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## FEMA seeks feedback on National Flood Insurance Program

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“Uncle Sam Wants You.” That’s the word from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which is soliciting feedback on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) during a 30-day public comment period. The NFIP is a federal program created by Congress in 1968. It was designed to ensure that communities across the country have access to affordable flood insurance, as well as to encourage community floodplain management to reduce future flood damage. The NFIP is currently running a deficit of more than \$19 billion.



“Clearly this deficit is not sustainable,” said Mary Colvin, Acting Division Director for Mitigation, FEMA, Region II, which covers New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. “We are looking for ways to revitalize the program, and want input from policy holders, local officials and flood plain managers, everyone.”

Flooding is the nation’s most common natural disaster, accounting for one out of every 10 presidential disaster declaration each year. On average, floods kill about 140 people each year and cause \$6 billion in property damage, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. In 2005, the flooding associated with Hurricane Katrina caused \$200 billion in property damage.

FEMA kicked off its 30-day comment period with a two-day listening session in Washington, D.C. Nov. 5. FEMA invited nearly 175 stakeholders representing environmental and historic preservation groups, fair housing groups, and representatives from the lending, insurance, emergency management, real estate, land use, planning, and engineering industries, as well as representatives from State, Local and Tribal governments.

FEMA’s NFIP listening sessions and public comment period will allow FEMA to gain input on the various issues and programs related to the NFIP, such as flood map modernization updates, reducing repetitive loss properties, and other program topics.

Residents’ views on the NFIP and how to improve it are encouraged to submit them via the FEMA Web site, [www.fema.gov/nfipcomments](http://www.fema.gov/nfipcomments) before close of business on December 5th.

For more information, visit [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

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