration.
- Infrastructure Improvements: Bridge enlargement, storm water improvements, culvert replacement in support of watershed functional restoration.

The comment period for the proposed PEA will remain open for two weeks following publication of this notice. After gathering public comments, FEMA will develop a draft

PEA that will be available for public review and comment according to 44 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 10.

You can obtain more detailed information about the proposed PEA from Steven Hardegen, FEMA Region VIII, Regional Environmental Officer, Denver, CO
steven.hardegen@fema.gov.

Comments should be made in writing to the FEMA point of contact listed above and post-marked within fourteen (14) days of publication of this notice.