

HURRICANE SANDY REBUILDING STRATEGY

Progress Update — Spring 2014



Spring 2014

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BACKGROUND

On August 19, 2013, the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force released its [Rebuilding Strategy](#) for the Sandy impacted region. The Rebuilding Strategy included a long-term plan for rebuilding that guides Sandy Supplemental spending to drive regional coordination and make communities more resilient to future disasters. The Rebuilding Strategy also aligns federal, state and local policies to achieve seven goals that are important to the long-term rebuilding of the region in the most economically efficient, ecologically robust and innovative ways possible. These goals are:

- Promoting Resilient Rebuilding through Innovative Ideas and a Thorough Understanding of Current and Future Risk
- Ensuring a Regionally Coordinated, Resilient Approach to Infrastructure Investment
- Restoring and Strengthening Homes and Providing Families with Safe, Affordable Housing Options
- Supporting Small Businesses and Revitalizing Local Economies
- Addressing Insurance Challenges, Understanding, and Affordability
- Building State and Local Capacity to Plan for and Implement Long-Term Recovery and Rebuilding
- Improving Data Sharing Between Federal, State, and Local Officials

The Rebuilding Strategy identified 69 specific recommendations across these broad goals as well as specific member agencies¹ to lead the implementation of each of them. Since the publication of the Rebuilding Strategy, these agencies have continued to work closely together to move the recommendations forward and deliver on their commitments to the region and the President.

This report includes an update on the implementation of the Rebuilding Strategy goals and an additional section on the internal efforts to improve data sharing and accountability through the Sandy Program Management Office (PMO). This report is organized by each of the seven Rebuilding Strategy goals and the PMO; recommendations are grouped according to these goals. Each section of this report includes background information from the original Rebuilding Strategy, identifies the relevant leading agencies¹, and includes brief updates on highlighted areas of progress made since the publication of the Rebuilding Strategy through the spring of 2014. Each section can also be downloaded individually. A full list of the Rebuilding Strategy recommendations is included as an appendix to this document. To learn more about the Task Force or the Sandy Supplemental, to read the original Rebuilding Strategy, or to see the status of the Sandy Supplemental funding, please visit the following websites:

- Executive Order 13632, establishing the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-201200936/pdf/DCPD-201200936.pdf>
- Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013, or “Sandy Supplemental,” which provided \$50 billion in disaster relief funding to Federal agencies: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-113publ2/pdf/PLAW-113publ2.pdf>

¹ While the Rebuilding Strategy identified specific agencies (such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development) to lead implementation, in some cases these leads have changed, or more specific subcomponents of or offices within an agency (such as the Office of Community Planning and Development) have been identified. Further, for some recommendations, the Rebuilding Strategy also identified contributing or supporting agencies. This progress report reflects the latest lead agencies only, and does not include contributing agencies, which in some cases have played a significant role to support implementation.

- The Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Strategy, published by the Task Force on August 19, 2013: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=HSRebuildingStrategy.pdf>
- Recovery.gov Hurricane Sandy maps, for the latest status of Sandy Supplemental funds by state: <http://www.recovery.gov/Sandy/whereisthemoneygoing/maps/Pages/HudPmo.aspx>

REBUILDING STRATEGY GOAL: PROMOTING RESILIENT REBUILDING THROUGH INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT AND FUTURE RISK²

It is increasingly important to take advantage of the latest data and technology to measure and manage risk. Flood risk maps need to incorporate what scientists know about the pace and impact of climate change on sea level and other environmental factors. At the same time, the demographics of at-risk communities—which change quickly and dramatically due to rapid urbanization and shifting work patterns—must be understood. In the Sandy region, and across the country, communities once thought to be safe from risk are now beginning to recognize they face greater vulnerability to extreme weather and other natural disasters than previously imagined.

A robust recovery must use good data and science to inform decision making. Evidence-based information, risk-based analysis, and robust cost-benefit analyses could help governments, businesses, and homeowners better invest in measures that increase resilience on the national, regional, and local levels. The [National Climate Assessment](#) represents the most recent science on climate-related impacts that highlight knowledge for improved policy decisions.

Lead Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
(NOAA)
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP)

Progress Update

The Task Force announced the implementation of its first recommendation – that all Sandy-related rebuilding projects funded by the Sandy Supplemental must meet a single uniform flood risk reduction standard – even before the release of the Rebuilding Strategy. The standard takes into account the increased risk the region is facing from extreme weather events, sea level rise and other impacts of climate change and applies to the rebuilding of structures that were substantially damaged and will be repaired or rebuilt with federal funding. In October 2013, NOAA and USACE in partnership with FEMA, CEQ, and USGCRP, completed a resiliency recommendation by releasing the [sea-level rise viewer](#) which offers access to data and information about the risks of sea level rise, storm surge, and flooding along the coastal United States. The web-based map has the potential to help business owners and community planners build, retrofit, or rebuild in a more resilient way.

² Resilience is the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing conditions and withstand, respond to, and recover rapidly from disruptions. Disruptions can include deliberate attacks, accidents, potential threats, and naturally occurring incidents.

Rebuilding Strategy Goal:

Promoting Resilient Rebuilding through Innovative Ideas and a Thorough Understanding of Current and Future Risk

The last recommendation in this area was to create a competition to inspire experts from around the world to develop innovative design solutions for the region. Launched in the summer of 2013 by HUD and the Task Force, the [Rebuild by Design](#) competition has produced regional, cross-disciplinary collaboration between state and local governments, international design teams, educational institutions, and the public.

After months of research and community engagement, ten Rebuild by Design teams unveiled their final proposals on April 3, 2014. The teams, along with hundreds of tri-state residents, local stakeholders, and government representatives, gathered to view the proposals. The resulting design innovations include growing breakwaters, the development of absorptive shorelines, off-shore islands, and regional tidal parks, and several proposals incorporate both ecological and financial resiliency. Winners have been selected and can be viewed at www.rebuildbydesign.org. Implementation of these winning projects will be undertaken by state and local stakeholders.

