

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 2, 2023

The Honorable Deanne Criswell
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Administrator Criswell,

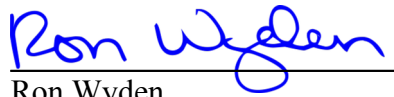
We write to you regarding the Federal Emergency Management Agency's proposed changes to the implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in Oregon. Oregonians recently identified concerns surrounding housing, economic development, and aging infrastructure in their review of the draft plan. In light of these concerns, we request that you extend the current scoping process for an additional 30 days to allow greater opportunity for public comment on the proposed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We also ask that you provide robust technical assistance to support our communities as they evaluate potential impacts of these changes and explore mitigation strategies.

While the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been working for many years to update the NFIP in Oregon to ensure compliance with environmental laws, FEMA only recently began the public engagement process for this EIS. We appreciate FEMA's efforts to hold public meetings in Oregon and solicit public comments regarding the draft plan. Community input is critical to the success of this effort, and we believe a longer comment period will aid in FEMA's understanding of the socioeconomic impacts and other effects of this NFIP-Endangered Species Act integration project. An extension will also allow key stakeholders in Oregon to understand the rules, learn what actions are and are not covered, explore costs associated with mitigation options, and share their informed views with FEMA.

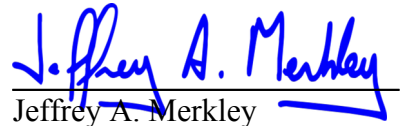
For example, Oregonians have already shared with us their concerns about repairing or restoring aging port infrastructure, replacing old dwellings, pursuing much-needed housing projects, and supporting already struggling rural businesses. Our communities have also stated that they require floodplain management training from FEMA to advance mitigation strategies.

Our constituents broadly support FEMA's efforts to protect endangered species and safeguard Oregon's extraordinary natural resources, and they want to continue their work with FEMA to ensure effective progress on this integration project. Accordingly, we ask that you extend the public scoping period set to end on May 5, 2023, by another 30 days and provide further technical assistance to our communities.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator