



September 28, 2022

Dear Tribal Leader:

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the tribal leaders and tribal staff who were able to participate in the June 22, 2022, tribal consultation about the Department of Homeland Security-Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) preparedness grant programs. Your feedback on the eligibility requirements for the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG) and the Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP) was invaluable. Thank you, also, to those who submitted comments. The input we received has been critical to our understanding of the issues that Tribal Nations face when seeking and managing preparedness grant funding.

We asked tribal leaders several questions during the consultation:

1. Should the scope of the EMPG and THSGP expand beyond terrorism and the national priority areas to address all hazards and tribal preparedness priorities?
2. Should more time be given to meet the requirements of the [National Incident Management System \(NIMS\)](#) implementation criteria?
3. Should the grant award's acceptance period expand beyond 60 or 90 days to allow sufficient time for tribal nations to receive the award and complete the [Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Stakeholder Preparedness Review \(THIRA/SPR\)](#)?
4. What additional challenges do tribal governments face in requesting and receiving and managing grant funding, including the EMPG and THSGP?
5. What support could FEMA provide to tribal governments in managing FEMA grant funding throughout the grant lifecycle? For example, during planning, project development, application, grants management, and closeout.
6. What cultural needs specific to tribal nations could emergency preparedness grant funding be used to support?
7. Would greater flexibility in the use of grant funding to support the completion of grant requirements be helpful (e.g., THIRA/SPR)?
8. What would tribal leaders like to see in the future in terms of FEMA grants to improve resilience?

Tribal leaders shared several important points and suggestions during the consultation discussion, including the following recommendations:

- The tribal cost-share requirement should be eliminated for tribal nations for FEMA grant programs;
- More time should be given to tribal nations to apply for a funding opportunity;
- The scope of the EMPG and THSGP should expand to include other hazards, such as drought, fires, flooding and irrigation activities that relate to crop production and related to traditional farming and subsistence, and the loss of habitat that causes loss of medicinal plants;
- Financial support should be available to tribal nations to assist them in meeting the [National Incident Management System \(NIMS\)](#) requirement;



- The eligibility requirement to live within 100 miles of a U.S. border should be eliminated for the THSGP;
- Tribal governments should be able to apply for EMPG funding without going through a state, per their sovereign status and FEMA's government-to-government relationship with tribal nations;
- Separate funding should be provided to finance the requirement for a tribal nation to complete a THIRA/SPR that is part of the award of a THSGP.

As a result of the tribal feedback received in this consultation, FEMA is working to develop a proposal to modify and expand the THSGP's legal authorities. In particular, FEMA is exploring statutory changes which would:

1. Increase equity in program funding eligibility to include all federally recognized Tribal Nations;
2. Expand the scope of the THSGP grant program for tribal governments to include all-hazards preparedness;
3. Revise THSGP to be a standalone grant program for tribal governments, with its own appropriation; and
4. Increase tribal access to grant funding by removing burdensome and unnecessary administrative requirements.

More equitable access to funding for emergency management capacity building would allow tribal nations to add personnel and resources to help them contend with future disasters, build resilience, and save lives. Investing in tribal capacity can, in particular, help tribal nations address the effects of climate change, from which they are often disproportionately impacted.

We plan on hosting another tribal consultation this fall to continue these discussions and gather additional feedback from tribal nations on what changes are needed to make FEMA preparedness grant programs as accessible and equitable as possible.

We thank you for your continued partnership and look forward to future opportunities to gather your feedback about our programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victoria Salinas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Victoria Salinas
Deputy Administrator (A) for Resilience

cc: Tribal Emergency Managers