



# External Stakeholder Engagement Guide

Unified Federal Environmental and Historic  
Preservation Review (UFR)

UFR Job Aid

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FEMA

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# 1. Introduction

The External Stakeholder Engagement Guide provides Unified Federal Review (UFR) practitioners guidance on how to engage external stakeholders during disaster recovery operations. In the field, UFR Advisors utilize the Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP) Coordination and Communication Structure to collect information to identify existing and needed UFR resources. This job aid highlights key information to consider when planning stakeholder outreach, including when to establish a focused working group. Also included is a list of key Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and UFR resources for targeted information gathering in support of UFR planning.

# 2. Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities

UFR Advisors are activated when the potential for significant coordination among federal and state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) entities may be required to resolve EHP concerns and expedite compliance reviews. During the first 30 days of activation, the UFR Advisor scopes the nature of the disaster, recovery efforts, federal and SLTT agencies and entities involved, and identifies specific EHP issues and priorities. Depending on the complexity of the disaster or proposed recovery projects, the UFR Advisor may lead disaster specific working groups, including representatives from other agencies, to resolve EHP issues and assist in expediting the EHP review process.

The EHP Advisor (EHAD), EHP Manager (EHMG), and Regional UFR Coordinator are the primary sources of information for the UFR Advisor for identifying appropriate federal and SLTT partners to engage, and appropriate meetings or working groups to join. During the first 30 days of deployment, the UFR Advisor coordinates with the EHAD and Regional UFR Coordinator to establish UFR priorities based upon existing or forecast operational needs. The UFR Advisor coordinates with the EHAD or Regional Coordinator to set introductory calls with federal and SLTT recovery partners. It is the responsibility of the UFR Advisor to consistently communicate with the Regional UFR Coordinator or designated regional staff member to provide updates on UFR advancements. See Section 5, [Key FEMA Resources](#), for a list of other resources available to assist the UFR Advisor throughout their activation. A formal or informal disaster implementation plan can be created to describe how the UFR process will be implemented to disaster recovery operations. The components of a UFR Disaster Implementation Plan are illustrated in the graphic below.

## UFR DISASTER IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



**Description of Desired Outcomes**



**Timeline with Major Milestones**



**Logistics and Resource Requirements**



**Assignment of Responsibility to Specific Entities**

The primary function of the UFR Advisor is to coordinate with the EHAD to establish and maintain structured coordination among Recovery Support Function (RSF) Field Coordinators, other federal agencies, SLTT EHP points of contact (POCs), and joint field office (JFO) leadership. These activities ensure consistent communication and awareness among UFR stakeholder on EHP and UFR matters. This expansive coordination structure is the most valuable element a UFR Advisor brings to the disaster recovery operation. This collaboration allows the UFR Advisor identify or create streamlining tools and agreements that expedite the EHP compliance review process. Participants in EHP compliance review include, but are not limited to, regional or field EHP representatives from federal disaster recovery funding agencies, resource and regulatory agencies, SLTT partners, including Tribal and State Historic Preservation Officers.

Through leveraging this coordination and communication structure, the UFR Advisor accomplishes the following objectives:

### Identify, Gather, and Disseminate Information

- Establish basic UFR-related work guidelines, such as the Disaster Specific UFR Implementation Plan.
- Identify EHP-related aspects of recovery expectations.
- Review the region's current UFR Implementation Plan.
- Identify other agency EHP compliance priorities and information needs to inform UFR actions.
- Document other agency needs for additional resources through mission assignments.
- Gather input from federal and SLTT stakeholders and partners to inform the scope and strategies for the UFR mission.
- Identify new federal or SLTT stakeholders that need to be contacted based on specific projects or newly identified compliance review requirements.
- Identify potential or proposed disaster recovery projects with a federal nexus where FEMA is or has the potential to be the Lead Federal Agency or a cooperating agency.
- Identify potential or proposed projects with a federal nexus that may impact or be impacted by disaster recovery activity.
- As situations evolve, identify the need to develop new or revise existing EHP streamlining tools and formal agreements between agencies.
- Identify the need to establish separate disaster-specific UFR working groups to facilitate EHP compliance and coordination related to major recovery issues or complex projects and or discuss the alignment of EHP compliance strategies.
- Support EHP practitioners in identifying and implementing existing programmatic analyses, agreements, and tools to expedite reviews during disaster recovery.
- Identify EHP processes, resources, and mechanisms from other federal agencies that can be leveraged to expedite FEMA EHP compliance reviews.
- Promote and disseminate UFR products, including Programmatic Agreements, job aids, regional UFR planning documents and tools, to EHP and Program staff, SLTT and other federal agency representatives, applicants, and other stakeholders.

### 3. Key Information Needs and Sources

Key stakeholder contacts for the UFR Advisor include RSF Field Coordinators and EHP personnel from other federal or SLTT agencies across the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF). It is important to maintain regular communication with other federal agency staff to share project information and maintain awareness of non-FEMA recovery projects. Gaining visibility on other agencies' actions is often achieved through relationships Regional UFR Coordinators, Regional Environmental Officers (REOs), EHADs, and UFR Advisors have built or maintained. These contacts may change over the lifetime of a disaster recovery as personnel may be temporarily assigned to the recovery effort. Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) meetings, state-level recovery plans, Federal Register or other public notices can also provide insight into federally funded actions in the disaster recovery space.

When multiple federal agencies are taking action by providing funding, approval, or technical assistance for disaster recovery projects there is potential for conflicting or redundant EHP compliance review requirements. This should be documented in the Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA), EHP Management Plan, UFR Implementation Plan, or UFR After Action Report.

#### Stakeholder Contact

- A list of the most frequently involved federal agencies in disaster recovery, including their roles and responsibilities, can be found in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Establishing the Unified Federal Environmental and Historic Preservation Review Process (UFR MOU; see [UFR Library](#)) executed in July 2014.
- Contact information for EHP personnel in other federal agencies and SLTT agency representatives may be found in the Greensheet, the Agency POC list on the UFR website, the disaster-based EHP Management Plan, or obtained from the EHAD or Regional UFR Coordinator. Through the course of ongoing interagency coordination efforts, other stakeholders may be identified.
- Current and ongoing SLTT agency engagements may be obtained from the EHAD, the Regional UFR Coordinator, or REO. The EHP Management Plan should also be consulted for information on roles and responsibilities of participating federal and SLTT agencies.

#### EHP Coordination and Communication Structure

- Identify the existing EHP coordination structure and evaluate the need for a separate UFR coordination structure.
  - Consult the EHAD for information on disaster specific challenges and concerns, current meeting schedules, and current or forecast consultation or coordination activity.
  - Identify disaster specific challenges that highlight the need for recurring interagency meetings or more focused efforts, such as a task force or working group.
  - Consult the UFR Communication and Outreach Strategy to maintain consistency among FEMA UFR communication products.

- Ensure the regions receive regular updates on relevant UFR activity to avoid conflict with ongoing regional efforts.
- Coordinate with the Regional UFR Coordinator, EHAD, and REO to ensure all available UFR streamlining tools are identified and properly implemented. These should be referenced in the EHP Management Plan and may be obtained from EHP management, Regional UFR Coordinator, REO, or National UFR Coordinator.
- Consult the Regional UFR Coordinator, EHAD, or other agency POCs to identify capacity shortfalls and potential resolutions. Other federal and SLTT agencies may not have the surge capacity to support the review of disaster recovery projects. This lack of capacity may result in a lengthy EHP review backlog and delays in delivering disaster recovery funding. Community Planning and Capacity Building staff, located in the IRC Group, may also be able to provide information on lack of capacity among federal and SLTT stakeholders.

### Other Agency EHP Information

- Identify differences in funding timelines among agencies to reduce redundancies in the EHP compliance review process for disaster recovery projects. This information may be available from the EHAD or Regional UFR Coordinator, REO, or may be identified through interagency coordination.
- Identify conflicts or duplication of effort between FEMA and other agency EHP compliance reviews.
- Identify regulatory review requirements and timelines for federal and SLTT EHP agencies to identify conflicting EHP review requirements, establish review or coordination timelines for proposed projects, and highlight opportunities for data sharing among federal and SLTT agencies. This information may be gathered from the EHAD or EHMGM, Regional UFR Coordinator, REO, found in federal agency regulations, or identified during interagency coordination.
- Identify common EHP concerns among funding agencies to identify opportunities for developing a unified approach to resolving specific EHP issues among funding agencies and streamlining EHP compliance reviews through information sharing. Information about common EHP concerns may be gathered from the EHAD or EHMGM, Regional UFR Coordinator, REO, or through early communication related to interagency coordination.
- Individual agencies may be ahead of others in the review of specific types of disaster recovery projects or projects within a specific geographic area. This information may be available from the EHAD, Regional UFR Coordinator, REO, or identified through interagency coordination. This type of information sharing can help other funding agencies expedite their reviews and avoid potential delays during the EHP review of disaster recovery projects.
- In-progress or recently completed Environmental Assessment(s) or Environmental Impact Statement(s) may provide useful information that can be used to streamline EHP reviews. These resources may be available from the EHAD, EHMGM, Regional UFR Coordinator, REO, or interagency partners and may include programmatic National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents, such as a programmatic Environmental Assessments for non-disaster activities similar to a disaster recovery project type. While it may not be possible to adopt the findings of or tier off of NEPA documents completed by other agencies, this type of information sharing may help other funding agencies and regulatory agencies expedite EHP reviews.
- Other issues or opportunities may be identified from various sources, such as the REO, Regional UFR Coordinator, EHAD, other federal agencies, or SLTT entities.

