

THE WHITE HOUSE
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FACT SHEET: Taking Action to Support State, Local, and Tribal Leaders as They Prepare Communities for the Impacts of Climate Change

President Obama is focused every day on building on the progress America's economy is making by creating jobs and expanding opportunity for all hardworking Americans. As part of that effort, the President has put forward a comprehensive plan to invest in America's infrastructure in order to create jobs, provide certainty to states and communities, support American businesses, and grow our economy. Investing in infrastructure has never been more important. In addition to the clear economic benefits of building a world-class infrastructure system, the third National Climate Assessment released earlier this year confirms that the impacts of climate change are already taking a toll on communities. To support communities in need of a more resilient infrastructure that can withstand impacts like more extreme weather and increased flooding, President Obama is responding to guidance from governors, mayors, county and tribal officials who are proven leaders in helping their communities prepare for climate impacts.

The President established the State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience last November to advise him on how the Federal government can best respond to the needs of communities nationwide already dealing with the impacts of climate change. The Task Force, made up of 26 officials from across the country, is holding its fourth and final meeting in Washington, D.C. today. They will provide their final recommendations to the President in the fall.

Today the President is announcing a series of actions to respond to the Task Force's early feedback to help state, local, and tribal leaders prepare their communities for the impacts of climate change by developing more resilient infrastructure and rebuilding existing infrastructure stronger and smarter.

Providing Federal resources to support climate preparedness:

- **National Disaster Resilience Competition.** The nearly \$1 billion National Disaster Resilience Competition, announced by the President on June 14, will make resources available to communities that have been struck by natural disasters in recent years. Building on the success of the Rebuild by Design competition after Hurricane Sandy, this competition will create replicable models of modern disaster recovery that apply science-based and forward-looking risk analysis to address recovery and resilience needs. The competition will also help communities create and implement disaster recovery plans that will make them better prepared for future extreme weather events and other shocks.

Today, new details for the competition are being announced by the President. The year-long competition will have two phases: (1) risk assessment and planning; and (2) design and implementation. Many communities will be eligible for funding and technical assistance during Phase 1 to develop innovative, data-driven, and community-led approaches to recovery that increase preparedness for future disasters. A subset of these communities will be invited to continue in Phase 2 to design solutions for recovery and future resilience. The best proposals will receive funds for implementation to demonstrate how communities across the country can build a more resilient future. More information is available at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=FactSheet_071514.pdf.

- **Helping tribes prepare for climate impacts.** The Department of the Interior's (DOI) Bureau of Indian Affairs today launched a new \$10 million Federal-Tribal Climate Resilience Partnership and Technical Assistance Program that will help tribes prepare for climate change by developing and delivering adaptation training. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy will establish an interagency group to provide tribes with data and information, improve Federal collaboration, and assist with climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.

- **Investing in the nation's rural electric system.** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced awards totaling \$236.3 million in funding for eight states to support improved rural electric infrastructure. A modern, reliable electric system is critical to attract and retain residents and businesses in rural communities. Supporting rural electric utilities' deployment of smart grid technologies will increase efficiency and reliability and bring more jobs to rural America. President Obama and Agriculture Secretary Vilsack are committed to smarter use of Federal resources to foster sustainable economic prosperity, support the rural way of life, and ensure the Federal Government is a strong partner for businesses, entrepreneurs and working families in rural communities.

- **Developing advanced mapping data and tools.** The Department of the Interior's U.S. Geological Survey and other Federal agencies today launched a \$13.1 million 3-D Elevation Program partnership designed to bring Federal agencies, academia, corporate entities, states, tribes, and communities together to develop advanced 3-dimensional mapping data of the United States. These data and related tools will be used in the areas of flood risk management, water resource planning, mitigation of coastal erosion and storm surge impacts, and identification of landslide hazards as an essential component of supporting action on climate resilience. More information is available at <http://nationalmap.gov/3DEP/>.

