

**Comment Summary**

**State of Iowa**

**NDRC Application Phase 1**

Posted March 23, 2015

The State of Iowa's Phase 1 application for the National Disaster Resiliency Competition was released for public comment on March 6, 2015. The public comment period for the document ran from March 6-21. The posting of the application was hosted on Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's website and a media advisory was distributed for publication. In addition to the above, a public hearing was hosted by Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management on March 16, 2015, at 1 p.m. at their office in Windsor Heights, Iowa.

Comments on the application were accepted on the Department's website at:

[http://www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/disasters/hazard\\_mitigation.html#hudapplication](http://www.homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/disasters/hazard_mitigation.html#hudapplication), at the public hearing held on March 16, via email at [HSEMDPIO@iowa.gov](mailto:HSEMDPIO@iowa.gov) and via phone at (515) 725-3231. Additional written comments were also accepted by the Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Department at 7900 Hickman Road, Suite 500, Windsor Heights, Iowa, 50324.

The following comments were received by the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) concerning the Phase 1 application. A brief summary of each comment as well as the Department's response is included. For more information on the public comments received on the Phase 1 application or for copies of the original comments, contact HSEMD's Recovery Division at (515) 725-3231.

**Comment #1: You should include the following items in your application narrative.**

- The Iowa DNR is an agency associated with Watershed Management Authorities and should be included in the executive summary narrative.

- Exhibit C could include language that the DNR is the agency with floodplain regulatory authority, which would strengthen the narrative of the partnership section. The DNR could assist with permitting and prioritization of projects in this capacity. The DNR works closely with the Iowa Flood Center to develop and improve regulatory floodplain maps for the state. The DNR is the main funding entity of the Watershed Management Authority, but they are not housed within the organization. The Water Resource Coordinating Council (WRCC) developed a plan in response to the 2008 flooding events that contains a list of specific recommendations that could be useful in this approach. The DNR is highly visible and willing to assist with community outreach public engagement in the floodplain management section who already works with communities in the NFIP.
- Exhibit E: For vulnerable populations, can you find data that would indicate that the rural areas are identified as LMI? You are speaking of soil quality in this narrative, it may be more readable if further explanation is given regarding how soil quality will absorb more water and reduce runoff, thus prevent future flooding.
- You speak to Dubuque's need very well, but leave other communities out. Are you unable to get information from them?
- Is there an advantage to indicating that as partners we meet regularly as Silver Jackets? That would be a strong indication that we already partner on a regular basis, so this is nothing new to Iowa.
- Would it be beneficial or detrimental to indicate that areas of the Cedar Basin have applied for and received RCPP? Would playing up the partnership exhibited there be a good thing?

**Staff Response:**

- The State of Iowa is asking all potential partners in the application to provide narrative support the application components.
- The Watershed Management Authorities' narrative will be corrected to accurately reflect the organizational structure.
- LMI data is available and was utilized for the threshold exercise in Exhibit B. The soil's ability to retain water will be clarified in the need and soundness of approach section.
- The State of Iowa is narrating an approach with two watershed-based strategies. Dubuque will be the model for the Urban Watershed with the potential for 24 other counties to consider a rural watershed flood risk-reduction solution. The State will work to develop strategies and partnerships in these eligible areas of work.
- Our partnerships in this application are built on established relationships from such groups as the Silver Jackets, the State Hazard Mitigation Team, etc. We will make sure this is addressed in the application draft.
- The recent RCPP award is an excellent example of long-term commitment and leveraging of resources. If we are able to scope project activities in this area, we will coordinate closely with all groups currently involved.

**Comment #2:**

I gave your proposal a quick review. Because it appears that the Bee Creek watershed is within in the city limits, I am out of my agricultural comfort zone. I do think you have the right partners involved. I am impressed with the modeling work that the Iowa Flood Center does and Director Weber and his team are familiar with the expertise at Iowa State University that they can call upon. Similarly, Director Cruse at the Iowa Water Center is on faculty at ISU and knows the resources. Weber chairs the Iowa Water Center board and works well with Cruse. IDALS and NRCS resources are also experienced and accessible.

The other resource at Iowa State that may be of value to the team is Extension and Outreach. While more at home in a rural watershed, some individuals within ISUEO are very experienced in working with people living in watersheds and how their decisions impact the goals of the watershed. These folks typically work with farmers and small communities and the challenge is typically sediment and nutrients rather than flooding. We also have staff that work with youth (4-H) that are an effective way to educate and engage families and staff that work with families regarding financial management and health. Cruse of the Iowa Water Center is familiar with these people and will be able to bring them to the table if the ISUEO skills are needed.

I appreciate the opportunity to review the proposal. If there is a rural portion of this project that I missed or a rural portion of future projects please contact me. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach would be a good partner to such a project.

**Staff Response:**

Thank you for the feedback and direction with Iowa State. We will continue to network with the college to make sure all interested parties are engaged.