

Resilient Florida Webinar 7/14

- Whitney Gray (00:56) Thanks for joining early birds. We will start in 10 minutes or so.
- Alex Reed (09:44): Thank you all for joining us. We're going to give folks a couple more minutes to log on, and then we'll get started.
- Guest (10:30): Good morning everybody.
- Guest (10:36): Good morning.
- Guest (10:38): Good morning.
- Alex Reed (10:47): We're going to give folks just one more minute, and then we'll get started.
- Alex Reed (11:27): Good morning everyone. Thank you so much for joining us today. My name is *Alex Reed*. I'm the director with DEP's Office of Resilience in Coastal Protection and as most of you are well aware, it was a truly exciting legislative session. We are grateful for the unprecedented support from the governor's office and the legislature in acknowledging the need for a focus on resilience and helping Florida's communities to be prepared for, and adapt to, the effects of sea level rise, climate change, extreme flooding events and climate changes.

DEP is truly honored to be able to be administering the new Resilient Florida program and the tremendous funding support that has been provided for this program. We do know that things are changing daily, and this is a very fluid situation, as we understand the statutory language better and as we understand the federal funding support that is being used for this program, as we understand the need across the state. So, as you know it's a very dynamic situation. Some guidance that you may have heard weeks ago, may be changing, as we understand the need and the guidance better on a daily basis. So please bear with us as we try to understand this program better and better every day.

I think one of the biggest key pieces is knowing what the need is, knowing what the scenarios of need are, and then try to incorporate all of those needs within this new program. So please bear with us. Saying that, to be a successful program moving forward, will need to be a statewide effort, and so we looked to all of you, our coastal communities or inland communities, our resilience practitioners, our engineers, our university experts, we are going to need to move forward together to understand what we know about resilience needs, knowing what we don't know about resilience needs, and then designing adaptation measures to move forward and protect the residents of this state. So, with that, I want to turn it over to staff and our Florida Resilient Coastlines program who have done a phenomenal job in getting us prepared for this presentation today. They'll give you some background on where we see the program going and how we can get started and not lose any time moving forward. So, with that, *Whitney* and your team.

- Emma Huggins (13:59): Good morning everyone. This is *Emma Huggins*. Thank you all for joining today, the participation is wonderful to see. So hopefully everyone had a chance to read through the bill and obviously get a little bit more familiar with the exciting new legislation today. Just a couple of housekeeping things we wanted to go over before getting started with the presentation. As you can see, this webinar is being recorded and we are going to make it available after the presentation this morning. We will send out a follow up email as soon as we can. For those who can't attend, feel free to share that with your colleagues and so forth.

We are just asking if you can, some people have started doing it there in the chat, for everybody to introduce themselves just with their name and organization. This is just so we can understand who was here today and just use that going forward. I have attached the PowerPoint that we're going to be using today into the file section here and I can put it in the

chat as well, just so you can have that and also follow along at your own speed. It should be available to everybody, if you're not seeing it, just let me know and I'll make it available again. We are going to answer any questions that get submitted through the chat. Then towards the end of the presentation we are obviously going to answer a lot of these questions. I'll try and group them together in case there are a lot of similar questions and we'll try to get to as many as possible.

As you can see on the screen that we have a few poll questions. We're just asking that everybody answered those, again just for a little bit of information on our end. As to, you know, what sectors that you represent and whatnot. That about covers it as far as housekeeping goes. As always, feel free to contact us at the Resilience@FloridaDEP.gov email that you can see there on the screen. We're always available to answer questions. So, feel free to do that. Like I said, hopefully we'll get to as many of those questions as we can today. Stopping with that, I won't take any more time. We've got a lot to cover today, so I'll turn it over to *Whitney Gray* to begin her presentation. Thank you all.

- Whitney Gray (16:14): Thank you *Emma*. Thanks everybody for being here this morning. So exciting to share this news with you. As *Emma* mentioned, we have some poll questions that we'd love for you to fill out just so we can get a bit of a hint about who's with us today. And if they're not popping up on the screen, there is a tab at the top where you can pull up the polls. Actually, if you hover over it, it says polls, so if you're not seeing them, you can try looking for them that way.

So, what we're going to do today is review the major sections of Senate Bill 1954, which is now known as section 380.093, Florida statutes. In the House of Representatives, in the Florida House, this legislation was also referred to as Always Ready. So, in case you've heard that name, we are talking about the same thing here. This landmark legislation for the state of Florida, with unprecedented resources made available to work on one of the most pressing issues facing our state. Some of you may have heard, as *Alex* mentioned previously, some of you may have heard me talk about the program over the past several weeks, and as she mentioned, our understanding has shifted and evolved as we go along and get more guidance from the governor and the legislature. So, some of the information you hear today may be different from something you heard previously, and it would be wise to stay up to date. As we learn more, we will share that with you. This is a challenging and fast-moving effort and we really appreciate your patience as we roll out the program.

