

FEMA Designates First Communities to Receive Assistance for Hazard Resilience

The [Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act of 2022](#) was signed into law by President Joseph R. Biden on Dec. 20, 2022. The act builds disaster resilience across the nation by creating and designating resilience zones that can focus assistance and support to areas that need it most.

These zones are disadvantaged communities that have high natural hazard risks based on combined risks of annualized estimated losses to buildings, people and agriculture from natural hazards; social vulnerability; and community resilience.

The designations will also enable jurisdictions to strengthen their community resilience by working with a range of federal agencies, private sector, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, and private equity partners.

Community Disaster Resilience Zones Designations

On Sept. 6, FEMA is announcing 483 census tracts in communities that will receive targeted federal support to become more resilient to natural hazards and extreme weather worsened by the climate crisis. FEMA will use these zones to focus resilience activities as well as to encourage other federal agencies, the private sector, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, and private equity to invest in resilience projects.

FEMA is authorized to provide additional assistance for mitigation projects that reduce natural hazard risk in, or primarily benefiting, a designated zone, including a cost share adjustment under certain FEMA mitigation grant programs.

Designation Requirements and Process

FEMA consulted with other federal agencies, supporters and contributors from the public and private sectors, and the general public to refine the methodology for designating these initial resilience zones.

With the legislation as guidance, individual census tracts with the highest natural hazard risk assessment as determined by components of the [National Risk Index](#) are eligible for designation. The law requires the following:

- Include the 50 census tracts assigned the highest individual hazard risk rating.



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- Within each state, include at least 1% of the census tracts with the highest individual risk rating.
- Achieve geographic balance and consider designations in coastal, inland, urban, suburban, rural areas.
- Include census tracts in territories and on tribal lands.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) was used for these designations as well. This tool is a geospatial platform that identifies areas across the nation that face especially acute climate and other resilience burdens. FEMA's use of this tool further focused the designations on underserved communities.

Designations will focus resilience building activities as well as to encourage other federal agencies, the private sector, nonprofits, philanthropic and private equity to invest in projects to make identified communities more resilient.

For example, the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#) plans to use these newly designated zones to focus a number of its climate resilience programs. NOAA will make an award this fall for the [Climate-Smart Communities Initiative program](#) funded by the [Inflation Reduction Act](#) to accelerate the pace of and reduce the cost of climate resilience-building for communities across the United States. The program will work with communities to co-develop equitable climate resilience plans that can be readied for funding and implementation. NOAA's priority is to assist communities that are at the highest risk to climate impacts and have the most need for assistance, such as the FEMA identified Community Disaster Resilience Zones.

The Initial Designations Announcement on September 6

The initial announcement of designations is for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. FEMA will make a second announcement in the fall of 2023 for tribal lands. For the tribal land designations, FEMA will consider input received through a Tribal Consultation conducted on Aug.2, 2023. The open comment period for the [Tribal Consultation](#) closed on Sept. 5, 2023.

A third designation of zones will occur in 12-18 months based on updates to the National Risk Index, lessons learned from this initial experience, and stakeholder input. Examples of planned updates to the National Risk Index include additional data on tsunami and riverine flood risk.

FEMA will continue to engage the public as it refines the natural hazard risk assessment methodology to designate the zones, consults with local jurisdictions, and implements post-designation support from a range of public and private resources.

The agency ensured that each state has at least one Community Disaster Resilience Zone and considered geographical balance among coastal, inland, urban, suburban, and rural areas when designating the zones. Future designations will continue to build upon the geographic diversity.

The jurisdictions with these designated resilience zones may be viewed on [FEMA's website](#). An [interactive map](#) shows the states and census tracts with these initial designations.

Please see the attachment for the Community Disaster Resilience Zone Designations by FEMA Region.

Table 1. Community Disaster Resilience Zone Designations by FEMA Region

| FEMA Region | States and the District of Columbia* | Number of Designated Community Disaster Resilience Zones in each region | Total Census Tracts in each region |
|-------------|---|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connecticut ▪ New Hampshire ▪ Maine ▪ Massachusetts ▪ Rhode Island ▪ Vermont | 10 | 3,681 |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New Jersey ▪ New York | 32 | 7,568 |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delaware ▪ District of Columbia ▪ Maryland ▪ Pennsylvania ▪ Virginia ▪ West Virginia | 49 | 8,105 |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alabama ▪ Florida ▪ Georgia ▪ Kentucky ▪ Mississippi ▪ North Carolina ▪ South Carolina ▪ Tennessee | 110 | 17,199 |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Illinois ▪ Indiana ▪ Michigan ▪ Minnesota ▪ Ohio ▪ Wisconsin | 68 | 14,117 |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arkansas ▪ Louisiana ▪ New Mexico | 66 | 10,899 |

| FEMA Region | States and the District of Columbia* | Number of Designated Community Disaster Resilience Zones in each region | Total Census Tracts in each region |
|-------------|--|---|------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oklahoma ▪ Texas | | |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Iowa ▪ Kansas ▪ Missouri ▪ Nebraska | 25 | 3,932 |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colorado ▪ Montana ▪ North Dakota ▪ South Dakota ▪ Utah ▪ Wyoming | 18 | 3,112 |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Arizona ▪ California ▪ Hawaii ▪ Nevada | 78 | 12,081 |
| 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alaska ▪ Idaho ▪ Oregon ▪ Washington | 27 | 3,399 |
| Total | | 483 | 84,093 |

Contact Us

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