What this means for communities

Federal investments in resilience measures means that Sandy-affected communities will be **better protected against future storms and rising sea levels**. The region will soon benefit from the efforts of **world class design projects** developed specifically to address the needs and risks facing these communities, and community planners and businesses across the country now have **access to better information** about future risks to help them plan for a stronger, more resilient future.

For More Information

- View NOAA's sea-level rise tool here: <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/slrviewer>
- Learn more about Rebuild by Design here: <http://www.rebuildbydesign.org/>
- Learn more about the National Climate Assessment here: <http://www.globalchange.gov/what-we-do/assessment>

REBUILDING STRATEGY GOAL: ENSURING A REGIONALLY COORDINATED, RESILIENT APPROACH TO INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

The damage from Hurricane Sandy to infrastructure in the impacted region was unprecedented in scope and cost. The damage to a region from impacts to infrastructure is not only in the cost of repair and replacement, but in the severe and cascading impacts on assets and systems, and natural resources that form the framework of our communities. Impacts to infrastructure are especially hard on the most vulnerable in our communities as they have few options when needed services are not available. The goal of the Rebuilding Strategy is to ensure the rebuilding efforts are coordinated, timely, and effective and to encourage investment in systems, assets and nature-based protective features to help the region withstand and quickly recover from future disasters.

Lead Agencies

Department of Agriculture (USDA)	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Department of Energy (DOE)	National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	White House National Security Staff (NSS)
Department of the Interior (DOI)	White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
Department of Labor (DOL)	Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
Department of Transportation (DOT)	White House Office of Science and Technology (OSTP)
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	

Progress Update

This section of the Rebuilding Strategy contains recommendations with the goal of ensuring a regionally coordinated, resilient approach to infrastructure investment. The first of these recommendations set forth a set of seven Resilience Guidelines for infrastructure projects. The seven Guidelines promote these concepts:

- Forward-looking, science-based comprehensive risk analysis
- Transparent and inclusive decision processes
- Regional coordination of resilience efforts
- Assurance of long-term efficacy and fiscal sustainability
- Environmentally sustainable and innovative solutions
- Use of targeted financial incentives

- Adherence to resilience performance standards

To date, key funding agencies, EPA, DOI, DOT/Federal Transit Administration (FTA), HUD, and USACE, have incorporated the Resilience Guidelines into their funding requirements to ensure grantees build back more resiliently and are measuring the effectiveness and impact of the Guidelines for Sandy recovery. In addition, an interagency policy team is currently looking at whether the Guidelines should be applied beyond the Sandy recovery efforts. Regional coordination, an integral part of the Guidelines, is underway at the Sandy Recovery Office through the Sandy Regional Infrastructure Resilience Coordination initiative, where a regional coordination effort that has brought Federal, state and local agencies together to discuss planned projects, shared funding opportunities, the required Federal review and permitting processes, and cascading benefits and impacts in the recovery process. The development of a Hurricane Sandy best practices template will help inform future federal recovery coordination.

Other efforts are underway to encourage the use of resilient energy strategies for key assets and systems, address the nexus between power and communications, power and public transportation, and between availability of funding and needed investment in infrastructure.³ Each of these teams is identifying near term and longer term actions to address these issues.

In December of 2013, FTA released a Notice of Funding Availability allocating \$3 billion in competitive grants for resiliency projects in the Sandy affected regions. The resiliency funds will be distributed to projects that reinforce the critical infrastructure necessary to support public transportation systems damaged by Hurricane Sandy. FTA's goal is to advance the best regionally coordinated projects, so taxpayers won't have to pay to restore the same transit services a second or third time.

DOT had also taken proactive steps to assist communities in preparing for, identifying infrastructure with the highest risk from, and strengthening resilience toward climate change and the potential for extreme weather events. In 2010-2011, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funded 5 cities for a pilot program that conducted vulnerability and risk assessments of infrastructure to the projected impacts of global climate change. The purpose of the pilots was twofold; 1) to assist State DOTs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) more quickly advance existing adaptation assessment activities and 2) to assist FHWA in "test-driving" the model. Based on the feedback and lessons learned through the pilots, FHWA revised the model into the [Climate Change & Extreme Weather Vulnerability Assessment Framework](#). One such [pilot program](#) was awarded for New Jersey DOT/North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority that studied areas in Coastal and Central New Jersey.

To provide a base of scientific evidence for health officials, community members and leaders as they make decisions about health and social services, HHS awarded dozens of grants to conduct research in impacted communities on the health system's response, health care access, mental health, the health impacts of evacuation and other health resilience issues. Findings of these studies will be shared with the communities. A team of scientists, engineers, and policy analysts are also looking at how to better utilize nature-based (green) infrastructure alternatives (such as wetlands and open space) in projects.⁴ The team is also looking

³ Energy investment refers to assets, rather than investment in the grid, and their resilient power systems, which includes combined heat and power systems (CHP), microgrids, renewable energy sources, and backup generation.

⁴ Storm surge associated with Hurricane Sandy caused dune and beach erosion, island breaching, and transport and deposition of sediment inland (i.e., overwash) in coastal communities from New England to Florida. Coastal flooding also caused significant erosion to existing natural infrastructure, inundation of wetland habitats, removal of or erosion to coastal dunes, destruction of coastal lakes, and new inlet creation.

at storm surge protection and how to share the data from these efforts in order to know what works best in different situations, as well as show how to best pursue a mixed approach – green and gray⁵ infrastructure elements – to achieve the best results. To achieve this, the team is working to develop a better understanding of how to value green infrastructure to account for the extra benefits it may bring in the form of cleaner air, water, habitat for commercial species or recreational opportunities.

Finally, an interagency team lead by FEMA is working with stakeholders from across government and industry to promote better and stronger building codes so that all communities can benefit from a more resilient and safe approach to development.

What this means for communities

Federal infrastructure investments across the Sandy-affected region and nationwide will be **better coordinated** across federal agencies and **aligned with state and local stakeholders**, meaning that projects can be **delivered more efficiently** and with **more resilient outcomes for communities**.