So, let's dive in. We are, let's see. Here we go. So, the first section that I want to talk about is what's called the Resilient Florida Grant program. This part of the program is modeled on the Florida Resilient Coastlines program that many of you are already familiar with. These grants will be focused on four types of projects: *Comprehensive Plan Amendments*, especially those for compliance with peril of flood, sea level rise, flooding vulnerability assessments, and we'll talk more about that on the next slide. *Adaptation and Resilience Plans* which prioritized needs identified in vulnerability assessments, and *projects that adopt critical assets* to the changing conditions were all experiencing. As you can see from the graphic from the Florida Adaptation Planning Guidebook, we continue to emphasize the planning approach to determining needs. In the past, the FRCP program was...

- Alex Reed (19:01): *Whitney*. We've lost the PowerPoint on the screen.
- Whitney Gray (19:05): Oh, thank you for letting me know that. Sorry about that. How's that?
- Guest (19:18) Perfect, much better.
- Whitney Gray (19:20) Thank you, thank you for that input and I do hear lots of background noise so if everybody could check their mute and make sure that they're muted, that would

be really helpful. Except to let me know when I've gone off the screen, so that's also very helpful. As I was saying in the past, the program was open only to coastal...

- Guest (19:49): *Whitney*, you're on mute.
- Whitney Gray (19:53) Thank you. So, as I mentioned in the past, the program was open only to coastal communities. Now we're including inland as well, all communities across the state. Okay. Hopefully now you can still see and hear me. So, one of the goals of the Resilient Florida program is to ultimately complete a statewide flooding and vulnerability assessment using as much local data as possible. Many coastal local governments have done vulnerability assessments using our grants in the past and other funding sources, but those results are not always necessarily compatible with each other in terms of the data set. So that's why we've added certain required outputs for assessments done using Resilient Florida funding. These are minimum requirements, and grantees can include other sea level rise projections or time frames if they want to, but the required elements must also be present. There's considerable leeway in the statute for an application to provide reasoning for not going along with these requirements, so please check statutory language carefully. However, your help in producing the data that is needed by the governor and the legislature is really appreciated.

And I've lost it again, it seems like folks are somehow able to grab control of the screen so if you could be on the lookout for not doing that, that would be that would be great. Sorry for the interruption. Okay, so that's the vulnerability assessments that are funded by the Resilient Florida Grant program. This is again, why we have these minimum requirements that we're asking for. Here are the four project types for this funding pot. The three planning project types will be funded from the \$20 million that was allocated in the final state budget. The 4th project type will be funded by money from the federal government's COVID relief program. These dollars were specifically allocated to this funding pot and this is a change from what we've said previously. We will talk some more about this project type later in the presentation.

So, as I mentioned on the last slide, the 4th type of project allowed from the planning grant's pot includes projects to adapt critical assets. The statute defines critical assets in Section 1, paragraph 2, so you can see all the different types of critical assets that are included in that definition here. The next section is the statewide flooding and sea level rise data set and vulnerability assessment, but we're going to skip over that for just a moment and continue to focus on the funding opportunities.

In the intense section of the statute, the Legislature acknowledges that Florida faces significant challenges from sea level rise and other sources of flooding across the entire state. They require us to allocate funding in a manner that prioritizes addressing the most significant risks, to take a coordinated approach to addressing flooding impacts, and to conduct a comprehensive statewide flooding and vulnerability sea level rise vulnerability assessment, and to develop a statewide coordinated approach to addressing the risks identified. That coordinated approach is the statewide flooding and sea level rise resilience plan. To prioritize the projects that will be proposed, there will be a scoring system that will be devised during the rulemaking, which is required to start August 1st of this year, but you can see some of the basic characteristics of the sea level flooding and sea level rise resilience plan. It's a three-year rolling plan, the first year of the plan will be made up of projects that have been identified in existing local vulnerability assessments that comply with the requirements elsewhere in the statute. Year 2 updates that plan, and then year three will be the plan will be made up of projects identified in the statewide vulnerability assessment.

You can see the counties and cities, regional resilience entities, water management districts and flood control districts are all eligible applicants.

Additionally, in this program there is a minimum 50% cost share, unless the applicant is a financially disadvantaged small community as defined in statute. The projects have to be identified in a vulnerability assessment that complies with the requirements, as I stated earlier. We will have the tier system to prioritize all the projects. The projects in the plan will be submitted to the legislature by December 1st of this year and prioritized for funding in the fiscal year 22/23. Another part of the program features assistance for regional resilience entities. This third funding pot is intended to help these regional resilience entities provide technical assistance to their member local governments. Regional resilience entities, such as those shown on the screen, but also including several across the straight state that are currently in development, have a proven track record of helping local governments achieve real gains and resilience, and we are excited to partner with them.

The Florida Flood Hub is another part of the program that's established in the statute. The Flood Hub will be tasked with organizing the data needed for the statewide vulnerability assessment, developing sophisticated Florida specific models that will advance our understanding of what the future holds for our state, and will coordinate research efforts. The Hub will establish community-based programs to improve flood monitoring and prediction and will coordinate with DEP, the water management districts, and others to advance statewide resilience efforts. We are honored to have *Dr. Tom Frazier* with us. He's the Dean of the College of Marine Science at USF and our previous state Chief Science Officer for the state of Florida. *Dr. Fraser* can answer any questions that you might have about the role of the Flood Hub at the end of the presentation.

So how do we put this all together? This very colorful and busy slide is an attempt to provide you with all of the aspects of the Resilient Florida program in one handy dandy chart. And you can see the different programs that I've talked about, sort of subprograms the first column there, and sort of the Aqua or green is the Resilient Florida Grant program. We have the statewide flooding vulnerability data set and assessment, the plan, the regional resilience entities, and the Flood Hub are all represented on this. There are activities for each one, outlined from the statute. And the deadlines for all of these things. Some of these deadlines have our deadlines for getting applications in, like for the green column and the yellow column and the orange column, and then some of them are deadlines that we face...

- Guest (28:07): We lost the presentation again.
- Whitney Gray (28:10) Yeah, sorry, thank you very much. Here we go back to the colorful chart. So yeah *David*, if we could put the polls to the side for now, and we'll just keep going with the presentation.

Again, here are the different chunks of the program. Some of the deadlines are internal for us. For example, the statewide flooding vulnerability data state set and assessment. The data set is due this time next year and the final statewide vulnerability assessment is due July 1st, 2023. And of course, will be coordinating closely with the Florida Flood Hub on those two things as well. You can also see the annual funding that's laid out. This is, you know, the information that we have currently. And what we know from the final budget. And so, this is the summary of the whole program.

So how do you get involved with this? Well, we have a project portal where you can add your project proposal by September 1st, 2021. The portal proposals will be screened and we'll figure out which one of those three pots the project would be best suited for, and then we will

get back with you to flush out more of details of your project using some online application forms, online forms. And after we take a look at those and looking at the statutory guidelines, the project will be prioritized, but specifically the projects for the statewide flooding and sea level rise resilience plan will be ranked and submitted to the legislature by December 1st.

- Guest (30:12): I think somebody has taken over the screen again.
- Whitney Gray (30:16): Thank you. Learning so many lessons. So, I throw a lot of information out there and we've had, you know, a couple of glitches in the presentation, so I think at this point I'll ask *Emma* if we have questions in the chat that we can handle.
- Emma Huggins (30:52) Thank you *Whitney*. There are a few questions in the chat already. A few people have been asking about where the files tab is. If you kind of get out of the video screen on the home page, there should be a few tabs. I did just add it again there. Just for anybody who's looking for the presentation and we will be sure the email that out as well after this. Just so everybody has it. A couple of the questions though that we've had earlier on in the presentation. Somebody asked about **how do we submit local vulnerability assessments for the statewide plan?**
- Alex Reed (31:26) A really good question. I'll jump in. This is *Alex* again, so we are working in coordination with the Florida Flood Hub and teams throughout the department to figure out just what our process will be for reaching out to communities, getting all the data and information that they already have so that we can compare that to the new statutory requirements for those minimum standards for vulnerability assessments so that we can then come up with a methodology to, I look at as a mosaic, of getting all those data sets together into one data set so that we can get that statewide picture, not only to see what we have, but also what we don't have and what we have to go out and get. So we will be coming up with a process and protocol to communicate with our communities, get that data and information in, let you know what data and information might need to be provided in a slightly different format for example, because there is some specificity in the statute. So, stay tuned. We will be in touch. And of course, you can always provide information through that Resilience@FloridaDEP.gov email and we can keep track of what you have.

I also wrote down a couple of the questions that I saw in the chat box, so I'll just go ahead and get to them right now. **There was a question about the application process for these grants.** The application process actually started July 1. We opened up the portal. We have by statute to close that portal and receive all the applications by September 1. So, we are in the application process, acceptance process, right now. So, if there is a need out there, we need you guys to let us know the portal has some generic questions that need to be answered, these are the questions that were actually listed in statute as the required information that we need to provide moving forward and say the resilience plan. So, we started off with these basic questions. As we start to prioritize the applications received, we will then be reaching out to get additional information that we may need for contracting or additional prioritization, but at least we're starting with the minimum information that's included in the statutory language.

We also had a question about, **are tribes eligible?** And that is something I don't know off the top of my head, but we will certainly look into that and get that information back to you as soon as possible.

Someone asked about the RIGs, **the RIG grant application**, and that stands for resilience implementation grants. I think we have to look at this and kind of two different lenses, in the Florida Resilient Coastlines program we've already received applications for implementation grants through that portal last year, so we are looking at other implementation projects being submitted for the new program, and we're not sure how those will be handled right this

minute, but we will. We will figure that out in the next in the coming weeks, so that terminology I think we need to use specifically for the Resilient Coastlines program, and so we'll see how those projects will move forward.

Then the last question that I saw before I came on screen was about **a draft manual for the application process**, and we were not able to draft a manual. We are still pretty early on in this process. That's certainly a goal we will have for the program moving forward, but there's enough information in the application portal to get you started. There's a lot of great information as Whitney mentioned in the statute, there's a lot of specificity in the statute that gets us started on the right path, so you can always check that. And then, of course, if you have specific questions you can get with us through the email or phone call and we're happy to talk you through that process. And back to you, *Emma*. If you have some more questions that you saw.

- Emma Huggins (35:24): Sure, yeah there are a few coming in now. We've had a couple of questions regarding some of their **requirements for the vulnerability assessments**, including different sea level rise projections that might have been used in the past, and obviously the requirement that we have to use intermediate high and intermediate low, and if we could just **clarify basically what those requirements are and how that might affect previous and future mobility assessments**.
- Whitney Gray (35:54): Yeah, thanks *Emma*. I'll take that one, so the projects that are identified for the plan, the sea level rise, resilience, flooding and resilience plan. will need to be identified from a vulnerability assessment that is done according to the standards. I think that anything that has any of those aspects or characteristics that are not present, will probably not rank as highly as projects that come from the full vulnerability assessment. But I want to make it clear that you can apply for funding in the planning grants to redo or complete or flush out the vulnerability assessment you may already have, so there is that opportunity as well.
- Emma Huggins (36:48): Great thank you. There are a couple of other questions are regarding **the matching requirements**. If we could just dive into **how that 50% match requirement applies and where it applies**. I think that would answer a few of the questions that we've had regarding that.
- Whitney Gray (37:05): Sure, so the 50% match cost share does apply to the projects that are submitted to go into the plan. There's not a match identified for the projects that are funded out of the first pot that we talked about, the Resilient Florida Grant program, that's mostly the planning grants. Those projects do not have a required 50% cost share.
- Emma Huggins (37:35): Okay, similar question regarding the **ability for the tribes to apply** for some of our funding. There are a couple of **questions about University research**, obviously that might be still TBD, I don't know if you wanted to expand on that at all. The **eligibility requirements and just kind of reclarify**.
- Whitney Gray (37:53): So, I think the intent of the statute was to assist local governments. So, we definitely need to check on the eligibility of the tribes. I would venture to say that universities would not be able to be the applicant. There would be no problem with the university being a, you know a contractor to a local government, but they would not be able to be the applicant.
- Alex Reed (38:23): Right and just to add to that, what you always have to look at, in not only the statutory language, but also the appropriation language and the appropriation language is grants in aid to local governments. So, we really have to look at both of those pieces. For our authority.
- Emma Huggins (38:41): Thank you and I see the chat. I think it has the files which have been made available now for the public. I apologize for that taking a second to be made available, but everybody should have it there. There are a couple of the questions here regarding the vulnerability assessments in subsection three of the bill. It says this is from *Erin Deady*

projects that must be identified in the vulnerability assessments that meet the requirements. How are these identified? And she has an assumption here **the project must be a critical asset included in a map series, must ever be a narrative describing these projects? If we could just clarify basically how I'm going to identify the projects in the...**

- Whitney Gray (39:25): Well, I think it's pretty...thank you *Emma*. I think it's pretty standard for a vulnerability assessment to wind up identifying assets that are at risk, in terms of creating a good grant application, certainly how you described that would be, you know, would make a good grant application, so, you know you kind of got two pieces. You've got a vulnerability assessment, that's the science that shows that a critical asset is indeed at risk. And then you've got the grant application that explains how you got there and how much risk there is and states your case.
- Emma Huggins (40:06): Thank you. I think it might be worth just kind of reclarifying, obviously the former or still current, Florida Resilient Coastline program Grants, and basically where people can find this information. I know there's been a little confusion for some people visiting our website, and **where they might need to go now for these newer applications.**
- Whitney Gray (40:25): Right. So, the one site that you need to know is the project portal and that's the link that you can see on this last slide. I'm going to go ahead and click it. Take a chance that we actually can show the website. So, clicking that link will take you to the Protecting Florida Together site where we have this project proposal right here on the right, Resilient Florida. You can click that link and you go to an online form. That is where you will put in your project information. In fact, we've already had a couple of submissions.

So the Florida Resilient Coastline Grant program is closed, there's no more information about that program. That's a whole separate thing, and that program is not accepting anymore applications. We are working with the applicants from that program for the past year to figure out how we're going to fund that program's projects, and we've been in communication with them. But any new application for resilience dollars is going to come in through this portal right here.

- Emma Huggins (41:42): Thank you. Okay, a couple of questions, a little bit more specific, **what about the assets on State Park lands?** Somebody's asked about that the last one for that topic. There was a question about **are water management districts eligible?** so we could clarify again those entities who are eligible.
- Whitney Gray (42:02): Right, Water management districts are definitely eligible. There's very specific language in the statute about water management districts providing a project list to the program by that same September 1st deadline. So please look at the statutory language.

State Parks, that's a very interesting question that I have been asked before and we're working on the most precise answer. Again, as far as we can tell, the eligible applicants are local governments, so water management districts, flood control districts, regional resilience entities. So, we're still kind of looking into that to see if there's something we are not aware of in there.

- Emma Huggins (42:48): Okay, I'm not sure if we've decided this yet, but there are a few people **asking do we have a PDF available of the application?** So before going into the portal, if people could see that, and maybe plan it out ahead. Perhaps you can make that available...