- **Safeguarding access to quality drinking water amid drought.** USDA continues to work with producers, communities, affected states and other agencies to help address the current West Coast drought. This week, the Department will announce additional funds to help rural communities struggling with drought. These funds will help rural communities that have experienced or are likely to experience a significant decline in the quantity or quality of drinking water due to severe drought and other emergencies.

Rebuilding stronger and safer after natural disasters:

- **Establishing a Mitigation Integration Task Force.** In order to help communities build back stronger and safer in the face of new risks, FEMA has established a Mitigation Integration Task Force to develop and implement a Mitigation Integration Pilot Program by the end of August. Working with State, tribal, local, and eligible private non-profit partners, FEMA will identify pilot projects in current and emerging disasters where there are specific opportunities to make investments that result in a more resilient outcome than using a single funding source and program. This pilot program will work to equip communities to meet their recovery objectives and ensure that all resources are brought to bear through FEMA's Mitigation and Recovery programs to minimize the impact of future disasters. This is part of FEMA's goal of breaking the cycle of disasters -- saving lives, protecting property, reducing losses, and allowing individuals and communities to recover more quickly after a disaster.

- **Accounting for Climate Change in Hazard Mitigation Planning.** To ensure that States are preparing for the impacts of climate change, FEMA will release new guidance for State Hazard Mitigation Plans that calls upon States to consider climate variability as part of their requirement to address the probability of future events in state planning efforts. Last issued in 2008, FEMA's guidance for these plans helps States prepare in advance of a disaster to identify and drive actions for more resilient and sustainable recovery, such as elevating or relocating homes and businesses to

reduce flood risks associated with sea-level rise and more intense storms or rebuilding to higher standards. More information is available at <http://www.fema.gov/multi-hazard-mitigation-planning>.

Building more resilient communities:

- **Committing to “Preparedness Pilots.”** The Administration today announced the launch of two “Preparedness Pilots” in cooperation with the City of Houston and the State of Colorado, with NASA (Johnson Space Flight Center) and the Energy Department (National Renewable Energy Laboratory). The pilots will involve key Federal agencies in each community, including NASA, the Energy Department, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Interior, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Department of Agriculture. These pilots will bring together federal agencies and local communities to assess and plan for their region-specific vulnerabilities and interdependencies associated with the impacts of climate change. This effort will advance preparedness planning on the ground and help create models for other communities and agencies to follow.
- **Making our coasts more resilient.** The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) today announced new program guidance under Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act to ensure greater consideration of how climate change may exacerbate challenges in the management of coastal areas. Through this effort, \$1.5 million of competitive funding will be available to help states and tribes make improvements to their coastal management programs. The guidance will help state and tribal coastal managers better prepare for the impacts of climate change and improve the safety of their communities. More information is available at <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/>.
- **Improving stormwater management.** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today launched a Green Infrastructure Collaborative among government agencies, NGOs, and other private sector entities to advance green stormwater infrastructure. Green infrastructure, such as urban forests and rooftop gardens, can be used as an important tool for building resilience to climate change impacts such as increased precipitation and heat island effects. Federal agencies will provide funding assistance in at least 25 communities across the country for green infrastructure projects, technical assistance to create integrated green stormwater management and hazard mitigation plans, and recognition and awards programs for innovative green infrastructure projects. Agencies will also add guidance on green infrastructure to existing Department of Transportation (DOT) and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) peer-to-peer exchange and training programs. The partnership will also provide a platform for conducting research on increasing affordability and effectiveness, sharing best practices, and developing actionable planning tools that decision-makers have been seeking.
- **Assessing climate-related health hazards.** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention today released a new guide, “Assessing Health Vulnerability to Climate Change,” to help public health departments assess local vulnerabilities to health hazards associated with climate change. The assessments will help inform targeted public health actions to reduce the health impacts of climate change. More information is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/pubs/AssessingHealthVulnerabilitytoClimateChange.pdf>

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