

**JOINT FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL  
PUBLIC NOTICE**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and South Carolina Emergency Management Division will receive the following application for Federal grant funding. Final notice is hereby given of FEMA's consideration to provide funding in the form of a Flood Mitigation Assistance Program Grant.

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), federal actions must be reviewed and evaluated for feasible alternatives and for social, economic, historic, environmental, legal, and safety considerations. Under Executive Order (EO) 11988 and EO 11990 FEMA is required to consider alternatives to and to provide public notice of any proposed actions in or affecting floodplains or wetlands. EO 12898 also requires FEMA to provide the opportunity for public participation in the planning process and to consider potential impacts to minority or low-income populations.

Funding for the proposed project will be conditional upon compliance with all applicable federal, tribal, state, and local laws, regulations, floodplain standards, permit requirements, and conditions.

**Applicant:**

*South Carolina Department of Natural Resources*

**Project Title:**

Flood Forecasting and Alert System

**Location of Proposed Work:**

The area affected by this project consists of ten bridge crossings and/or stream banks near bridge crossing on the following streams and associated roads in South Carolina:

- 1) Four Hole Swamp at US 78
- 2) North Fork Edisto River at US 321
- 3) Lynches River at SC 41/51
- 4) Black River at SC 41
- 5) Lumber River at SC 9/US 76
- 6) Twelvemile Creek at US 1
- 7) Wilson Creek at SC 246
- 8) Little River at US 221
- 9) French Quarter Creek at Cainhoy Road
- 10) Steven's Creek at Woodlawn Road
- 11) Jeffries Creek at US 76 (alternate site)
- 12) North Tyger River at Railroad Crossing near Fairmont, SC (alternate site)

**Proposed Work and Purpose:**

The main purpose of this project is to reduce the risk of physical harm to individuals in communities that may be affected by future flood events. To that end, the project proposes to install 10 streamflow monitoring sites across the State that have been chosen as sites of flooding concern by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and the National Weather Service (NWS). The installation and maintenance of the monitoring sites for one year will be contracted out to the United States Geologic Survey (USGS). The data collected will be used by flood forecasters from the NWS to predict where and when streamflow levels are expected to reach or exceed flood stage. The flood forecasts can

then be used by State and local emergency managers to determine when evacuations should be implemented.

To maximize the potential for the new streamflow data to benefit the public, an outreach program will be conducted to educate the public on how to use the USGS website to access streamflow data and how to sign up for a text-alert system for gaged streams in their area. Outreach will be accomplished through a variety of means including, but not limited to, community newsletters, local media outlets, and public meetings. The outreach component is vital for attaining success in mitigating the impact of future flood events. An increased awareness by the general public and emergency managers of the text-alert system developed by the USGS will allow time for preparations when streamflow levels approach or reach a dangerous or critical level.

The proposed action of installing streamflow monitoring sites must, in most cases, be completed within the floodplain or a wetland owing to the nature of the information (streamflow and flood stages) being collected. Most, if not all, installations will involve attaching monitoring equipment directly to bridge infrastructure. Installations for any sites requiring a ground installation will not affect the floodplain and will require no mitigation. The proposed action will conform to applicable state and local floodplain protection standards.

**Project Alternatives:**

The alternatives to the project that were considered are 1) the no action alternative and 2) using Agency resources and staff to install the streamflow gaging stations and to implement a flood warning system, independent of the USGS. Alternative 1 is not viable, since under this alternative, communities in or near the proposed monitoring sites will continue to have limited information available to reduce the risk of life and property loss during floods. Alternative 2 was also deemed unviable for the following reasons: 1) since the SCDNR does not currently have its own streamflow monitoring program, developing such a program would lead to unacceptable delays in the acquisition of reliable data as the program is developed 2) the SCDNR could not commit the amount of staff time and resources required to develop a successful monitoring program at this time and 3) the cost effectiveness is highly uncertain owing to the agency's lack of experience in conducting its own streamflow monitoring program.

**Comment Period:**

Comments are solicited from the public; local, state or federal agencies; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed project. The comments can be made in writing and addressed to:

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
Attn: Scott Harder  
311 Natural Resources Drive  
Clemson, SC 29631

Comments are due within 15 days of this notice. The State will forward comments to applicable regulatory agencies as needed. Interested persons may also submit comments and obtain more detailed information about the proposed action including a site map by contacting:

Scott Harder  
Senior Hydrologist, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

864-654-1671, ext. 25  
[harders@dnr.sc.gov](mailto:harders@dnr.sc.gov)