



FEMA



UFR Interagency Working Group Newsletter

The UFR Interagency Working Group Newsletter is a quarterly publication covering agency highlights, industry news, disaster declarations/updates, and partnering agencies' recent and upcoming program and policy activities and announcements. For more information on UFR visit: [Unified Federal Environmental and Historic Preservation Review | FEMA.gov](#)

- [Agency Highlight: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation](#)
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Unified Federal Review Regional Coordinators Spring 2023 Workshop, Guaynabo Puerto Rico Joint Recovery Office: Renewed Planning and Interagency Coordination Commitments

Agency Highlight: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

The ACHP plays a vital role in safeguarding our nation's heritage. Working hand-in-hand with communities, ACHP works to protect historic properties and the stories they hold. Their mission statement states, "ACHP promotes the preservation, enhancement, and sustainable use of our nation's diverse historic resources, and advises the President and the Congress on national historic preservation policy." ACHP administers the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the impact of their actions on historic resources and provide the ACHP with an opportunity to comment before project implementation.



Through mechanisms like Section 106, ACHP ensures federally funded projects consider potential impacts on historic resources, fostering a harmonious balance between development endeavors and preserving our collective legacy. Jaime Loichinger, the newly appointed Director of the ACHP Office of Federal Agency Programs, discussed the impactful preservation efforts carried out by the ACHP to safeguard historical sites. Jamie also provided details on her advisory work with Section 106 regarding the consultation process and determination of historical relevance, stating: “[Section 106] allows for everything. From complete demolition up to complete preservation. There’s a range of options within the process that can be negotiated so long as the agency is actively consulting and discussing it with those consulting parties.”



ACHP's Executive and Congressional Advisory Role

As one of its primary duties, the ACHP advises the President and Congress on matters related to historic preservation. A crucial aspect of fulfilling this responsibility involves commenting on proposed legislation. During its meeting in March 2023, the ACHP approved a set of priorities that the agency will emphasize while advising the 118th Congress on actions that could potentially impact the nation's historic sites. ***Priorities seven and eight describe priorities that UFR efforts may support.***

These priorities are:

1. Supporting preservation-friendly programs and funding
2. Reauthorizing, making permanent, and increasing the Historic Preservation Fund
3. Promoting consideration of historic properties in the federal response to climate change, as discussed in the ACHP's Climate Change and Historic Preservation Policy Statement
4. Supporting designation or protection of historic properties that reflect the full American story and discouraging proposals that would destroy or diminish diverse histories
5. Supporting the preservation of historic properties in community development, including the creation of affordable housing
6. Maintaining and enhancing tax incentives for historic preservation
7. Balancing regulatory/permitting reform and streamlining with the protection of historic properties
8. Digitizing and mapping known resources subject to Section 106 processes and expanding survey work of unknown/undocumented resources

9. Addressing the impacts of accelerated infrastructure development on historic properties
10. Fostering stewardship of historic properties on federal lands or under national management

ACHP Case Study: Hume Lake, Sequoia National Forest, California

The ACHP's website showcases an extensive Section 106 review process, spotlighting numerous success stories. Among these, ACHP celebrates an innovative engineering endeavor that successfully rehabilitated the historic dam at Hume Lake in California.



Constructed in 1908, Hume Lake Dam created a log pond and water reservoir for the Hume-Bennett Lumber Company in California. Crafted by the visionary American dam engineer John Eastwood, this engineering marvel is the world's first reinforced concrete multiple-arch dam. Hume Lake Dam is listed as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) by the National Park Service and was found to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places due to its contribution to the history of hydraulic engineering and its significance in developing reinforced concrete technology.

During inspections in 2015, it was discovered the western parts of the dam were experiencing significant foundation seepage and corrosion. These issues were believed to be caused by the drought conditions affecting the lake's levels. The USFS, the federal agency carrying out this project, proposed a \$3 million upgrade to the dam structure to address these concerns and ensure the dam's long-term viability. Successful project implementation includes efforts by the NPS, USFS, ACHP, and state and local stakeholders.

