



NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOVERY SUPPORT FUNCTION

The National Disaster Recovery Framework introduces six new Recovery Support Functions that are led by designated federal coordinating agencies at the national level. Recovery Support Functions involve partners in the local, State and Tribal governments and private and nonprofit sectors not typically involved in emergency support functions but critically needed in disaster recovery. These new partners may include public and private organizations that have experience with permanent housing financing, economic development, advocacy for underserved populations and long-term community planning.

The processes used for facilitating recovery are more flexible, context based and collaborative in approach than the task-oriented approach used during the response phase of an incident. Recovery processes should be scalable and based on demonstrated recovery needs.

Each Recovery Support Function has a designated coordinating agency along with primary agencies and supporting organizations with programs relevant to the functional area. The Recovery Support Function Coordinating Agency, with the assistance of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, provides leadership, coordination and oversight for that particular. When coordinating agencies are activated to lead a Recovery Support Function, primary agencies and supporting organizations are expected to be responsive to the function related communication and coordination needs.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Coordinating Agency: Department of Interior

Primary Agencies: Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Interior and Environmental Protection Agency.

Supporting Organizations: Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Corporation for National and Community Service Council on Environmental Quality, Department of Commerce, Institute of Museum and Library Services Department of Interior, Library of Congress National Endowment for the Arts National Endowment for the Humanities U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Heritage Preservation.

Mission

Integrate Federal assets and capabilities to help State and Tribal governments and communities address long-term environmental and cultural resource recovery needs after large-scale and catastrophic incidents.

Function

The core recovery capability for natural and cultural resources is the ability to protect natural and cultural resources and historic properties through appropriate response and recovery actions to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore them consistent with post-disaster community priorities and in compliance with appropriate environmental and cultural resources laws. The Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery Support Function coordinates departments and agencies working together to provide information and assistance to communities seeking to preserve, protect, conserve, rehabilitate, recover and restore natural and cultural resources during recovery.

Relevant agencies and partners are those with expertise and programs including, but not limited to, specific natural and cultural resource issue identification, assessment and management (e.g., fish and wildlife, historic and traditional cultural properties, hydrology); natural and cultural resource planning; environmental planning and historic preservation compliance under Federal laws and *Executive Orders* (specific to programs that provide funding for disaster recovery); and community sustainability.

PRE-DISASTER: THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOVERY SUPPORT FUNCTION

- Identifies relevant Federal programs and incentives that have a role in supporting the preservation, protection, conservation, rehabilitation, recovery and restoration of natural and cultural resources during recovery.
- Develops a pre-disaster Natural and Cultural Resources RSF action plan to identify and communicate priority actions.
- Identifies and prioritizes gaps and inconsistencies within and between relevant Federal regulations, policies, program requirements and processes affecting natural and cultural resources that are used in disaster recovery, either separately or in combination with one another, and makes recommendations to the National Disaster Recovery Planning (NDRP) Division at FEMA Headquarters and specific Federal agencies.
- Works with private nonprofits and other nongovernmental organizations (N G Os) to leverage opportunities to encourage local, State and Tribal governments and institutions to develop emergency management plans that integrate natural and cultural resource issues.
- Promotes the principles of sustainable and disaster resistant communities through the protection of natural resources such as coastal barriers and zones, floodplains, wetlands and other natural resources critical to risk reduction.
- Assesses appropriate hazard mitigation strategies for the protection of

cultural resources.

POST-DISASTER: THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOVERY SUPPORT FUNCTION

- When activated by the FDRC, the primary and supporting departments and agencies deploy in support of the Natural and Cultural Resources RSF mission.
- Works to leverage Federal resources and available programs to meet local community recovery needs.
- Identifies opportunities to leverage natural and cultural resource protection with hazard mitigation strategies.
- Addresses government policy and agency program issues, gaps and inconsistencies related to natural and cultural resource issues.
- Coordinates cross-jurisdictional or multistate and/or regional natural and cultural resource issues to ensure consistency of Federal support where needed.
- Encourages responsible agencies at all levels of government and their important private sector partners to support the local community's recovery plan and priorities by developing a Natural and Cultural Resources action plan that identifies how the agencies leverage resources and capabilities to meet the community's needs.
- Synchronizes the Natural and Cultural Resources action plan with other RSFs, as appropriate to support the broader vision of Federal support to disaster recovery.
- Helps communities and State and Tribal governments to leverage opportunities inherent in recovery to mitigate impacts to environmental or cultural resources.
- Promotes a systematic, interdisciplinary approach to understand the interdependencies and complex relationships of the natural and cultural environments.
- Maintains robust and accessible communications throughout the recovery process between the Federal Government and all other partners to ensure ongoing dialogue and information sharing.

OUTCOMES FOR THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOVERY SUPPORT FUNCTION

With expertise drawn from Federal departments and agencies, the Natural and Cultural Resources RSF works so that:

- Considerations related to the management and protection of natural and cultural resources and historic properties (NCH) resources, community sustainability and compliance with environmental planning and historic preservation requirements are integrated into recovery.
- Local communities, States and Tribal governments are ready to address post-disaster natural and cultural resource recovery needs.
- Programs to support disaster recovery, coordination of technical assistance and capabilities and data sharing are coordinated.
- Natural and cultural assessments and studies needed post-disaster, including proposed solutions to environmental and historic preservation policy and process impediments, are developed.

###

September 2011