For More Information

- Learn more about FHWA’s Climate Change Resilience Pilots here: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/climate_change/adaptation/ongoing_and_current_research/vulnerability_assessment_pilots/
- Read the 2011 FHWA Coastal and Central New Jersey Pilot Study Report here: http://www.njtpa.org/Planning/Regional-Studies/Recently-Completed-Studies/Vulnerability-and-Risk-Assessment-of-NJ-Transporta/FHWAConceptualModel/CCVR_REPORT_FINAL_4_2_12_ENTIRE.aspx
- Read FTA’s 2011 Flooded Bus Barns and Buckled Rails Report here: http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_0001_-_Flooded_Bus_Barns_and_Buckled_Rails.pdf

⁵ *Green and Gray Infrastructure are terms used to differentiate between the integration of natural systems and processes (such as wetlands) or engineered systems that mimic natural systems (such as artificial reefs) which are known as “green infrastructure” and more traditional built systems (such as concrete culverts and flood walls) which are known as “gray infrastructure.”*

REBUILDING STRATEGY GOAL: RESTORING AND STRENGTHENING HOMES AND PROVIDING FAMILIES WITH SAFE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS

From the public housing projects in Queens and Brooklyn that remained without light and heat for days, to the beach front towns along the Jersey shore where surging tides plowed houses from their foundations and left them buried in sand, the storm upended tens of thousands of lives across the New York and New Jersey region. Sandy rendered individual homes and entire neighborhoods uninhabitable and, in some cases, unrecognizable.

Because the region has a high population density, a relatively expensive housing market, and low housing inventory, responding to the housing needs of affected residents raised challenges different from those faced in disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina, Ike, and Rita. Affordable, temporary housing units in close proximity to storm-affected neighborhoods were in short supply, which forced federal, state and local authorities to employ an array of policy tools to provide displaced individuals with a place to stay. Some of these tools had been used in past disasters, but many were significantly adapted or developed in real time to respond to Sandy.

Lead Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Department of Treasury (Treasury)
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Progress Update

Lead agencies continue to make progress on completing the various housing recommendations, which range from speeding assistance to housing programs in the affected states and communities, to developing model affordable housing programs and interagency guidance on health related housing issues.

HUD allocated the first round of [Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery](#) funding in just 8 days – faster than ever before. In total, HUD has now allocated \$13 billion to the region to date.

A policy tool used to respond to Hurricane Sandy was HUD's Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP), which provided temporary rental payments directly to landlords to help families displaced by the storm. Also, the IRS temporarily suspended tenant income limitations and non-transiency rules of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit to allow project owners to rent their vacant units to individuals and families who lost their homes due to Hurricane Sandy even if those individuals do not qualify as low-income persons.

FEMA's [Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power \(STEP\) Pilot Program](#) is a new policy tool that enabled States to work with residents to return to or remain in their homes by providing homeowners with funds for permanent repairs. This reduced the number of individuals in congregate shelters or in the FEMA Transitional

Shelter Assistance (TSA) Program. Currently FEMA is in the middle of evaluating the effectiveness of STEP and has to date completed its customer surveys and is evaluating this feedback.

A model affordable housing program was created working with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and a New Jersey-based community development financial institution to purchase FHA single-family distressed loans in the most impacted counties, and to allow homeowners to make repairs while they remained in their homes. More than 125 homeowners (25% of the total portfolio of loans) already have loan modifications in progress and will be able to repair and retain their homes.

HUD and Treasury in partnership with New York City's Housing Development Corporation, continue to make progress in developing a multifamily risk-sharing model to finance affordable housing projects in New York City.

Finally, together FEMA, EPA, HHS and HUD are currently on target to issue consolidated guidance on the mediation of indoor air pollutants (e.g. mold, lead, and radon) with an anticipated publication date of late summer 2014.

What this means for communities

Agencies have worked to get money for housing to communities **faster than ever before**, are exploring new ways to **protect homeowners in disaster affected areas who are in danger of losing their homes to foreclosure**, and are working to ensure that homes impacted by disasters are rebuilt **healthy and safe**.

For More Information

- Learn more about HUD's Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery here: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs/drsi
- For more background on FEMA's Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) Pilot Program: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/29829?id=6709>

REBUILDING STRATEGY GOAL: SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES AND REVITALIZING LOCAL ECONOMIES

Small businesses are particularly vulnerable to disasters because they often have small profit margins and cannot sustain extended business interruption. They also typically lack adaptive business management models, tend to be underinsured, and often depend on generating revenues from customers and clients who have also been impacted by the disaster. Disasters amplify existing economic issues for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The Task Force recognized the role small businesses play in recovery and rebuilding after a disaster. Small businesses, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, and gasoline stations, provide services in their communities. Furthermore, small business contractors may contribute to economic recovery by taking on government contracts for rebuilding and long-term resilience and hiring a local workforce to do the work.

Lead Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Department of Labor (DOL)
Department of the Treasury (Treasury)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
Small Business Administration (SBA)

Progress Update

The Rebuilding Strategy recommendations in this area are being implemented by SBA, HUD, Treasury, Labor, and the FEMA-led Recovery Support Function Leadership Group (RSFLG). Actions for all recommendations are in various stages of development.

SBA has completed several innovative improvements to its Disaster Loan Program, and published an interim final rule on April 25, 2014 that implements changes to expedite processing of applications from disaster victims with strong credit and to increase the amount of disaster assistance funds that can be disbursed to borrowers immediately following loan closings.

Further, SBA is developing legislative proposals to remove statutory barriers for some of its programs, to provide additional technical assistance to small businesses before and after disasters, and to better use business accelerators to promote recovery and growth following disasters. SBA also completed actions to improve small business contracting opportunities in Sandy rebuilding and has drafted language for statutory changes to the HUBZone program for disaster affected areas.

Treasury and HUD have continued to raise awareness of the use of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) for disaster recovery. HUD has encouraged [Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery \(CDBG-DR\)](#) grantees to consider the provision of grant funds to a broad range of community organizations, including CDFIs, to help grantees address unmet needs through grantee training conferences,

publication in the November 18, 2014 Federal Register Notice regarding CDBG-DR allocations, and in ongoing technical assistance with grantees.

Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 requires that certain HUD-assisted projects provide opportunities for training and employing low-income persons. The HUD Office of Fair Housing & Equal Opportunity, in coordination with the HUD Office of Community Planning and Development delivered [Section 3](#) training to all three grantees (New York, New Jersey, and New York City). An ongoing process has been established to deliver additional training as necessary and in response to future monitoring.

DOL's Employment & Training Administration has provided more than \$70 million in National Emergency Grants to affected states. Additionally DOL has assisted State Departments of Labor in sharing best practices. DOL representatives from the Occupational Safety & Health Administration, the Wage Hour Division, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs & the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs continue to work with the Regional Infrastructure Working Group to coordinate with every Federal and State agency that is financing recovery and resilience projects.

What this means for communities

Agencies are working to **speed funding to small businesses** after disasters, to expand the role of **community-based financial institutions** after disasters, to compile and align information about **federal resources available to small businesses** in the wake of a disaster, and to ensure that the Federal investments after a disaster **provide economic opportunities to those who need them most**.

For More Information

- SBA Website with small business assistance information: www.sba.gov/sandy
- SBA Government Contracting Information: www.sba.gov/gcclassroom
- Federal Register Notice: www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-11-18/pdf/2013-27506.pdf
- CDFI Research Information: http://cdfifund.gov/impact_we_make/research/CDFI_Response_to_Superstorm_Sandy_Impact_Assessment.pdf
- HUD Small Business Grant and Loan Program Toolkit: <https://www.onecpd.info/cdbg-dr/toolkits/small-business-loan-and-grant/>
- HUD Section 3 Resources: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/section3/section3

REBUILDING STRATEGY GOAL: ADDRESSING INSURANCE CHALLENGES, UNDERSTANDING, AND AFFORDABILITY

When risks are known and disasters are imminent, individuals can take immediate precautions, such as boarding up windows when the forecast predicts high winds, seeking shelter during tornadoes, and clearing basements of valuables in the face of floods. Businesses can likewise prepare for disruption and, in some cases, plan to operate remotely. For risks less imminent and/or more difficult to predict, insurance can be an important line of defense against economic loss. In the absence of insurance, the cost of repairing damaged property is usually borne by the property/business owner or through Federal assistance and often has negative social consequences—disrupting lives and livelihoods.

There are two approaches to reducing the cost of recovery from future disasters. The first is to mitigate and reduce risk by moving out of harm's way or hardening properties to better withstand floods or other hazards. The second is to insure property and spread the risk. The Task Force is proposing initiatives to encourage investment in both hazard mitigation and insurance. For these approaches to be effective, individuals need to understand their risks, take steps to reduce risk, and invest in applicable insurance products that will adequately transfer their risk in the case of a disaster.

Lead Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
Department of Treasury (Treasury)

Progress Update

With the recent passage of the [Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014](#), there are legislative requirements that now further support and provide guidance to assist in implementing and completing the insurance recommendations in the Rebuilding Strategy.

For example, the legislation calls for the standing up of a Technical Mapping Advisory Council (TMAC) to provide guidance on various aspects of improving mapping, including incorporation of the best available climate science to assess flood risks and use of the best methodology for impact of sea level rise. The recommendation to improve the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policyholder awareness of factors that affect flood risk and insurance rating decisions is supported by the Act which requires a Flood Insurance Advocate. In part, the Advocate will be responsible for educating policy holders about their individual flood risks, their options in choosing a policy and assisting property owners through the map appeal process. The TMAC will better equip FEMA to make accurate long-term rating decisions and is critical to the effectiveness of the Flood Insurance Advocate.

Another recommendation that will be implemented through the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 is the analysis of the affordability of flood insurance and the impact of increased premiums on

economically distressed households. The Act retains the provision from the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 that requires FEMA to conduct an affordability study, but adds additional criteria to be included in the study, and also requires FEMA to draft an affordability framework to address the issues of affordability of flood insurance sold under NFIP.

A final example is the recommendation to encourage increased hazard mitigation activities, including elevation, in order to protect property against future losses. This recommendation will be met through the Act's requirement that FEMA establish guidelines for property owners that provide other alternative methods of mitigation, other than building elevation to reduce flood risk to residential buildings that cannot be elevated due to their structural characteristics. FEMA must also inform property owners about how the implementation of mitigation methods may affect their risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the NFIP. Upon implementation of these legislative requirements, the recommendations will be completed or revised accordingly.

What this means for communities

The new legislation will ensure that key components of the Task Force recommendations will be implemented and even expanded upon – resulting in **homeowners having more information** and a **new affordability framework** for the NFIP.

For More Information

- For NFIP reform and updates: <http://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance-reform>

REBUILDING STRATEGY GOAL: BUILDING STATE AND LOCAL CAPACITY TO PLAN FOR AND IMPLEMENT LONG-TERM RECOVERY AND REBUILDING

The scope and scale of Hurricane Sandy challenged the uneven capacities of state and local governments, which also faced differences in needs and readiness for disaster recovery. Many of the municipalities that experienced severe river flooding and the coastal towns along the New Jersey Shore and on Long Island are without full time planners, city managers, grants managers, engineers, and architects, and do not have the in-house capabilities to lead comprehensive, long-term recovery planning efforts on their own.

Planning for recovery from a catastrophic event like Sandy is a massive challenge for even the best prepared communities and it should not be postponed until the immediate response is complete. Recovery planning and decision-making take place under severe time constraints and deal with the rebuilding of multiple systems simultaneously. This effort involves stakeholders who have been traumatized and triggers funding sources not normally available. Successful recovery under such difficult circumstances depends on two critical factors: planning and capacity building.

Lead Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Progress Update

The FEMA-led Community Planning and Capacity Building Recovery Support Function (CPCB RSF) supported both New York and New Jersey in coordinating assistance from over 15 federal agencies to assist states and communities in organizing, planning and building recovery management capability across the affected area. FEMA and the CPCB RSF also drew on the support of a wide range of professional and community-based organizations (CBOs) and non-profits including: the American Planning Association in New York and New Jersey, Sustainable Long Island, the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Research and Development and Office of Sustainable Communities, the National Renewable Laboratory, the New Jersey League of Municipalities, Sustainable Jersey, and New Jersey Future, among a host of organizations, to offer recovery planning training, consultation, and other forms of technical assistance to local community leaders across the declared counties.