Speaking to the complexities of Section 106, Jamie stated: "It is interesting because it seeks to find a balance between this idea that historic preservation is in the public's interest to have places, buildings, objects, and landscapes saved for future generations but that it is, in and of itself, not the only public interest. You have to find this balance between preservation and transportation projects, preservation and national security, preservation and disaster recovery, and preservation and telecommunications. That also then gets balanced out by what is programmatically allowed by the agency and what is ultimately in the public interest."

Preserve America

Communities play a key role in preserving and cherishing America's cultural and natural heritage. Administered by the ACHP, Preserve America is a federal initiative dedicated to fostering and supporting these community-driven efforts to enjoy the richness and diversity of our country's heritage. The program aims to promote a deeper collective understanding of the nation's history, reinforce regional identities and local pride, encourage heightened involvement at a local level in conserving the nation's cultural and natural heritage, and bolster the economic strength of our communities. Through this program, over 900 municipalities, neighborhoods, counties, and tribes



across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa have earned recognition as Preserve America Communities.

Preserve America Grants are designed to support various activities related to heritage tourism and innovative approaches to using historic properties as educational and economic assets. Federal agencies that have been partners in the Preserve America initiative offer a variety of information, technical assistance, and resources that can help further the initiative's goals. The [Information Clearinghouse](#) page provides links to other federal agency programs and materials relevant to historic and cultural preservation, heritage tourism, and heritage education.

ACHP Publications

The [ACHP's digital library](#) includes a wide array of information and general resources for the Section 106 process. These publications aim to spread information, guidelines, and best practices for preserving historic properties and cultural heritage. The publications include the ACHP Policy Statement on Climate Change and Historic Preservation, A Citizen's Guide to Section 106 Review, Section 106 Process Flowchart, and Section 106 and the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: General Information and Guidance.

Join us in celebrating and preserving our rich heritage together with ACHP!

UFR Publications and FEMA Updates

FEMA Region 8 UFR Case Study: Adding New Allowances to State & Tribal 106 Agreements

By: Charles A. Bello, FEMA Region 8 Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Advisor
charles.bello@fema.dhs.gov

For about a decade, FEMA Region 8, in consultation with our State and Tribal partners for various disaster and non-disaster assistance programs, has successfully implemented Programmatic Agreements (PA) to expedite compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Many of the Region's original Agreements were set to expire in 2023, and the time was right to renew portions of the standard document and any specific provisions applicable to individual States or Tribes. In conjunction with the Regional and Deputy Regional Environmental Officers and the FEMA Federal Preservation Officer, I reviewed existing documents for language to clarify existing or add needed language in the Preamble, Stipulations, and Appendices. This included Program Summaries, especially the Programmatic Allowances (Tier 1 and Tier 2) in our State- and Tribal-specific agreements.

I added new allowances drawn from the FEMA Section 106 Prototype Programmatic Agreement and incorporated allowances drawn from FEMA Regions 6 and 10. I freely borrowed (in the spirit of Unified Federal Review) allowances found in the January 2021 PA between the Colorado State Historic Preservation Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and US Forest Service for wildfire-related disasters in Colorado, as well as those found in PAs from the Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service. Most new or refined allowances were developed to address actions related to wildfire response, recovery, and mitigation activities, but they are also applicable to other FEMA [grant programs](#). Many new allowances fall into the Tier II category (reviewed by the Secretary of the Interior's professionally qualified staff) and constitute FEMA-funded activities with no or minimal effect on historic properties.

They focus on roads, bridges, slope failures, stream bank armoring, communication systems, installation of environmental monitoring equipment, creation of wildfire defensible space, hazardous tree and ash removal, soot and smoke cleaning (buildings and grave markers), demolition of heavily damaged structures, and various building retrofits, among others. Regional State and Tribal Historic Preservation Office staff supplied valuable input during this process and were very engaged in reviewing and discussing proposed changes or additions. They actively promoted the inherent value of using Programmatic Agreements as a review streamlining tool for disaster response and recovery projects.