## 4. Establishing UFR Working Groups with Other Agencies

The UFR Advisor identifies situations where the establishment of disaster specific UFR working groups in coordination with the EHAD, Regional UFR Coordinator, and REO, and federal agency partners. Working groups may address projects that occur in specific geographic areas or habitats or projects with a common EHP concern. Information identified through the UFR coordination structure can be useful in assessing the need for a separate UFR working group. The following is a list of common issues to consider, in coordination with the EHAD, Regional UFR Coordinator, and REO, when determining whether to establish a UFR working group.

### Common Issues Resolved Through Establishing a UFR Working Group

- Significant level of duplication of EHP review among agencies. Duplication of EHP review effort may be identified by the EHAD or through interagency coordination. Minimizing duplication of EHP review effort may require cooperation among relevant federal and SLTT agencies.
- Resolving inefficiencies. Inefficiencies among federal agency EHP review efforts may be resolved by focusing existing compliance requirements across a larger geographic area, rather than on a project-by-project basis. Examples are the development of an Endangered Species Act determination matrix, regional or statewide programmatic agreements, or drafting a programmatic NEPA document. The need or opportunity to develop resources to resolve inefficiencies may be identified by the EHAD, EHM, Regional UFR Coordinator, an EHP regulatory agency, or through ongoing interagency coordination. Developing the appropriate resource for a more efficient EHP review effort may require collaboration among federal funding agencies, federal resource and regulatory agencies, and SLTT reviewing agencies.
- Conflicting EHP review schedules among funding agencies. Conflicting timelines may prolong the EHP compliance review process. The need to resolve conflicting EHP review schedules among funding agencies may be identified by the EHAD, Regional UFR Coordinator, or through ongoing interagency coordination. Resolving these conflicts will require cooperation among relevant federal and SLTT agencies.
- Multiple funding agencies across disaster recovery efforts. When multiple agencies are funding similar disaster recovery projects, POCs for those agencies may be identified by the EHAD, Regional UFR Coordinator, or IRC group. Coordination of EHP review efforts among funding agencies creates a more efficient review process through sharing relevant information, develops common compliance approaches, and avoids duplication of effort and conflicting results.
- A proposal for a large-scale or highly complex disaster recovery project. FEMA Public Assistance or Mitigation Programs, the EHAD, or IRC group typically identifies large-scale complex disaster recovery project proposals. Such a proposal may also be identified through the SLTT or federal agency coordination. Coordination of EHP review efforts among relevant agencies creates a more efficient review process through sharing relevant information, develops common compliance approaches, and avoids duplication of effort and conflicting results.
- Additional issues not listed above. The UFR Advisor will work with the REO, Regional UFR Coordinator, EHAD, or other federal agency or SLTT entities to identify challenges that can be resolved through creation of a UFR working group.

## 5. Key FEMA Resources

A number of resources are available to UFR Advisors in the [UFR Libraries on FEMA.gov](#) or the internal [UFR SharePoint](#) site.

### UFR Resources

- UFR Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). This SOP enables regional and disaster leadership to understand the need, roles, activities, and processes for activation, deployment, and deactivation for UFR field support. See [UFR Library](#).
- UFR Guidance for EHP Practitioners. This document establishes a consistent review process and communicates best practices for agencies reviewing proposed disaster recovery projects. In addition to being one of the documents to highlight on the UFR website during introductory meetings with federal and SLTT partners, the UFR Advisor may review this document to learn about key UFR roles and responsibilities from an interagency practitioner perspective. The Practitioner Guidance may be used to assist the UFR Advisor with building working relationships during a disaster recovery to unify and expedite EHP review of disaster recovery projects.
- Regional UFR Implementation Plan. Each of the 10 FEMA regions has drafted or is currently drafting a Regional UFR Implementation Plan that will identify and outline priorities for their given region related to the larger strategies and goals of the UFR Strategy and Implementation Plan. The individual regional plans are intended to inform plans for future coordination, consultation, and outreach to current and potential partners to accomplish the goal of building relationships and creating improved protocols and procedures to further enhance delivery of the FEMA mission.
- UFR Strategy and Implementation Plan 2020-2025. This document details the strategies and goals that inform the development of the UFR implementation plan. It describes how FEMA will foster partnerships, enhance intergovernmental coordination, expedite EHP compliance reviews, and improve the grantee/applicant experience in support of a more mature NDRF.
- [UFR Libraries on FEMA.gov](#) or the internal [UFR SharePoint](#) site. A collection of foundational documents, templates, tools, and resources for UFR practitioners to guide interagency engagements and promote consistency in the implementation of the UFR process.

