

# FEMA'S HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM

Opportunities to achieve coastal resilience with HMGP



## Why use HMGP?

[FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program \(HMGP\)](#) provides an opportunity for individuals, businesses, private non-profits, and communities to implement hazard mitigation initiatives, including mitigation projects and mitigation planning, following a presidential major disaster declaration anywhere in their state.

## What does HMGP do?

HMGP reduces or permanently eliminates future risk to lives and property (public or private) from natural hazards. Mitigation projects must align with state priorities identified in the state, tribal, or local hazard mitigation plan.

## Who can apply for HMGP?

Each [state, territory, or tribe](#) has one designated state agency which administers HMGP (typically the state's Emergency Management Agency where the [State Hazard Mitigation Officer \(SHMO\)](#) works) and will serve as the applicant. This designated state agency will review local applications and determine the priority for projects within the state to fund based on alignment with state and local hazard mitigation priorities, which can usually be found in the state or local hazard mitigation plan.

Sub-applicants ([other state or territory agencies](#), federally or non-federally recognized tribes, [local governments](#), or eligible private non-profits) may apply to the applicant (usually your state emergency management agency). To be eligible [an approved state and local hazard mitigation plan](#) must be in place.

[Individuals and property and business owners](#) may not apply directly to the state, but local governments can apply on their behalf as a sub-applicant. Interested individuals and owners are encouraged to contact local community planning, emergency management, or hazard mitigation offices for more information.

## Resources

[Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance \(2015\)](#)

[Hazard Mitigation Grants for Governments](#)

[Hazard Mitigation Grants for Individuals](#)

[FEMA Hazard Mitigation Planning Resources Fact Sheet](#)

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR HMGP?

- 01.** HMGP is FEMA's largest pool of money for mitigation with approximately \$700 million allocated in 2019.
- 02.** HMGP funds are allocated by the state, meaning local priorities can be addressed.
- 03.** Opportunities exist to fund innovative resilience projects through the 5% Initiative without a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA). This can be a good option for nature-based solutions and other projects which are difficult to evaluate with a traditional BCA.
- 04.** Although funded post-disaster, mitigation projects can be implemented statewide.
- 05.** HMGP funds can be used to improve or update hazard mitigation plans, which direct most FEMA mitigation grants and are necessary for successful FEMA mitigation project awards.

IN 2019  
**\$700<sub>M</sub>**  
ALLOCATED FOR HMGP  
GRANTS

## BEST PRACTICES FOR MAXIMIZING HMGP FUNDS THROUGH HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING

- 01.** During local and state hazard mitigation planning cycle updates, consider a “wish list” of actionable mitigation projects.
- 02.** When mitigation funding becomes available after a disaster, a competitive HMGP application is one that is aligned and directed by the state and local hazard mitigation plan to achieve hazard mitigation goals.
- 03.** Forming strong relationships with your [SHMO](#) can help drive more successful projects, and keep you aware of internal state deadlines which may differ from FEMA’s national deadlines.
- 04.** Coastal Management Programs can act to represent the needs of coastal communities during the state hazard mitigation plan updates by forming relationships with the state emergency management agency that leads the hazard mitigation plan update process.
- 05.** Having a seat at the table for the next planning cycle update can help bring prioritization to coastal needs and increase access to funds for coastal resilience and hazard mitigation grants.



Coastal States Organization  
Washington, DC 20001  
[www.coastalstates.org](http://www.coastalstates.org)

### *Where can HMGP fund projects?*

Any project anywhere within a state which has been impacted by a federally declared natural hazard that the governor has requested funding where the state, territory, federally recognized tribe, or local jurisdiction has a [hazard mitigation plan \(HMP\)](#) prior to receipt of HMGP funds.

### *When are HMGP funds available?*

HMGP funding is available when requested by the governor following a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration.

### *How do I access HMGP funds?*

After a disaster that has HMGP funds allocated, local jurisdictions statewide can identify projects that align with their hazard mitigation plan to reduce potential damage from future disasters. These projects are then submitted to the state agency which is in charge of administering HMGP funds, usually coordinated by the SHMO.

The agency in charge of administering funds will prioritize projects that align with the state’s mitigation goals. More information on the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program process can be found [here](#).

States, territories, or federally-recognized tribes should establish their mitigation priorities, help facilitate the development of applications, and submit applications on behalf of the local jurisdictions to FEMA based on funding criteria and available funding.

FEMA conducts a final eligibility review to make sure projects are compliant with all federal regulations (environmental and historic preservation, cost effectiveness, consider a range of alternatives, and technical feasibility).

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**Cost Share:** FEMA will provide 75% of the funding while the sub-applicant must cover the other 25%. The other 25% can be any match of non-federal funds including cash, other non-federal grants, in-kind donations like community volunteer hours, or donated materials or services. More information on cost share can be found [here](#).

**Increased HMGP Allocation:** States that have approved [Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plans](#) or implement state mitigation plans which exceed minimum standards are eligible to receive increased HMGP funding after a disaster (20% of estimated disaster assistance rather than 15% for standard Hazard Mitigation Plan).

**The 5% Initiative** encourages communities to implement innovative resilience projects by allowing HMGP grantees to use up to 5% of total HMGP grant funds for projects that are difficult to evaluate using the typical FEMA approved cost-effectiveness methodologies, but otherwise meet HMGP requirements.

**Hazard Mitigation Planning Funding:** Up to 7% of HMGP funds can be used for planning related activities such as integration of mitigation into comprehensive, disaster recovery, or capital improvement plans. It can also be used to deliver technical assistance and evaluate building code improvements.

# HMGP IN ACTION

## CHAUVIN, LOUISIANA

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In Chauvin, Louisiana HMGP funded integrated stormwater management measures that mitigate peak runoff rates and volumes. This project involved the acquisition of flood prone, high risk residences and the removal of structures to convert the land to green space. This green space was specifically designed to reduce flood damage by competently eliminating flood risk to the acquired structures and by incorporating plantings and floodplain restoration to further protect surround areas. Cyprus plantings were incorporated to increase rainwater storage and therefore reduce flooding to wider community. Green space and plantings also provided the co-benefits of additional community recreation opportunities, reducing extreme heat impacts, and improving groundwater recharge.



Photo Credit: Janan Reilly

## SONOMA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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Photo Credit: Gayle Halldin Shook

Sonoma County, California conducted floodplain and stream restoration to reestablish the structure and function of a natural stream ecosystem while also mitigating flood risks. Through restoration, natural stream function was returned, mitigating peak flood stages, protecting nearby roads, bridges, farmland and property, while also restoring ecological habitat for plants and animals and improving local water quality.