- Whitney Gray (42:55): We don't have that available on the portal for the portal application just yet, but that's something I can look into. If we get some information that we can provide that, we intend to send a follow up email once the recording for this webinar is available and we'll provide any information like that in that follow up email.
- Emma Huggins (43:26): Thank you. Okay so we have a question here regarding critical assets. **Does the program have any higher priorities for the four categories that we've identified as critical assets?**
- Whitney Gray (43:42): What we have to go on is the statutory language. There's no prioritization in that statutory language for which critical assets are more critical. Perhaps that would be something that we look into in the rulemaking, but because our rulemaking doesn't start until August 1st and we have to have those grant applications in by September 1st, clearly we'll be doing some of this funding in the absence of specific rules. So, all we have to lean on right now is the statute.
- Emma Huggins (44:15): Okay, one of the most asked questions: **is there a maximum and minimum amount for grants?** Obviously, we have the main pots, but I'll let you go ahead with that.
- Whitney Gray (44:27): Yeah, that's a great question and the best thing I can tell you is that, what we're trying to do is understand the needs that are out there, and so we want to hear what your needs are and what time frame you think your project will take. We think there's some flexibility in the funding sources that translates into timeframes and dollar amounts, but we don't fully understand all of that yet, so please just provide us with the best information that you can of what you think your project will cost and how long it will take and we will be sure to work with you to refine those things.
- Emma Huggins (45:12): And a similar more admin type question: **Are communities, county, cities, whoever, able to submit more than one application?**
- Whitney Gray (45:21): There is nothing in the statute that says you can't. Nothing that says you cannot. Let me say that. There's no, there's no guidance about that.
- Alex Reed (45:31): Right and I'll just add a little bit to that, Whitney. You know it makes sense that a community will have a variety of different types of projects that all fall into the resilience category, and it makes sense that the different applications would be submitted for each one of those types of projects.

For example, you may have a wastewater treatment plant, you may have a living shoreline, and you may have a road. So those are all going to be different projects, different timetables, different funding sources, potentially, and they all would need to be addressed through a different application process.

- Emma Huggins (46:08): Excellent, let's see a couple questions about **how we're going to score the applications? Do we have a rubric or any system in place currently?** If you want to expand on that a little bit.
- Whitney Gray (46:19): Yeah, the guidance that we have from the statute is the tier system that is spelled out fairly specifically. That's the level of detail that we have. I think any further level of detail would have to be flushed out during rulemaking, but we're going to use the tier system as it exists right now.
- Emma Huggins (46:42): Okay, quick question about projects which might have multiple phases. If we could just go into that a little bit. One of the questions we got asked is **should we split projects, meaning design interface one and phase two as construction?** If you want to expand on that part of the bill.
- Whitney Gray (46:57): Yeah Alex. I wonder if you would mind taking that one.
- Alex Reed (47:02): Absolutely, and it would be very helpful if you all could split those larger projects into phased approach. It makes sense that you would start with a year of design a year of permitting and then go into construction. And that's really going to help us as we

refine that resilience plan and be able to use the construction dollars for a project that's ready to construct, while another project is designing and permitting.

So anything that you all can do to break those into phases is going to help us with that resilience plan moving forward, because you know, the money that we have is a lot of money, and as you all know, with these large capital improvement projects and resilience projects, it's not a lot of money. So, we need to make sure that we're maximizing our dollar statewide and helping all communities to be able to adapt as they're ready, and as funding is available. That help.

- Emma Huggins (47:52): Thank you. We did touch on this before, but there's just another question here about the funding and basically **how do we find out which communities require matches, and which do not?** So, if we could just touch on that again, that would be helpful for a few people.
- Whitney Gray (48:10): Sure, right, there are guidelines that are laid out in the Statute for what determines whether a Community is considered a small financially disadvantaged community. Excuse me, I said that wrong. Looking at the literature right now. The financially disadvantaged small community, just briefly right here in the Statute, *municipality that has a population of 10,000 or fewer according to the most recent April 1 population estimates posted on the Office of Economic and Demographic Research's website and a per capita annual income that's less than the states per capital annual income as shown in the most recent release from the Bureau of the Census of the United States Department of Commerce that looks at both measurements.*

And then there is a similar definition for *a county population of 50,000 or fewer* and again per capita annual income that's less than the states. So please refer to the Statute for that specific language.

- Emma Huggins (49:14): Thank you. A couple of questions regarding **what type of projects are eligible?** We do have a question about **are projects eligible that assess effectiveness of different methods addressing sea level rise?** Does that fall into one of our pots or...?
- Whitney Gray (49:28): I'm sorry Emma, would you repeat that?
- Emma Huggins (49:32): **Are projects eligible that assess effectiveness of different methods addressing sea level rise?**
- Whitney Gray (49:42): I'm not sure that would fall into one of the project types that we've outlined.
- Emma Huggins (49:53): Thank you, and then moving forward a couple more broader questions about the timelines and how long project periods might be. **Is there an estimate of basically when we're going to set deadlines and whatnot for the different types of projects?**
- Whitney Gray (50:08): Right as far as we know, the federal funds must be obligated by, I believe it's fall of 2024, and must be expended by 26. That is again, one of those pieces of information that's evolving as we learn more about it.
- Emma Huggins (50:31): There are a couple of questions regarding things that are covered under this critical assets definition, which as we mentioned before that did come straight from the statute, so we're limited to what is pretty much on the screen there. I know there's been a couple **questions about if other things could be considered critical assets**, but just to confirm that that list their covers what was in the statute.
- Whitney Gray (50:51): Yes, ma'am.
- Emma Huggins (50:54): Okey dokey, let's see. Somebody just added a link to the statute in the chat by way. So, thank you for doing that.

- Whitney Gray (51:02): The statute number is actually on the screen right now with section 380.093.
- Emma Huggins (51:05): Okay, somebody asked about **it be helpful for a list of those qualifying financially disadvantaged communities**. I don't believe we have a list right now, but the language that Whitney just outlined should cover that. Let me just scroll through again here real quick. **Are there any timelines for planning projects that are funded by state funds?** There might be a question here about the Flood Hub, about USF's role in that, I'm not sure if the...
- Whitney Gray (51:44): Dr. Fraser are you still? Are you still on? Do you want to address the Flood Hub?
- Dr. Tom Fraser (51:48): Yeah, no problem. So again, the Flood Hub it, as Whitney and Alex, both said earlier, you know this is a pretty large in endeavor. There's a lot of partnerships and coordination and collaboration that will take place. But the Flood Hub will really take, you know, a lead role really in helping to organize the existing data needs and just to perform a gap analysis to see what other types of needs that we might need to move forward with things-- Sea level rise projections and some of our modeling efforts.

The ultimate goal is to incorporate some of these projections with other parameters in order to develop models that can be used in the resilience planning efforts. So again, we'll partner quite closely with the DEP as we try to provide a kind of a liaison with various communities in their efforts to take the information that's available that will help guide their assessments and their planning efforts. So that's the bulk of it, I think in the short term.

- Whitney Gray (53:11): Thanks Dr. Fraser, we're really excited about partnering with the Flood Hub. I think the things that will come out of the Hub are just going to be cutting edge and I'm really excited about that aspect of this program. Thank you for being a partner in this.
- Dr. Tom Fraser (53:25): Happy.
- Whitney Gray (53:28): Uh, I noticed a question here that I thought would be great to answer. Okay, slow down [referring to the chat box] **are flooding projects not associated with sea level rise eligible?** and absolutely, so we recognize that rainfall driven flooding is an issue in our inland counties and in fact some riverine flooding, you know, is a combination of rainfall and sea level rise. That's why the program is extended to all counties and cities in the state. So, the answer to your question is yes.

Will guidelines be forthcoming? I've seen a couple of things and suggestions that we put together a manual and instructions. We'll try and get that done, again, we have a very short timeline before these projects need to be submitted. So we're really hoping that the information that you see on the portal will be self-explanatory enough to get you through and please understand that we are available to answer questions and help you through that application process, whenever and whatever you need.

- Alex Reed (54:42): Whitney, I just wanted to jump in really quickly here and say that you know another requirement in the statute is the DEP initiate rulemaking by August 1 to implement this statute. So, a lot of the specifics that you guys are wanting and needing, and that we need as a program to be successful, will come out in that rulemaking effort. So, we hope that you all will be actively involved. We need your input. There's no way for us to know all of the different scenarios that you all are experiencing on the community level, and the resilience practicing level, so we hope that you'll stay involved and we will flesh out a lot of these specific needs and requirements for the program as we move through the rulemaking effort.
- Whitney Gray (55:30): And since we still have 15 minutes or so left in our time together, I think we could open it up for a couple of verbal questions. If you would like to ask a question, if

you could use the hand raise icon and wait to be called on, then we can try and get some of your other burning questions that may be on your mind, out to the rest of us.

One of our questions in the chat, ***who's leading the rule making and how do we get involved?*** We'll be leading the rule making, all the folks right here on this call with you and we will be pulling in other subject matter experts from across the agency so that we make it a really good rulemaking, and we'll also be of course opening that out to the public. If you were involved at all with the slip rule, you'll know that we try really hard to get as much involvement as we can. So, stay tuned for more information about that.

Let's see, I see that *Kathy FitzPatrick* has a hand up *Kathy*? would you like to go off mute and ask your question?

