

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FOR PUBLIC REVIEW OF A
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (PEA) FOR
RESTORATION, REPLACEMENT AND RELOCATION OF UTILITIES IN MONTANA**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is providing notice that a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) to evaluate proposed utility projects in the State of Montana is available for public review and comment. We provide this notice to provide the opportunity for other Federal and State agencies, Native American tribes, non-governmental organizations, and the public to comment on the proposed PEA. A Notice of interested was published October 6, 2020 and no comments were received. 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 C.F.R. Part 9 and FEMA Directive 108-1 & Instruction 108-1-1.

Our PEA focuses on a variety utilities located in Montana that require restoration, replacement, or relocation as a result of damages sustained during disaster events, or as proposed mitigation projects funded through FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs. Other Federal agencies may adopt the PEA under their own authorities in accordance with the Unified Federal Review (UFR) process.

A “utility” supplies a community with electricity, gas, water, or sewage and other similar public services. In an effort to restore these utilities or mitigate from future events, FEMA (and other agencies such as the US Economic Development Administration (EDA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) may provide funds for expansion, enlargement, and other upgrades along with replacement, relocation, or changes in materials. The purpose of the PEA is to provide an assessment of the expected environmental impacts associated with implementing these types of projects. It addresses the purpose and need of the proposed projects, project alternatives considered, affected environment, environmental consequences, and impact of mitigation measures. The PEA would not address site-specific impacts, which would be evaluated on a project-specific basis.

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 are limited to:

- Placement of temporary crossings, utilities, staging areas, access, and safety features.
- Repair, replacement, and relocation of production, transmission, and treatment facilities in order to provide communities with utility services.
- Construction, excavation, trenching, and directional boring to allow repair, replacement, and relocation of utilities and ancillary facilities.
- Upsizing, encasing, armoring, and upgrading utilities to improve function and protect from future events.
- Repair and reconstruction of adjacent roadway and other connected infrastructure necessary to restore function.
- Operating equipment within waterways to allow repair, replacement, and relocation of utilities.

The comment period for the draft PEA will remain open for fifteen days following publication of this notice. After gathering public comments, the draft PEA will become final in accordance with FEMA Directive 108-1 & Instruction 108-1-1, FEMA's implementing procedures for NEPA.

You can provide comments or obtain more detailed information about the proposed PEA by contacting Richard Myers, FEMA Region VIII, Deputy Regional Environmental Officer at richard.myers2@fema.gov.