



April 10, 2023

Dear Tribal Leader:

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) remains committed to its responsibility to engage in consultation and collaboration with tribal officials, consistent with [Executive Order 13175](#), *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*, reaffirmed by President Biden's "[Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships](#)."

In 2013, the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 (SRIA) amended the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act \(Stafford Act\)](#) to provide federally recognized Indian tribal governments (Tribal Nations) the pathway to request a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration. After consulting with Tribal Nations, FEMA released the [Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance in 2017](#), which serves as a resource for Tribal Nations on Stafford Act declarations, disaster assistance, and related requirements. The Guidance also includes the criteria that FEMA uses to evaluate declaration requests from Tribal Nations and make recommendations to the President regarding whether to declare an emergency or major disaster.

The [2022-2026 FEMA Strategic Plan Goal 1.2](#) includes a commitment to transform our service to Tribal Nations to acknowledge tribal sovereignty and respond to the needs of each Tribal Nation. The [2022-2026 FEMA National Tribal Strategy Goal 1.4](#) further commits the FEMA to increase Tribal Nation's access to FEMA programs and resources by affecting policy changes.

Consistent with our responsibilities and commitments, FEMA invites Tribal Nations to attend a series of government-to-government listening sessions and tribal consultations on the Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance. You can find out more information, register for future consultations, and see past listening session information below.

Future Tribal Consultations on the Guidance:

- Virtual Tribal Consultation
 - Day/Time: April 20, 3:00 – 5:00 pm ET
 - Location: Via Zoom and Phone
 - [Register Here](#)

- Virtual Tribal Consultation
 - Day/Time: May 4, 2023, 3:00 – 5:00 pm ET
 - Location: Via Zoom and Phone
 - [Register Here](#)

- In-Person Tribal Consultation at the [Inter-Tribal Emergency Management Coalition Conference](#)
 - Day/Time: August 15-17, 2023
 - The final date and time of this consultation will be announced soon.
 - Location: Tulsa, OK, [River Spirit Casino](#)

Past Tribal Listening Session on the Guidance:

- In Person Tribal Listening Session at the [National Congress of American Indians, Executive Council Winter Session](#)
 - Day/Time: February 23, 2023, 1:30 – 3:00 pm ET
 - Location: 1001 16th St NW, Washington, D.C. 20036

- In Person Tribal Listening Session at the [2023 Tribal Nations Training Week](#)
 - Day/Time: March 15, 2023, 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. CST
 - Location: Center for Domestic Preparedness, Anniston, Alabama

The purpose of the government-to-government listening sessions and tribal consultations are to gather Tribal Nations’ feedback on how to improve the Presidential disaster declaration process to ensure that Tribal Nations can access FEMA resources during and after disasters in Indian Country. A framing paper and additional information will be released soon on the [FEMA Tribal Consultation webpage](#).

Tribal Nations can submit their written comments and any questions via email with the subject line “Tribal Declarations Guidance – Written Comments” to fema-tribal@fema.dhs.gov. Final feedback and comments from Tribal Nations are due by **September 17, 2023**.

We look forward to your participation and receiving comments and feedback as we work to support Tribal Nations before, during, and after disasters.

Sincerely,

Anne Bink
 Associate Administrator
 Office of Response and Recovery

cc: Tribal Emergency Managers