- *Kathy FitzPatrick (56:43)*: Sure, thanks a lot. Good morning, *Whitney* and everyone else involved. I just have one question in the Statute, in a couple of places, it mentions just kind of frozen and erosion in areas that are experiencing impacts. The statute speaks a lot about sea level rise and precipitation driven, but the erosion part just seems to be thrown in a couple times. I wonder if you had any thoughts about ***how that would be applied and how that would be reviewed for projects that are submitted.*** Thank you.
- *Whitney Gray (57:23)*: Thanks, *Kathy*. Yeah, that's a good question. I think you know one of the things to take into consideration is that we would love to see nature-based erosion control, efforts used like living shorelines and things that are particularly helpful in Back Bay areas. Our Beaches program has significant funding and a highly increased funding this year for beachside erosion control projects and so I would highly recommend taking a look at all of the funding programs that are available to deal with that.
- *Whitney Gray (58:00)*: *Cheryl*. *Kathy*, you can put your hand down, and *Cheryl* I see your hand up as well. *Cheryl Hapke*.
- *Cheryl Hapke (58:05)*: Hi *Whitney* and everyone on the phone, so this is an exciting time. I'm speaking with my consulting hat on and a question I had posted but it got overlooked I think is ***will the communities in the state that don't yet have vulnerability assessments, will they be required to put out RFPs that are competitive? You know competed for by various entities that do vulnerability assessments and resilient studies.***
- *Whitney Gray (58:29)*: So for an adaptation project to be included in the funding pot that we call the Plan. Those projects have to have been identified in a vulnerability assessment. So step one for a community that doesn't already have one would be to apply for a planning grant out of the other pot, do that vulnerability assessment, and then use the results of that to drive what project you apply for to be put into the Plan. Remember that we want to focus on projects that really address the assets that are at risk. So, to know what's at risk, we go to have that based on science and data, that's your vulnerability assessment.
- *Cheryl Hapke (59:23)*: Great, thank you.
- *Whitney Gray (59:26)*: You're welcome, uh *Mohammed Dobbies*, you're next.
- *Mohammed Dobbies (59:30)*: I have a quick question and looking forward, with respect to the assessment and academic researchers going alongside this program, as I can see that the focus is on the sea level rise and the scenarios of sea level rise, looking at our assets and how we can be resilient to those.

From where we are in the South and the West Coast of Florida, where the make of our coastline is mostly barrier islands, these are more dynamic, the static or the change in water level will result in a lot of dynamics and morphology as well. The shape of our coast is changing and will change even more with the sea level rise. ***Are these scenarios being included or are we only working with the assumption the water will rise? And our shape of coast and inlets will remain the same as we are now,*** which I think is a very

basic assumption that I don't think will withstand the test of time. So I just want to make sure that the academic research, as well as the state program, is looking more into an incremental approach, that as the sea level rises, we'll have changes in the dynamics of the makeup of our coastline as well.

- Whitney Gray (01:00:53): I could venture to answer it but let me ask *Dr. Fraser* if he would like to answer that question.
- Dr. Tom Fraser (01:01:02): Sure, happy to jump in here again. I think the goal long term is, you know, aside from the sea level rise projections themselves, is to embark upon a modeling effort that takes into account the dynamics of the systems. That include changes to the morphology of the coastline and other things like that. So there will be certainly an opportunity in the activities that are coordinated through the Flood Hub to take those types of things into account.
- Whitney Gray (01:01:35): Thanks *Dr. Fraser*. *Oscar Bode* you're next.
- Oscar Bode (01:01:40): Thank you, excellent session everybody. So, I congratulate you on that. I just have two quick questions. One is we're doing other projects that potentially include ARPA federal funding, since federal funding is part of here, you need to follow in those rules, federal procurement, which is CFR 200. So, whoever, designs can't build, etc. ***Are the guidelines going to be applied for procurement and execution? Those at the federal level? Or do you have to adhere to federal, state and local*** which could impact how you actually execute, and who designs can't actually build the solution. Things of that nature.
- Whitney Gray (01:02:14): I'm going kick that to Alex. Do you have any insights on that?
- Alex Reed (01:02:18): Ah, thanks Whitney. I have no idea, but we are going to find out and we're going to get that full guidance on how we need to move forward with procurement. I know it gets a little tricky when we're taking federal money and passing it through state appropriations. It does change the requirements, but we don't know how significantly and in what areas. So that's going to be first on my list to figure out how we're going to make sure that we are moving off on the wrong path, or the right path, and that we don't end up with issues down the road after the fact. So, we'll let you know on that.
- Oscar Bode (01:02:52): Perfect and the other quick part of my question, to the extent that there is smart city projects that the technology itself, whether it be the fiber and other mechanisms, are actually addressing the resiliency and the flooding of that nature, ***will those types of application or uses of the solution itself be applicable to those projects where maybe the technology or third of it is being used for qualifying use case.*** I don't know if that question makes sense, I just want to make sure that you can actually use other technology funding, or funding to partly covered technology as it relates to these use cases.
- Whitney Gray (01:03:27): Yeah, I think that would actually be considered cost share, if you're leveraging other funding along with Resilient Florida funding, I think that would be allowed.
- Oscar Bode (01:03:39): Thank you.
- Alex Reed (01:03:41): But we do need to talk to our legal counsel and find out just what types of funding can be used as match, because we don't want to say match one state grant with another state grant, and then there's concerns about, you know, might not want to be matching one federal grant with another federal grant. So, you know we'll come out with some guidance on that and that's a very good question.
- Whitney Gray (01:04:05): Thank you, Oscar. I think the next one is *Alice Rankeillor*.
- Alice Rankeillor (01:04:16): Great, thank you. I had a question, I'm from Gainesville we are an inland community and we're scheduled to receive a free flood smart or flood wise communities assessment this fall and I was wondering if you are familiar with that process and if it would qualify as a vulnerability assessment under this program.
- Whitney Gray (01:04:42): So, the required aspects of the vulnerability assessments really have to do with sea level rise projections and time horizons. Those are the biggies. So, since Gainesville is in an inland area, and go Gators by the way, sea level rise is not an issue. So, you would not need to worry about that and as far as you looking at the time horizons that

we've recommended, excuse me, I think you'd be in good shape. I will say that again these criteria address projects that would be included in the Plan, which is on our chart. The yellow orange column.