Further, federal agencies have partnered with other state agencies as well as, CBOs and educational institutions to convene symposiums, forums, and roundtable discussions to better inform local communities and the general public on disaster preparedness and long-term community disaster recovery. One example of a best practice partnership between local government and an academic institution is the HHS-funded Extramural Hurricane Sandy Recovery Research program. Principal investigators from Columbia University

and NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene collaborated to leverage existing guidelines and research on vulnerable populations affected by Hurricane Sandy in order to further augment the [department's health guidelines](#) to address catastrophic flooding. CPCB RSF and its partners in New Jersey also worked with academic institutions to match academic programs with community needs. Participating institutions, such as Stockton, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rowan and Rutgers Universities have worked together to provide qualified students for a variety of recovery activities such as "Alternative Spring Break" community recovery support, developing marketing and tourism plans, and grant writing assistance.

In New York, the CPCB RSF and its partners assisted the State in launching the [New York Rising Community Reconstruction Program](#) by developing 11 guidance and recovery planning related documents and providing 104 "fact packs" containing Geographic Information System data and community conditions information for communities affected by Hurricanes Sandy, Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. The partnership between CPCB RSF, the Housing Recovery Support Function, and numerous non-governmental organizations created an interactive [Resource Mapping Tool](#) that links damaged New York communities to available information resources. State and local entities are already utilizing this decision-making tool to identify resource gaps. More than 150 Federal, State and county level recovery practitioners participated in community planning and capacity building training events organized through the Smart Growth Initiative (a working group comprised of representatives from EPA, FEMA, Metropolitan Transportation Authority – New York (MTA), and Nassau and Suffolk County) to build capacity for engaging community stakeholders in recovery planning. In New Jersey, CPCB RSF and partners held a Recovery Resource Summit where more than 100 representatives from federal, state, local, NGO, and philanthropic organizations had an opportunity to network with partners and identify potential resources. Also in New Jersey, CPCB RSF and its partners assisted Cumberland County to develop and implement a recovery planning process that resulted not only in a recovery strategy but additionally created a Local Resilience Partnership, as adjacent communities came together to build a more resilient future.

Early conversations between CPCB RSF and the philanthropic community resulted in the placement of recovery managers supporting six communities. Local disaster recovery management capacity has been increased throughout the affected area by providing training and funding for Local Disaster Recovery Managers (LDRMs). HUD encouraged the use of [Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery \(CDBG-DR\)](#) grants to support the establishment of LDRMs in their Notice of Funding Availability in the [Federal Register](#). LDRM job descriptions and information have been made available to local communities through interagency, state and non-profit partners. As a result, local disaster recovery staff have already been placed to support several New Jersey communities.

What this means for communities

Local leaders are getting **more information, training, and new resources** to help them **plan for and manage disaster recovery in their communities.**

For More Information

- New York State Rising Program: <http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/community-reconstruction-program>.
- Wall Street Journal article on FEMA symposia with Education and other institutions to improve resilience and local partnerships: <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304886904579475371378044120>
- CDBG-DR Second Allocation Federal Register Notice provides eligibility for funding Local Disaster Recovery Managers on page 69110 <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-11-18/pdf/2013-27506.pdf>
- Resource Mapping Tool: <http://fema.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=c8e880eb4e7f4996ac26947884205da0>
- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/environmental/moldrpt1.shtml>

REBUILDING STRATEGY GOAL: IMPROVING DATA SHARING BETWEEN FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL OFFICIALS

The use of data facilitates decision-making that is well-informed and leads to goals that are both clearly defined and realistically achievable. In post-disaster situations, data collection and application are especially important for on-the-ground recovery efforts, as well as for long-term policy formulation and program management. Data and information are extremely valuable to Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, as well as to private citizens, businesses, non-profits, and other community groups.

Lead Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Small Business Administration (SBA)

Progress Update

The Task Force report recommends improving data sharing between and among federal agencies and between and among federal, state, and local agencies. The agencies leading these efforts have made progress on many of these recommendations, and are working closely to implement longer-term goals.

Key accomplishments to date include increased flexibility for FEMA to share valuable recovery data with other federal agencies by renewing its Disaster Recovery Assistance Files System of Records Notice (SORN) and by publishing its [Hazard Mitigation, Disaster Public Assistance \(PA\), and Disaster Loan Programs SORN](#). FEMA also issued a Policy for its Recovery data aimed at sharing data expediently and securely. FEMA launched a website explaining its information sharing processes and instructions to its key stakeholders (federal, state, local, tribal and certain established voluntary organizations). FEMA will soon place a data element glossary and sample report on the site. FEMA plans to create a similar, public-facing website.

Further, HUD, SBA, and FEMA are working together to define disaster relevant data sets that will be published to the Administration's data.gov website.

Finally, FEMA and HUD are establishing an interagency data exchange that would allow both agencies to share and access critical information in real (or expedient) time, improving operations and program delivery at both agencies. The Disaster Assistance Improvement Program has finalized system requirements and design for an automated data exchange between FEMA and HUD that will allow the agencies to share relevant disaster data necessary to make eligibility determinations and reduce duplicative payments for housing assistance following a disaster. Though the initial focus is on HUD and FEMA, once built, this system could in the future be expanded to include data from other agencies as well.

What this means for communities

State and local partners will be able to **access and understand valuable federal agency disaster data**. Federal agencies will be able to expediently and securely **share information** among one another and other stakeholders, thus accelerating **disaster relief efforts and assistance**.

For More Information

- FEMA's Hazard Mitigation, Disaster Public Assistance (PA), and Disaster Loan Programs SORN: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-03-24/pdf/2014-06361.pdf>

DATA SHARING AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH THE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE (PMO)

The Program Management Office (PMO) provides a concrete example of the ways in which open and transparent data sharing practices between agencies can encourage smarter and more effective decision making in recovery and rebuilding efforts. The size, complexity, and urgency of the funding for Hurricane Sandy recovery made it clear -- even before the Sandy Supplemental was enacted -- that the Task Force needed a central coordinating office that would work closely with agencies, OMB, and the oversight community, such as the agency Inspectors General and the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board (RATB). PMO was also established to leverage lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, as well as best practices from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

Lead Agencies

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Progress Update

Since the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force and its Program Management Office (PMO) disbanded on time and under budget on September 30, 2013, the PMO function has successfully continued through the Sandy PMO within HUD. In partnership with FEMA, the Sandy PMO has completed its two recommendations.

