

**March 29th 2015 | PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (PEA) FOR
WATERSHED RESILIENCY PROJECTS**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is providing notice of availability for comment on a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) to evaluate watershed resiliency projects in the State of Colorado. We provide this notice to invite other Federal and State agencies, Native American tribes, non-governmental organizations, and the public to provide commentary or suggestions on the scope of issues considered in our PEA. 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, regulations, and Executive Orders; and our policies for compliance with those laws and regulations including 44 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 9 and 10.

Our PEA focuses on comprehensive watershed resiliency activities in Colorado including river restoration and watershed mitigation through multi-objective design and bioengineering. 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 channel shaping or re-profiling, bank stabilization, floodplain construction, overflow channel construction, riparian re-vegetation, in-stream habitat improvement and fish passage.

The comment period for the proposed PEA will remain open for thirty (30) days following the original publication of this notice on March 29th and can be found at <http://dhsem.state.co.us/budget-finance/public-notices>.

You can obtain more information from Steven Hardegen, FEMA Region VIII, Regional Environmental Officer, Denver, CO Steven.Hardegen@fema.dhs.gov or Jeffrey Fullmer, FEMA Environmental Specialist, Jeffrey.Fullmer@fema.dhs.gov.

Comments should be made in writing to the FEMA point of contact listed above and post-marked within thirty (30) days of publication of this notice.