### EHP Resources

- EHP Briefings and Reports Module. This module, available in the [EHP Field Operations SOP Portal](#), provides an overview of EHP related briefings and reports that may be required during disaster recovery field operations. These documents are useful for informing the “when, where, and how” of UFR information that needs to be communicated to FEMA programs and staff. In addition, these briefings and reports may help identify EHP related issues and inform the development of UFR priorities and strategies.
- EHP Management Plan. EHP Management Plans are developed to administer the FEMA EHP Program for each specific incident and describes the decision-making processes for EHP at the JFO. A related job aid, UFR in the EHP Management Plan, is available in the [UFR Library](#) and provides guidance to the UFR Advisor on providing input to the EHP Management Plan.

- Disaster Greensheet. The Greensheet is an EHP product that provides applicants guidance on the requirements of FEMA's EHP review process and lists relevant FEMA and agency POCs. The Greensheet is intended to avoid funding delays by helping applicants understand their obligations to ensure that all federal and state EHP compliance requirements are met. Greensheets address issues specific to the disaster type and location. The UFR Advisor may use this resource to better understand the nature of the disaster and become familiar with disaster specific EHP concerns, identify federal and SLTT POCs, and develop talking points for meetings with SLTT partners and applicants.
- Agency POC List. This list, located in the [UFR Libraries on FEMA.gov](#) provides UFR and EHP practitioners and applicants for federal assistance federal and state agency EHP program contact information. The Agency POC List describes each agency's primary role and authority, organized by disaster type and affected resources. The UFR Advisor may use this list to obtain contact information for introductory calls to federal agency recovery partners during the first 30 days of activation and when coordinating with other federal agencies.
- Interagency UFR MOU (2014). The UFR MOU (available in the [UFR Libraries on FEMA.gov](#)) establishes the UFR process and describes the roles and responsibilities of the 11 federal departments and agencies involved in the EHP requirements associated with disaster recovery. The UFR Advisor can use this resource to help identify important federal partners and their roles and responsibilities in disaster recovery.

## FEMA Resources

- [Preliminary Damage Assessments \(PDAs\)](#), if available. Following a disaster, FEMA and the state/tribal emergency management agency typically undertake a PDA, a joint assessment to determine the magnitude and impact of an event's damage. The PDA team may visit local applicants and view damage first-hand to assess the scope of damage and estimate repair costs. The PDA provides information on the scope and complexity of the disaster and identifies unmet needs that may require immediate attention. FEMA EHP staff may join the PDA team to identify EHP issues. The UFR Advisor may review these reports for background on the magnitude and impact of an event's damage that may be useful when communicating with federal and SLTT partners.
- [Advance Evaluation Team \(AET\)](#) report, if available. At the beginning of a federal disaster response, an AET may be deployed to assess the nature and severity of the disaster and to recommend appropriate recovery efforts. The AET report recommends which of the six RSFs should be activated. Depending on the scale of a disaster, the AET report may recommend the appointment of a separate FDRO to synchronize internal and external partner resources, coordinate RSF agencies, and develop a RNA. The UFR Advisor can use this resource to understand the nature and scope of a disaster and potential RSFs that could be involved.
- Recovery Needs Assessment. The Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) summarizes and communicates key challenges within a specific disaster recovery effort and is used to develop the Integrated Strategic Plan (ISP). The RNA may recommend activating a UFR Advisor, who may provide input on the RNA or ISP, depending on the timing of the UFR Advisor's deployment. Inputs from the UFR Advisor include identifying potential interagency coordination challenges likely to arise during disaster recovery and the benefits of longer-term UFR Advisor deployment.
- [Integrated Strategic Plan](#). The ISP provides overall direction for incident management, specifies milestones to reach desired outcomes, and provides information that enables strategic planning across all phases of the disaster lifecycle. The planning process is a joint effort among relevant stakeholders at the field level, with equal visibility by FEMA incident management and incident support staff.