The Sandy PMO continued and expanded upon the role of the Task Force PMO, by growing its monitoring system beyond the supplemental funding and performance data to include implementation tracking for the 69 recommendations of the Rebuilding Strategy. The Sandy PMO has also organized and provided data for three Sandy Principals' meetings, co-chaired by the Secretary of HUD and the FEMA Administrator, ensuring continued cabinet-level engagement in this important work, even after the sunset of the Task Force.

The PMO has partnered with the RATB to improve transparency of the supplemental funding by providing [regular data to the public](#) in the form of maps and downloadable files. Finally, the PMO created a new resource for federal agencies - a PMO Toolkit - which documents and compiles key lessons, tools, and tips for the development of a PMO so that they may be replicated in the event of a future disaster, or in response to other large, cross-agency Supplemental appropriations.

The PMO has ensured that longer-term recovery continues by monitoring implementation of the Sandy recommendations and the Sandy Supplemental funding progress by supporting cabinet-level engagement through quarterly Principals meetings.

What this means for communities

The PMO provides **transparency for the public on the progress of recovery**, and **accountability for Federal agency partners**, by providing detailed information on the progress of the Supplemental funding, and periodic reports on the implementation of the Rebuilding Strategy recommendations.

For More Information

- State level Sandy Supplemental Financial Data: <http://www.recovery.gov/Sandy/whereisthemoneygoing/maps/Pages/HudPmo.aspx>

APPENDIX: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HURRICANE SANDY REBUILDING STRATEGY

Resilience: Promoting Resilient Rebuilding Through Innovative Ideas and a Thorough Understanding of Current and Future Risk

1. Facilitate the incorporation of future risk assessment, such as sea level rise, into rebuilding efforts with the development of a sea-level rise tool.
2. Develop a minimum flood risk reduction standard for major Federal investment that takes into account data on current and future flood risk.
3. Create a design competition to develop innovative resilient design solutions that address the Sandy-affected region's most pressing vulnerabilities.

Infrastructure: Ensuring a Regionally Coordinated, Resilient Approach to Infrastructure Investment

4. Apply Infrastructure Resilience Guidelines to all Federal infrastructure investments and projects for Sandy recovery.
5. Consider applying the Infrastructure Resilience Guidelines nationally.
6. Federal, State, and local agencies should continue to coordinate Sandy recovery infrastructure resilience projects.
7. Institutionalize regional approaches to resilience planning in the NDRF and the National Mitigation Framework.
8. Establish a Sandy Regional Infrastructure Permitting and Review Team that leverages the Executive Order 13604 framework for Sandy projects.
9. Leverage the Executive Order 13604 framework to identify opportunities to expedite and improve other types of review processes through programmatic agreement or consultation where appropriate.
10. Disaster recovery efforts should account for the temporary staffing needs of Federal agencies and State and local governments who conduct reviews and permitting of Federal disaster recovery projects.
11. Provide technical assistance to States and localities to help optimize Sandy recovery infrastructure funding, share best practices, leverage resources, advance sustainability, and meet the needs of vulnerable communities.
12. Ensure that Sandy recovery energy investments are resilient.
13. Mitigate future impacts to the liquid fuels supply chain like those experienced during the Sandy recovery.
14. Encourage Federal and State cooperation to improve electric grid policies and standards.
15. Mobilize the private sector and non-profit community to develop innovative solutions that support and integrate whole community efforts for disaster relief.

16. Develop a resilient power strategy for wireless and data communications infrastructure and consumer equipment.
17. Expedite flow of Sandy transportation funding to needed repairs.
18. Align Sandy transportation funding expenditures with national policy goals.
19. Consider green infrastructure options in all Sandy infrastructure investments.
20. Improve the understanding and decision-making tools for green infrastructure through projects funded by the Sandy Supplemental.
21. Create opportunities for innovations in green infrastructure technology and design using Sandy funding, particularly in vulnerable communities.
22. Develop a consistent approach to valuing the benefits of green approaches to infrastructure development and develop tools, data, and best practices to advance the broad integration of green infrastructure.
23. Ensure Sandy recovery water infrastructure investments are timely, resilient, sustainable, and effective.
24. Ensure Sandy recovery water infrastructure projects are coordinated with other infrastructure investments.
25. States and localities should adopt and enforce the most current version of the IBC and the IRC.
(IBC: International Building Code; IRC: International Residential Code)

Housing: Restoring and Strengthening Homes and Providing Families with Safe, Affordable Housing Options

26. For future disasters that affect high-density and high cost areas, shelter-in-place programs like New York City's Rapid Repair and FEMA's Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) programs should be implemented to reduce the number of people displaced from their homes who would otherwise require short term housing. Evaluate the effectiveness of STEP and compare outcomes to other forms of temporary emergency sheltering implemented in response to Sandy. In addition, evaluate the New York, New Jersey, and New York City implementation of sheltering in place programs.
27. HUD should expedite future allocations from the remaining CDBG-DR funds for Sandy recovery and other eligible disasters, as well as other allocations (if appropriated) for future disasters. HUD should continue to provide consistent and appropriate standards for the use of CDBG-DR funding. In addition, HUD should encourage grantees to use toolkits and other existing resources to expedite program implementation.
28. Require grantees to use CDBG-DR funding to support public and HUD-assisted multi-family housing as well as subsidized and tax credit-assisted affordable housing with recovery and risk mitigation efforts.
29. Align the foreclosure prevention policies of the FHA and the FHFA – including policies on moratoria, forbearance, and refinancing.
30. HUD should explore ways to assist State and local governments to develop model affordable housing programs that leverage funding from the public, private, and philanthropic sectors for affordable housing development and preservation in Sandy-affected areas, as well as in other regions that could potentially be affected by future disasters.
31. Encourage and promote the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS) FORTIFIED home programs/ Resilience STAR development standards.

32. Help identify opportunities for state and local housing programs to leverage funds and create public-private partnerships.
33. FEMA, EPA, HUD, and HHS should issue consolidated guidance on remediation of indoor air pollutants (e.g. mold, lead, radon, and asbestos) that can pose health hazards for workers and residents in the Sandy-affected region. In addition, these agencies should recommend or establish region and housing stock specific toolkits related to indoor air pollutants for States and localities responding to disasters. Tribal, State, and local governments should include the remediation of these indoor environmental pollutants in their rebuilding construction/rehabilitation programs.
34. Bring together the Housing RSF and Emergency Support Function six partner agencies to review and integrate existing housing plans, as well as existing statutes, regulations, and policies for potential changes (statutory, regulatory or policy) to improve the delivery of housing solutions for future disasters.

Small Business: Supporting Small Businesses and Revitalizing Local Economies

35. Build a Disaster Preparedness and Operations Team (DPOT) focused on planning to help SBA district offices, including those in the Hurricane Sandy region, ensure clear and consistent guidance on how to access both local and Federal aid following a disaster.
36. Institute a “No Wrong Door” approach to federal information sharing after disasters by building on existing information platforms and cross-referencing Hurricane Sandy disaster recovery resources. Furthermore, measures should be taken to ensure that information about economic recovery from Hurricane Sandy is accessible to vulnerable populations.
37. Encourage HUD CDBG-DR grantees to address the needs of a broad range of affected small businesses, including through the provision of grant funds to community organizations that work closely with businesses whose needs might otherwise be unmet.
38. Remove statutory barriers for SBA programs that provide additional technical assistance to small businesses before, during, and after a disaster.
39. Provide SBA statutory authority to fund incubators and accelerators.
40. Institute new and innovative process improvements to SBA’s Disaster Loan program.
41. Modify regulations to adopt and “alternative size standard” for small businesses for SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loans similar to the standard for SBA business loan programs, to enable more businesses to qualify for loans.
42. Increase SBA’s unsecured disaster loan limits and expedite the disbursement of small dollar loans.
43. Defer loan payments due to SBA from Microloan Intermediaries, when appropriate as determined by SBA Administrator, if a certain percent of the Intermediary’s portfolio is made up of loans to micro-borrowers in major disaster areas, including the Hurricane Sandy region.
44. Encourage HUD CDBG-DR grantees and private sources to fund additional CDFI outreach and support to small businesses in vulnerable communities.
45. Raise awareness that Treasury’s SSBCI Program can be used for disaster recovery, including Hurricane Sandy recovery.
46. Create opportunities and tools to increase access for small businesses to rebuild their businesses and participate in Hurricane Sandy rebuilding.

47. Make statutory changes to existing SBA initiatives to make it easier for small and local businesses to access Federal contracts for Hurricane Sandy rebuilding.
48. Promote best practices of local workforce agencies that are integrating disaster recovery and long-term Hurricane Sandy rebuilding into their ongoing efforts.
49. Encourage HUD CDBG-DR grantees, in complying with Section 3 regulations, to maximize efforts to create specialized skills training programs in the areas needed most for Sandy rebuilding, ranging from mold remediation and construction to ecosystem and habitat restoration, green infrastructure, and coastal engineering. Furthermore, the Task Force recommends that these training programs include low-income individuals and other vulnerable populations and create local Hurricane Sandy recovery jobs that pay wages and benefits at industry standards.
50. Pursuant to Executive Order 13502, executive agencies should be encouraged to consider consideration of Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) on large-scale construction projects in the Hurricane Sandy region in order to promote economy and efficiency in federal procurement.

Insurance: Addressing Insurance Challenges, Understanding, and Affordability

51. Establish Unified Insurance Disbursement Process.
52. Support efforts to reduce consumer confusion regarding risk and insurance coverage while working to increase hazard preparedness.
53. Improve National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policyholder awareness of factors that affect flood risk and insurance rating decisions.
54. Encourage increased hazard mitigation activities including elevation in order to protect property against future losses.
55. Continue to assess actuarial soundness of decreasing premiums based on mitigation activities other than elevation.
56. Analyze affordability challenges of flood insurance and the impact on economically distressed households facing premium increases.

Community Planning and Capacity Building: Building State and Local Capacity to Plan for and Implement Long-Term Recovery and Rebuilding

57. Work with States and local jurisdictions to consider funding strategies and raise awareness about the need to fill LDRM positions. (*LDRM: Local Disaster Recovery Manager*).
58. Support the New York Rising Community Reconstruction Program.
59. Support New Jersey planning efforts, including pilots for New Jersey Local Resilience Partnerships, and encourage Federal agencies, the State of New Jersey, non-profits, and philanthropic organizations to provide both financial and technical support for the formation and operation of the Local Resilience Partnerships.
60. Package the variety of existing Federal resources and tools related to disaster recovery and create new ones specific to community planning and capacity building in order to establish a coordinated suite of assistance that enhances and streamlines access to the recovery expertise needed by impacted communities.

61. Facilitate and expand opportunities for philanthropic and non-profit engagement in recovery, including opportunities for organizations that work with vulnerable populations. The CPCB RSFs in New York and New Jersey should actively support funder collaboratives that provide grants to nonprofits working in coordination with government. This should include encouragement of sub-grants to NGOs that would assist in accomplishing the Federal outreach requirements, including those specific to vulnerable populations to ensure they are included in the recovery planning process.

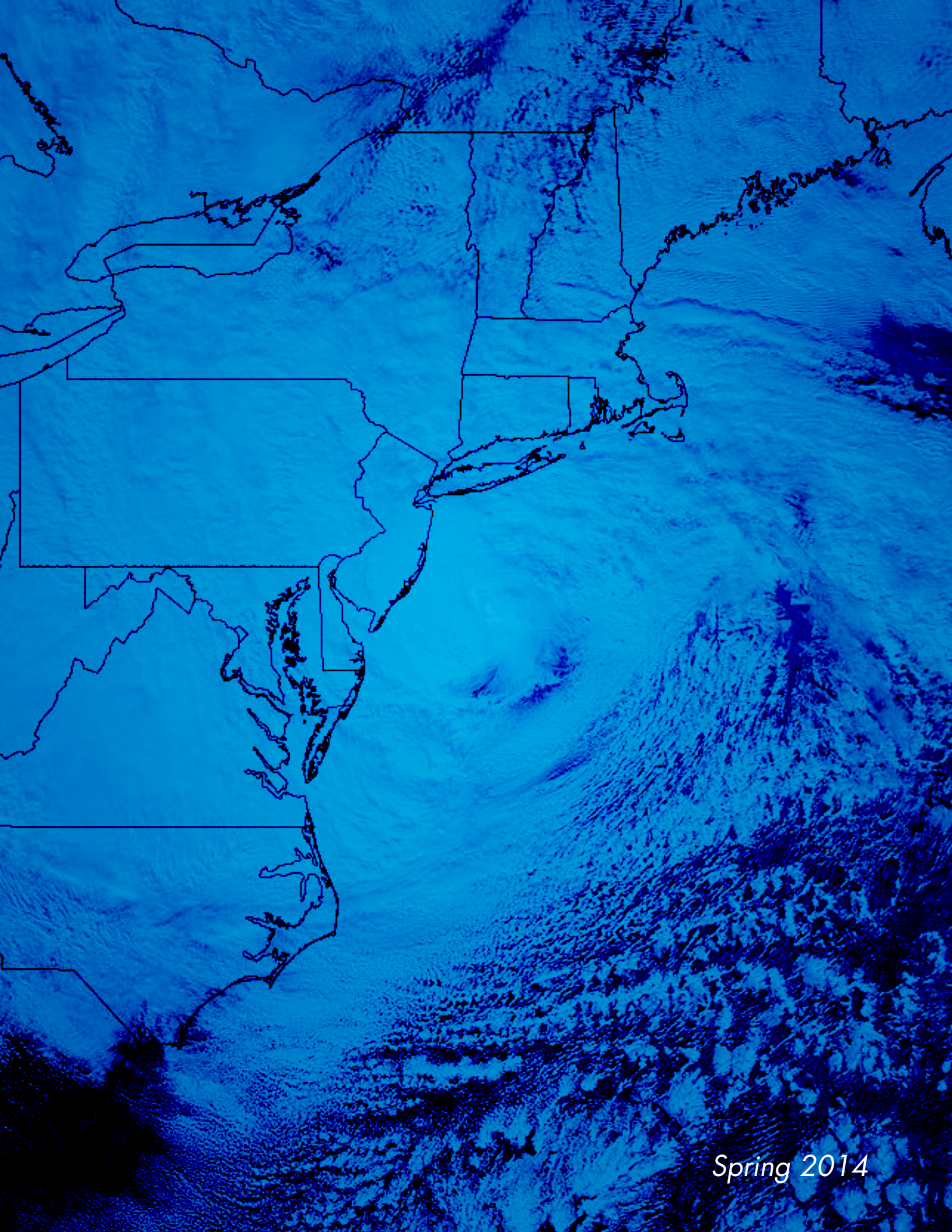
Data: Improving Data Sharing Between Federal, State and Local Officials

62. Agencies should make aggregated, PII-scrubbed data about disaster-affected populations available to the public using a central website similar to <http://www.data.gov>. Specifically, FEMA, HUD, and SBA should coordinate to create a new website or adapt an existing one (such as FEMA's openFEMA site) for data posting during disasters. In addition, FEMA, HUD, and SBA should create a process for digesting raw data into an aggregated form that the public can view.
63. Each agency and each State should identify a "data steward" who serves as a point of contact for data requests. This contact should not only be available after disasters, but also serve as an informational resource in advance of disasters. FEMA, HUD, and SBA should each designate an individual within their agencies that is permanently available to receive data sharing requests and related questions from States, local governments, and non-governmental entities. Each agency should then distribute the name and contact information of that individual to all 50 States. In the event of a disaster, agencies should send affected States a reminder that the data steward is available to assist them and that each State is responsible for identifying a central point of contact within the governor's office or within the primary disaster response agency to coordinate requests with Federal agencies.
64. Each agency should catalogue its disaster data in a "menu" that describes the data that it may share with States and local governments. Specifically, each agency's data steward (see recommendation 63) should create a document containing a list of all data sets that are typically requested during a disaster. Each data item description should include the fields in the data set and the units of measurement, as well as a brief description of how the data can be used by States responding to a disaster and describe the limitations of the data (privacy requirements, aggregation, data latency, etc.). This document should be distributed to disaster agencies in each State.
65. FEMA, HUD, and SBA should adopt a common data sharing agreement template so that data requestors do not have to familiarize themselves with three separate forms. Attorneys and privacy officials from these agencies should meet to compare their current data sharing agreement formats and identify common boilerplate language that can serve as the basis for an interagency template. Once drafted, this template should then be distributed by each agency's data sharing steward to the States.
66. Work towards a multi-agency integrated data repository, or "data hub," shared and operated by FEMA and HUD, that, to the extent permitted by law and Federal policy, allows those agencies to access and store one another's data and to pass these data along to States in the event of a Federally declared disaster. FEMA and HUD should provide technical support and personnel resources to further this tool's development in preparation for the next disaster. In addition, agency attorneys and privacy officials should discuss what steps will be necessary to begin preparing the legal framework for a multi-agency data portal.
67. To help make Federal data available to States, agencies should review "routine use" language in relevant SORNs to determine whether any changes are warranted that could provide greater flexibility to share information for planning purposes, to share information across State agencies and with local governments

and to broaden categories of records to cover data from other sources. Attorneys in FEMA's Office of Chief Counsel who have considered this issue have offered to make themselves available to provide guidance.

Program Management Office (PMO): Data Sharing and Accountability

68. Continue functions of PMO to track the progress of the Sandy supplemental funding and performance.
69. Document the functions and processes used by the Task Force recovery in a "PMO toolkit" which could be quickly deployed in the event of future supplemental funding.



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