



**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER JBE 2018 - 16**

Louisiana Watershed-Based Floodplain Management Coordination

WHEREAS, Louisiana is regularly impacted by flooding throughout the state, and extreme water events have increased in both frequency and magnitude;

WHEREAS, the State of Louisiana is positioned to be a national leader in watershed-based floodplain management, working through partnerships among state agencies that coordinate and align the actions and objectives of state and local governments, federal agencies, institutions of higher education, and private and not-for-profit organizations;

WHEREAS, the State of Louisiana is committed to increasing community and regional resilience to flooding by managing, mitigating and adapting to future flood risk;

WHEREAS, communities are hydraulically and hydrologically connected within the bounds of a watershed, and decisions made in one portion of a watershed will impact floodplains in other portions of the same watershed;

WHEREAS, flooding after a rain event is not only related to the amount and intensity of rainfall received, but is also closely tied to land use, as well as policy and infrastructure decisions;

WHEREAS, multiple programs designed to mitigate and reduce flood risk are managed in different state agencies, such as the Hazard Mitigation Assistance administered by GOHSEP, the Community Development Block Grant Program administered by OCD, the statewide Flood Control Program and the National Flood Insurance Program administered by DOTD, and the Flood Risk and Resilience Program administered by CPRA;

WHEREAS, currently floodplains are impacted by actions and decisions made by a wide variety of people, laws, and regulatory bodies, including private landowners, municipalities, parish leaders, zoning laws, building codes, statewide regulations, and federal requirements. Existing practices across varying levels of government do not currently provide for the comprehensive floodplain management that is necessary to properly address drainage issues as land is developed; and

WHEREAS, the increasing frequency and extent of flood events demands heightened levels of coordination, information sharing, and response among state agencies and other stakeholders in order to more closely align resources and programs designed to protect communities from flooding and manage floodplains and watersheds effectively.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN BEL EDWARDS, Governor of the State of Louisiana, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

SECTION 1: The development and implementation of a statewide, watershed-based floodplain management program through close collaboration and coordination of the Secretaries and Executive Directors of the Office of Community Development (OCD), the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), the Coastal

Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) operating as the Council on Watershed Management.

SECTION 2: The members of the Council will select a Chairman and Co-Chairman from among the five core members on an annual basis.

SECTION 3: The goals of this Council include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Promoting a unified effort, built on a solid foundation of scientific and engineering principles, to address flooding issues across the state.
- B. Identifying and working with or seeking input from additional local, state and federal agencies and other stakeholders including, but not limited to, The Water Institute of the Gulf (TWIG) and other not-for-profit research institutions, the Louisiana State University Center for River Studies (LSU CRS) and other university research institutions, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and other state agencies, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and other federal agencies, drainage or levee boards and other local districts, and private sector experts to develop, implement, and evaluate the necessary components of a Louisiana Watershed-based Floodplain Management Program.
- C. Expanding, developing and using in-state skill, knowledge, technology and talent to develop and implement the program, promoting Louisiana resources through collaboration, communication, and cooperation among governmental, non-governmental, for-profit, non-profit and university entities.
- D. Increasing state and local resilience to flooding by working to improve response to flooding and reduce the instances, damages, and amount of time needed to recover from flooding.
- E. Creating a path for the state and its various jurisdictions and political subdivisions to coordinate at a statewide and watershed level to maximize flood risk reduction in coordination with the natural and beneficial functions of the watershed and its floodplains, and to consistently manage floodplains using contextually appropriate best practices.
- F. Working within the interdependencies of our communities, infrastructure, political jurisdictions and natural environment to increase Louisiana's resilience and its ability to adapt and thrive.
- G. Promoting actions, including legislative, administrative, and regulatory, where appropriate, to enhance watershed and floodplain management in Louisiana.
- H. Identifying, prioritizing, acquiring and establishing funding mechanisms to enhance the Louisiana Watershed-based Floodplain Management Program.
- I. Facilitating watershed-based floodplain management by working to create watershed-bounded entities across the state.
- J. Developing an approach to watershed-based floodplain management that is recognized as a model for others nationally and internationally.

SECTION 4: This Order is effective upon signature and shall continue in effect until amended, modified, terminated, or rescinded by the Governor, or terminated by operation of law.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana, at the Capitol, in the City of Baton Rouge, on this 29th day of May, 2018.

GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

**ATTEST BY THE
SECRETARY OF STATE**

SECRETARY OF STATE