- Alice Rankeillor (01:05:37): Alright, thank you.
- Whitney Gray (01:05:40): I think next on our list is *Cynthia Clark* and we have just about four minutes left *Cynthia*.
- Cynthia Clark (01:05:51): Oh, so my question is this, when I thought I understood that at some point you will be standardizing the model to use to prepare vulnerability analysis. We did one, and I'm talking from Apalachicola in 2017. **Would we be able to update our vulnerability analysis with the new model information?** Include maybe projects that come about as a result of only with this funding.
- Whitney Gray (01:06:24): So if I understand you correctly, I think you're talking about the sea level rise projections that we're asking for in the time horizons, and yes, you could apply for funding to update your vulnerability assessment.
- Cynthia Clark (01:06:50): **That particular agreed upon set of models has not been identified yet, or it has?**
- Whitney Gray (01:06:57): No, the requirements are for to analyze your vulnerability against 2 sea level rise projections that come from NOAA's 2017 sea level rise guidance, and that's the intermediate low and the intermediate high sea level rise scenarios. Those are existing.
- Cynthia Clark (01:07:16): Okay, thank you.
- Whitney Gray (01:07:22): Okay, we have two minutes left. My friend *Dr. Sheng* is next on the list. *Peter* you have two minutes.
- Dr. Peter Sheng (01:07:30): Okay, I have a question. I understand **we are not allowed to apply directly for these grants, but we might act as a consultant to local counties and cities, correct?**
- Whitney Gray (01:07:48): Correct.
- Dr. Peter Sheng (01:07:54): Okay, and then the next question I have is for Tom, Tom Frazier, and Tom is a good friend of mine. So, my question is, you know many Florida universities have extensive experience in dealing with sea level rise and storm surge and coastal flooding, including precipitation. **How can we help you?** The USF Flood Hub in this process. I know this is a tremendous undertaking, trying to take care of these assessments and adaptation planning, critical infrastructure, and assessment for the entire state of Florida. It's a tremendous undertaking. With the faculty you have USF, **do you think you need outside help from us? Or you think you've got it all?**
- Dr. Tom Fraser (01:08:40): Okay, certainly. Hey Peter, it's good to hear your voice. I'd first say that again as I said in the earlier comments, you know this is a tremendous effort and it's going to include a lot of different people. We've got a tremendous amount of capacity not only in the agencies but across the State University system, as well as in in our local governments, and so part of the Flood Hub activities, you know, will be to provide that science, right, that will help us move forward and refine, for example, the projections, and that help guide some of the other things, and we'll take advantage of folks, for example, who have that expertise in the form of working groups to again apply that science to different spatial scales, you know at the level of local levels, regional levels, as well as state levels.

But we'll also have working groups that we put together, and that's the intent anyways, Peter, that deal with the modeling itself, right, and as you rightly point out, there are people all across the state who have various expertise, we'll identify existing models and we'll try to gather information from disparate data sources to create more comprehensive models, and so people like you, that have that expertise, we will certainly be reaching out to.

- Dr. Peter Sheng (01:10:06): Okay. **So, should we be involved in this process, in this grant application process,** or what?

- Dr. Tom Fraser (01:10:19): The Flood Hub itself isn't doing the grants itself, it's providing the scientific support and the professional support needed to kind of underpin a lot of the work that *Whitney* and *Alex* talked about as part of the broader resilience effort.
- Dr. Peter Sheng (01:10:38): So maybe we need we need...?
- Whitney Gray (01:10:41): Hey *Peter*? yeah, I apologize for interrupting, but we've run over time and I'm sure that *Tom* would be happy to talk with you further. And *Tom*, thanks for taking that question.
- Dr. Peter Sheng (01:10:50): Alright, thanks, thank you *Whitney*.
- Whitney Gray (01:10:53): Of course. Thank you all. I really appreciate you being here and your interest in this. I know that a lot of you helped each other out in the chat, providing links and stuff, so thank you for that in the next few days we will be sending out a follow up email with a link to the recording for this webinar, as well as the PDF of the presentation. If you have any other questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with myself or, either through my email, or through the Resilience@FloridaDEP.gov email. Thanks again and we're looking forward to working with all of you and more in the upcoming months on this very exciting program. And don't forget August 4th is the next Coastal Resilience Forum where we will be unveiling the SLIP Tool, which you've been anxiously awaiting seeing, I'm sure. So, have a great rest of your day everybody and thanks again.