This short article intends to share our regional success in developing and enhancing new and creative approaches to fulfilling our EHP compliance responsibilities. Those interested may access the Historic Preservation Compliance Module of FEMA's EHP Reference Library for a copy of the executed Colorado Programmatic Agreement.

UFR Publications and Updates

UFR Communication and Outreach Strategy: The communication and outreach strategy outlines a plan for Unified Federal Review (UFR) Partner Agencies to maintain and improve leadership and staff understanding at all levels (Headquarters, Regional, Field) of UFR to ensure it is consistently implemented and communicated accurately.

It is a living document to help align communication while building outreach capacity and capabilities among each Partner Agency. The strategy highlights national, regional, and field-level collaboration and messaging and should be updated as Partner Agency processes evolve. This coordination is pivotal in preparing for disaster and enabling efficient and effective UFR federal coordination.

This document is shaped by:

- ***Mission.*** Aligning Environmental and Historic Preservation Requirements for Disaster Recovery. Together.
- ***Vision.*** Support wise federal decision-making and investment during disaster recovery through effective communication and outreach while coordinating and streamlining required interagency environmental and historic preservation reviews.

The following outlines opportunities for all UFR Partner Agencies to engage and communicate internally and externally.

UFR Partner Agency Newsletter. A quarterly publication covering agency highlights, industry news, disaster declarations/updates, and partnering agencies' recent and upcoming program and policy activities and announcements.

UFR Interagency Working Group Agency Profiles. To ensure a clearer understanding across the UFR Partner Agencies, we are maintaining an Agency Profile database. The profiles will allow for a method to maintain an updated POC list and ensure current Agency information is updated and captured, including priorities, challenges to UFR implementation, and resource needs that FEMA or another agency may meet. A routine touch point with each Agency partner will be scheduled to review questions for approximately 18-24 months; however, they can continuously be updated as needed by each Partner Agency.

Case Study Collection and Development. As a means of promoting the work being done across the Partner Agencies, we would like to make a more concerted effort to collect/write case studies, stories, successes, and best practices. Not only will this highlight the importance of the work being done, but it will also elevate its impact and justify spending time on the UFR process to senior leadership and Congress.

Get Involved. If you would like to volunteer to be featured in the future UFR Partner Agency Newsletter or Case Study Development or have questions about the Agency Profiles, please email federal-unified-review@fema.dhs.gov

To access these Strategies, visit <https://resilience.files.com/f/ee913e7b66cf8f64>.

Disaster Updates

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves Utah Disaster Declaration

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. declared that a major disaster exists in the State of Utah and ordered Federal assistance to supplement state, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by flooding from May 1 to May 27, 2023. [Read More](#)

President Biden Issues Executive Order to Protect People in Ohio and Nearby Communities

Since the onset of the Norfolk Southern train derailment, the Biden-Harris Administration has mobilized a robust response to support the people of East Palestine, Ohio, and nearby affected communities. Under President Biden's leadership, within hours of the derailment, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) deployed a team to East Palestine to support state and local emergency and environmental response efforts.

[Read More.](#)

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves Tennessee Disaster Declaration

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. declared that a major disaster exists in the State of Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by severe storms and tornadoes on December 9, 2023.

[Read More.](#)

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves California Disaster Declaration

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. declared that a major disaster exists in the State of California and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by Tropical Storm Hilary from August 19 to August 21, 2023.

[Read More.](#)

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves Illinois Disaster Declaration

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. declared that a major disaster exists in the State of Illinois and ordered Federal assistance to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by severe storms and flooding from September 17 to September 18, 2023.

[Read More.](#)

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Amends Hawaii Disaster Declaration

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. made additional disaster assistance available to the State of Hawaii by authorizing an increase in the level of federal funding for Public Assistance projects undertaken in the State of Hawaii as a result of wildfires beginning on August 8, 2023, and continuing.

[Read More.](#)

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Approves Georgia Disaster Declaration

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. declared that a major disaster exists in the State of Georgia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by Hurricane Idalia on August 30, 2023.

[Read More.](#)

To learn more about FEMA declarations and updates, please visit [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov).