

## **FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING AGENDA**

**LOCATION:** Franklin County Superior Courtroom

**DATE AND TIME:** September 17, 2024 @ 3:30 P.M.

**The Franklin County Commissioners' meetings are open to the public.** This meeting is also available virtually via Video Conferencing, Cloud Phone, Webinars, Chat, Virtual Events | Zoom. Here is the meeting ID# 492 510 0482 passcode 030621.

**APPOINTMENTS: None**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1. Clerk's Report**
- 2. Treasurer's Report**
- 3. Open UT Road Bids**
- 4. Parttime Probate Clerk**
- 5. Policy review:**
  - a. Limited Access Policy**
  - b. Policy on Artificial Intelligence Usage**
- 6. Authorize EMA to apply for grant**
- 7. Discuss authorizing an official for the USDA Award documents**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

**WARRANTS: County AP, TIF, ARPA, UT, and Payroll**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting Packets are available to view by clicking on the link below:

[Agendas & Minutes - Franklin County, Maine \(franklincountymaine.gov\)](https://www.franklincountymaine.gov)

**County Commissioner's Meeting  
Agenda Discussion and Analysis  
September 17, 2024**

**Appointments:** None at this time.

**Agenda Item: Clerk's Report**

**Comments:** Minutes from the September 3, 2024, meeting

- We are obtaining quotes for Builders risk insurance for the EOC Building project.
- The Municipal taxes percentage pie chart is in the flower folder as requested.
- USDA/ Natural Resource Conservation Service sent a letter to the commissioners thank them for the letter of intent for the watershed emergency grant for the Plog homestead.
- Gray Owen House is requesting a donation of \$300. There is a letter in the flower folder
- Charter Communication has informed the commissioners of a rebranding of the northeast region. Please see in the flower folder
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> requisition document is in the flower folder for Commissioner Harvell to sign the ARPA warrant has a check in the amount of \$132,244.86 to JF Scott.

**Recommended:** Motion to approve and sign the September 3, 2024, Minutes.

**Treasurer's Report:** Included in Commissioners Packet

**Recommendation:**

**Open UT Road Bids:**

**Comments:** We have 2 Road bids that are ready to be opened one for shoulder grading of reeds mill road and West Freeman Road Ditching.

**3. Parttime Probate Clerk**

**Comments:** The interviews for the part-time Probate position were done on September 5<sup>th</sup> and the panel of interviewers agreed that the best hire was Heidi Knight. She was sent a conditional offer pending Commissioner approval. She has agreed to the offer, and

we are now requesting Commissioner approve Heidi Knight's hire for September 25<sup>th</sup> start date.

**Recommendation: Motion:** Authorize hiring Heidi Knight as a part time Probate Clerk.

#### **4. Limited Access Policy**

**Comments:** I attended the Maine Town City County Manager Association Conference where I attended a 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment Audit Training. This is where YouTubers will come to your office or place of work and go through offices stating that it is the people's office. To restrict access to the public in certain areas/forums the governing board must place signage and have a policy stating what areas or forum of the building are not for the public to gain access without permission.

**Recommendation: Motion:** Approve the Limited Public Assess Policy for Franklin County Buildings.

#### **5. Policy on Artificial Intelligence Usage**

**Comments:** IT Department went to a conference this Spring and has brought back this policy. The conference was on AI use in government and the risks of using free AI, and then they can use that data entered to better their model. Please review the policy enclosed and give feedback or please approve.

**Motion: approve a version of the AI Usage Policy**

**Recommendation: Motion:**

#### **6. Authorize EMA to apply grant**

**Comments:** Franklin County Emergency Management Agency seeks approval to apply for funding through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to fund the installation of two river gauges. This project aims to improve flood monitoring and response capabilities within

Franklin County. These Gauges will give the Weather Service accurate information that will allow the County to be more prepared to funnel resources to the necessary areas of risk. There is a match need for this grant in the amount of \$37,850 for the two river gauges. I believe we can use TIF funds to cover up to 50% of the match as the UT represent 50% of the land in Franklin County.

**Recommendation: Motion:** authorize EMA to apply for the grant and direct EMA to discuss with the Towns to cover the remainder of the match.

# Limited Public Access Policy

**Effective Date:** September 17, 2024

**Reviewed Date:** [Insert Date]

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## 1. Purpose

This policy aims to regulate public access to certain areas, resources, or information within Franklin County to ensure security, privacy, and operational efficiency.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, visitors, and any other external parties seeking access to restricted areas and sensitive information at Franklin County.

## 3. Definitions

- **Restricted Areas:** Locations within Franklin County where access is limited to authorized individuals only.
- **Sensitive Information:** Data or documents classified as confidential or proprietary, which are restricted from public access.

## 4. Access Restrictions

- **Physical Access:** Restricted, nonpublic areas include storage rooms, beyond the threshold of departments with service windows, file cabinets and vaults, IT server room, private offices, judge's chambers, staff kitchen, courtroom, and jury room.
- **Information Access:** Sensitive information includes employee records and client records.

## 5. Authorization Process

- **Request for Access:** Requests for access to restricted areas or sensitive information must be submitted to the County Administrator by written request.
- **Approval Criteria:** Access is granted based on necessity, clearance level, and relevance to the requester's role or purpose.

## 6. Procedures

- **Visitor Protocol:** All visitors must access the building through one of the three main doors of the building and go to the appropriate department for public services.
- **Monitoring:** Restricted areas are monitored by surveillance cameras to ensure compliance with access protocols.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Management:** Responsible for overseeing the implementation and enforcement of this policy.
- **Staff:** Required to enforce access restrictions, ensure compliance, and assist with access requests.
- **Public:** Must follow the established procedures for requesting access and adhere to access restrictions.

## 8. Compliance and Enforcement

- **Compliance:** All individuals must comply with the provisions of this policy.
- **Enforcement:** Violations of this policy may result in revocation of access privileges, disciplinary action, and legal consequences as appropriate.

## 9. Review and Updates

- **Review Schedule:** This policy will be reviewed annually.
- **Updates:** Any updates to the policy will be communicated to all relevant parties, posted on the county website, and readily available upon request through the Commissioner's Office.

## 10. Communication

- **Availability:** This policy is available to all employees and the public through the county's website and Commissioner's Office.
- **Training:** Employees will receive training on this policy as part of their onboarding and through periodic refresher courses.

## 11. Contact Information

For questions or further information regarding this policy, please contact:

- **Name/Position:** Amy Bernard, County Administrator
- **Phone:** 207-778-6614
- **Email:** [abernard@franklincountymaine.gov](mailto:abernard@franklincountymaine.gov)

# **Policy on Artificial Intelligence Usage**

## **Franklin County**

### **Objective**

Establish a framework for the secure and responsible implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in Franklin County. The objectives are to safeguard sensitive information, promote transparency, and foster public trust.

### **Purpose**

Set guidelines for the use of AI in Franklin County to minimize risks, protect privacy, and ensure ethical AI practices within local government operations.

### **Definitions**

1. **Generative AI:** AI systems that automatically process data and information in ways that resemble intelligent human behavior, producing uncontrolled results. These include large language models, image generators, music composers, and similar technologies.
2. **AI Systems:** Software or hardware that utilizes AI techniques such as machine learning, deep learning, and neural networks.

### **Policy Guidelines**

#### **1. Risk Assessment and Approval Process**

- All Franklin County agencies planning to adopt AI systems must undergo a comprehensive risk assessment.
- Exceptions or pilot projects involving AI require approval from the County's IT Department.
- The IT Department will evaluate proposed AI implementations for security, privacy, and ethical considerations.

#### **2. Security and Privacy Considerations**

- Generative AI systems can lack transparency, leading to data privacy and security concerns.
- Their use may result in unintentional collection or dissemination of business or personal data.
- Security vulnerabilities can exist, such as generating misinformation, spreading malware, or executing phishing techniques.

### **3. Human-Centered Approach**

- Franklin County will emphasize human judgment in critical decisions related to local government operations.
- AI should be used to augment human expertise, not replace it.

### **Compliance**

1. All Franklin County agencies must comply with this policy.
2. The IT Department is responsible for overseeing compliance with AI-related decisions.

### **Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains in line with evolving AI regulations and industry best practices.



## **Proposal for Funding: Installation of River Gauges in Franklin County**

**Objective:** Franklin County Emergency Management Agency seeks approval to apply for funding through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to fund the installation of two river gauges. This project aims to improve flood monitoring and response capabilities within Franklin County.

### **Project Cost and Funding Structure:**

- **Total Project Cost:** \$151,400
  - **HMGP Reimbursement (75%):** \$113,550
  - **County's Financial Responsibility (25%):** \$37,850

### **Grant Duration:**

- **Three Years**, including installation and two years of maintenance

**Funding Request:** Given the substantial land mass and unique challenges of the Unorganized Territories in Franklin County, we are requesting a 50% contribution of the required 25% local match from the TIF, amounting to \$18,925. The remaining \$18,925 will be sought from individual towns within Franklin County to fulfill the local match obligation.

### **Justification for Focus on Unorganized Territories:**

1. **Geographic Scope:** The Unorganized Territories constitute a significant portion of Franklin County's land area, with limited infrastructure and resources for flood monitoring. The installation of river gauges in these areas will address the unique challenges posed by their size and remoteness.
2. **Enhanced Data Accessibility:** The gauges will provide critical data on river levels in areas that are otherwise less monitored, improving flood prediction and response capabilities in these vast regions.
3. **Improved Emergency Response:** With collection of real-time flood data, the gauges will enhance the effectiveness of emergency response and resource deployment, ensuring that remote areas are adequately supported during flood events.
4. **Increased Resilience:** Access to accurate flood data will enable better preparedness and risk management in the Unorganized Territories, contributing to overall county resilience against flooding.

## *U.S. Geological Survey Proposal*

### **Project Staffing, Costs, and Funding**

Work required to meet the objectives will be carried out by hydrologic technicians, a data base specialist, and a supervisory hydrologic technician from the USGS. These USGS staff will collaborate, as needed, with the cooperator. Project costs are summarized in Table 1. After the initial agreement is completed, future agreements can be established for continued operation and maintenance.

### **References:**

- Rantz, S.E. and others, 1982a, Measurement and computation of streamflow: Volume 1. Measurement of stage and discharge: U.S. Geological Survey Water-Supply Paper 2175, 284 p.
- Rantz, S.E. and others, 1982b, Measurement and computation of streamflow: Volume 2. Computation of discharge: U.S. Geological Survey Water-Supply Paper 2175, 373 p.
- Sauer, V.B. and D.P. Turnipseed, 2010, Stage measurement at gaging stations: U.S. Geological Survey Techniques and Methods book 3, chap. A7, 45 p. <http://pubs.usgs.gov/tm/tm3-a7/>
- Turnipseed, D.P. and V.B. Sauer, 2010, Discharge measurements at gaging stations: U.S. Geological Survey Techniques and Methods book 3, chap. A8, 87 p. <http://pubs.usgs.gov/tm/tm3-a8/>

### **For further information contact:**

Nick Stasulis, [nstasuli@usgs.gov](mailto:nstasuli@usgs.gov) or 207-626-6612

Example of proposed gaging installation

## U.S. Geological Survey Proposal

data are publicly accessible through <http://water.usgs.gov>. Metadata are available for all published USGS data.

### Project Timeline and Cost

Data collection activities would be initiated in June 2024, assuming proper agreement is reached between the USGS and the cooperator and other necessary property permissions/permits are in place. Additionally, timelines are dependent on weather conditions and flow conditions. Operation and maintenance costs for Fiscal Year 24 are prorated as data is only collected for four months (Table 1). The Federal Fiscal year operates October through September.

USGS will own and operate all deployed streamgaging equipment. USGS will provide standard equipment for collecting, storing, and broadcasting streamgage data in near real-time for the duration of the program (Rantz and others 1982a, 1982b, Levesque and Oberg, 2012).

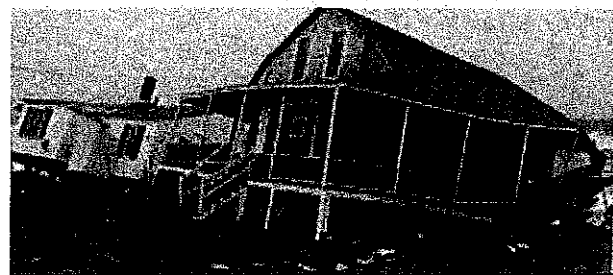
**Table 1.** Summary of total cost for streamflow gaging station [FY, Federal fiscal year].

Element	FY25	FY26	FY27
Installation of streamgage- salary for database config, field install, initial site visits	\$8,250		
Installation of streamgage- equipment for water level monitoring and transmission of data	\$15,200		
Installation of streamgage- supplies for gage structure, site preparation	\$850		
Installation of streamgage- supplies for solar power/battery	\$700		
Annual Operation and maintenance (Salaries, equipment, supplies, site visits, publication)	\$16,400	\$16,900	\$17,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$41,400</b>	<b>\$16,900</b>	<b>\$17,400</b>

**Table 2.** Project timeline for streamflow gaging station.

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Months 9-36
Site Reconnaissance/Property Permissions/Database config	X*	X*						
Streamgage Installation	X*	X*	X*					
Initial Discharge Measurements		X	X	X	X			
Routine Collection and Publication of Streamflow Data					X	X	X	X

\*If the funding agreement is finalized in the winter months, installation may not be possible until the spring (when the ground thaws). In this case, Month 1 would begin in the spring.



**FEMA**

## **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**

### **What is HMGP?**

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), also known as the 404 Program, provides funding to rebuild in a way that reduces, or mitigates, future natural disaster losses in their communities. The program is authorized by Section 404 of the Stafford Act.

### **How Does HMGP Funding Work?**

HMGP funding is authorized with a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration. Disaster funding is managed by FEMA Public Assistance, also known as the 406 Program. HMGP receives 15% of funding made available and is based on the Federal assistance expended .

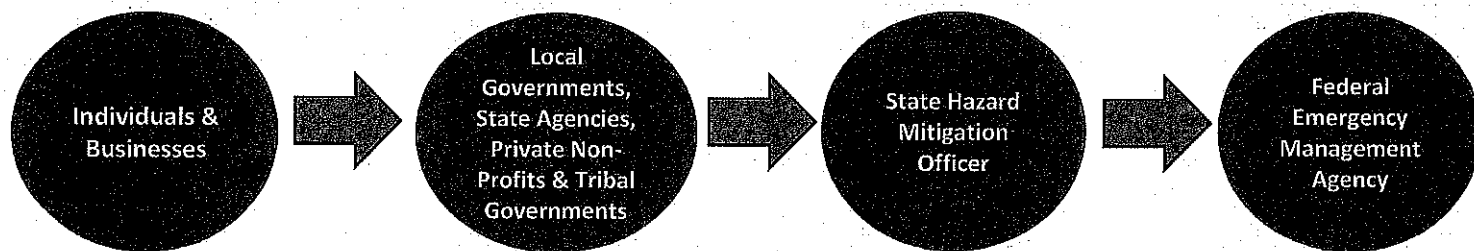
### **What Can HMGP Help Fund?**

**Building Code Activities**  
**Promoting Partnerships**  
**Advance Assistance, also known as Project Scoping**  
**Hazard Mitigation Plans**  
**Managements Costs**  
**Mitigation Planning & Planning Related Activities**  
**Hazard Mitigation Projects** *(Must have FEMA Benefit Cost Analysis of 1.0 or higher)*

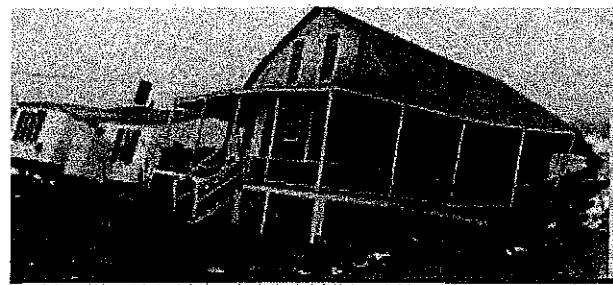
### **Who is Eligible to Apply?**

Those eligible to apply are state agencies, federally recognized tribes, local governments, private non-profit organizations, and municipalities.

HMGP Funding is only available to those with a current FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP).

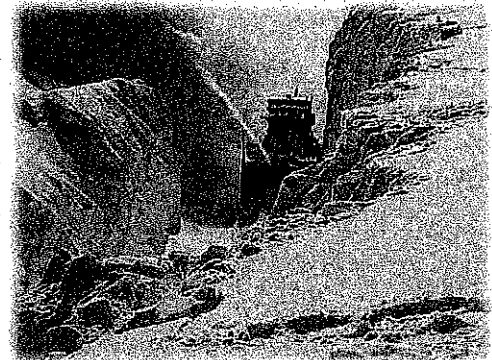
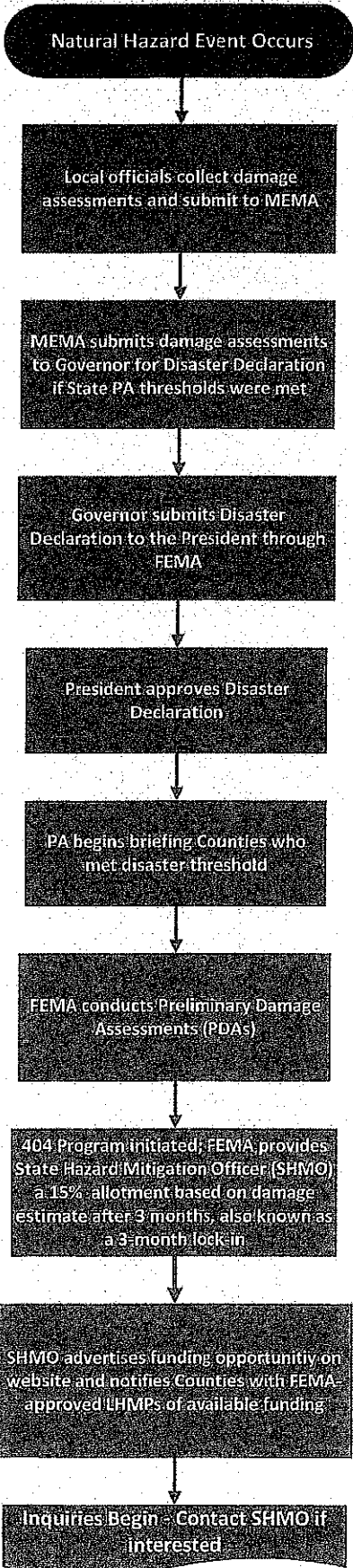


**Please Contact Heather Dumais, State Hazard Mitigation Officer,  
[Heather.Dumais@maine.gov](mailto:Heather.Dumais@maine.gov) or (207) 441-9510 with any questions or project inquiries.**



**FEMA**

## HMGP Process



406 Program	VS	404 Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managed by FEMA Mitigation Public Assistance Program</li> <li>Provides financial assistance to eligible applicants for costs incurred for response and recovery activities as a result of a declared emergency/disaster</li> <li>Only covers eligible expenses/measurements incurred from emergency protective measures to restoring infrastructure to pre-storm conditions</li> <li>Limited to declared Counties that met damage eligibility threshold</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managed by FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance and the State Hazard Mitigation Officer</li> <li>Receives up to 15% of public assistance funding spent</li> <li>Funding can be used to mitigate future natural hazards, and is not limited to pre-storm conditions</li> <li>Must have a FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)</li> <li>Not limited to those Counties affected by the disaster</li> </ul>

\*404 Program will receive a 6, 9 & 12-month lock-in estimate, based on PA funding spent. Estimates can change per lock-in. SHMO will monitor closely and notify subapplicant of any changes.



## Streamflow monitoring of Sandy River

U.S. Geological Survey, New England Water Science Center  
Maine Office – August 2024

### Background and Objectives

The purpose of this proposed work plan is to quantify streamflow in Sandy River by installing and maintaining a streamflow monitoring station at the ME-4 bridge north of Farmington, Maine. This location was previously monitored by the USGS from 1910-1915 as 01047500 Sandy River near Farmington, Maine. Specific objectives of the proposed project are:

1. Install and operate a streamflow monitoring station on Sandy River. Station will provide real-time streamflow data via the Water Data for the Nation (WDN) platform. Data will be collected on a 15-minute interval and transmitted hourly via satellite.
2. Quality-assure, finalize, and publish streamflow data. Publication of data will be on-line only through WDN.
3. Maintain a publicly accessible database of collected streamflow data via the USGS WDN platform.

### Approach

The streamgage will provide near real-time streamflow information to interested parties, which can be utilized for monitoring high and low flow conditions, trend analysis, and model development/validation, among other uses.

*Objective 1. Install and operate a streamflow monitoring station. Station will provide real-time streamflow data via the USGS Water Data for the Nation platform. Data will be collected on a 15-minute interval and transmitted hourly via satellite.*

The general approach for proposed data collection consists of 1) selecting a suitable site for monitoring streamflow, 2) securing permissions and installation of the stations, 3) station operation, maintenance, and display of real-time streamflow data on the USGS webpage, and 4) quality assuring and finalizing all data collected (Objective 2).

## *U.S. Geological Survey Proposal*

A streamflow monitoring station will be installed in Month 1 or 2 (see full project schedule below), if weather conditions allow. USGS staff will conduct the installation and would also secure permissions from landowners for placement of the streamgage, as needed. Permission may require a lease arrangement between the landowner and USGS, and USGS would be responsible for these costs. The actual start date of installation and operation may be dependent on the delivery of the monitoring equipment from suppliers, obtaining necessary property permission and permits, and finalization of an agreement between USGS and the cooperator. If the agreement is finalized in the winter months, installation will be delayed until the ground thaws in the spring.

Given the remote nature of the site, field reconnaissance will be an important part of the installation effort. This will ensure the gage is in an area that provides reasonable access through the year, collects the highest quality data possible and doesn't interfere with recreational activities in the area. Any potential locations will be discussed with the cooperator.

During installation, minimal ground disturbance will be needed. For the gage structure, two holes will be needed. Each will be approximately 6 inches in diameter and 4 ft deep. A trench will also be needed, from the gage structure to the riverbank. This trench will be approximately 1 ft deep and 8 inches wide. When working near the river's edge, proper silt fencing will be used and grass will be planted on any disturbed soil.

*Objective 2. Quality-assure, finalize, and publish streamflow data. Publication of data will be on-line only through WDN.*

Continuous record streamflow-gaging stations would be operated using protocols described in Rantz and others (1982a). Stage will be recorded and measured using a data collection platform (DCP) and stage sensors at a 15-minute interval. Stage readings will be related to measurements of streamflow to obtain a stage-streamflow relation for computing continuous streamflow. Standard shelters and equipment will be installed by the USGS for the duration of the project. Standard stage sensing equipment will have an accuracy of at least +/- .01 ft and will be recorded to .01 ft. The station will be equipped with GOES satellite telemetry equipment for transmission of stream stage data in real-time at 1-hour intervals to the USGS Water Data for the Nation website at:

<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/me/nwis/current/?type=flow>. The real-time data will allow rapid identification and remedy of any problems at the site, in initiating discharge measurement visits by the USGS, and make the data readily available to other agencies and interests.

Streamgage operation and maintenance is typically performed 6-10 times per year at each station. Service visits are made as soon as possible when equipment or stations are found inoperable or

## *U.S. Geological Survey Proposal*

in need of adjustment. Standard procedures for streamflow data collection within the USGS are included within reports by Sauer and Turnipseed (2010), Turnipseed and Sauer (2010), and Rantz and others (1982a, 1982b). The USGS maintains a comprehensive list of data collection procedures within individual Techniques of Water Resources Investigations publications at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/>.

The USGS practices extensive quality assurance of its data and records. Data and records are reviewed and finalized throughout the year. In addition, every 3 years, the data collection and technical activities in each office are checked and reviewed by an external USGS team from outside of that office. This review team includes regional and national representatives. QA/QC plans are established locally at each USGS office based on national protocols.

***Objective 3.** Maintain a publicly accessible database of collected streamflow data via the USGS WDN platform.* USGS data will be archived digitally at <http://water.usgs.gov/nwis/>. All published USGS data will be publicly accessible through <http://water.usgs.gov>. Metadata will be available for all published USGS data. If estimates for missing streamflow data are required, these data will be flagged accordingly and archived and/or estimated and stored within the national database at <http://water.usgs.gov/nwis>. All raw (original) data also are archived.

### **Relevance and Benefits**

The streamflow monitoring station would provide critical data on the hydrologic conditions of Sandy River. In addition, collection and dissemination of the information will: (1) meet the monitoring needs for interested parties at the specific location, (2) meet the broad USGS goal of furnishing data needed by other Federal, state, and local agencies and (3) allow for increased awareness of streamflow by emergency managers, users, and the public in general.

### **Products**

The USGS will electronically publish finalized gage-height and streamflow (discharge) values from the streamgaging station. Real-time gage-height and streamflow data will be made available on the USGS website soon after station operation is initiated. Final, approved data would be made available within approximately 6 months following data collection or once the stage-discharge relations for the streamgage is adequately established, which may take the entire first year. USGS data are archived digitally at <http://water.usgs.gov/nwis/>. All raw (original) data also are archived. All published USGS



*U.S. Geological Survey Proposal*



# Franklin County Commissioners Meeting

September 17, 2024

## Unorganized Territory Road Supervisor Report

### Outstanding Items

- Active/Open items requiring contractor action/follow-up – *Fenwick Construction, LLC has been notified – All known emergency items have been identified and prioritized for schedule.*
- Reeds Mills Road Shoulder gravel and grading and West Feeman Road Invitation to Bid – *Posted with bids due September 13, 2024.*
- Beech Hill Culvert Replacement – *Communicating with LUPC, permitting not required*
- Reeds Mills Roads Speed Limit sign locations – *Who installs?*
- ROW widths for CMP, Washington and Perkins – *Use assumed width???*
- Fall Maintenance Grading – *GCA to identify schedule and call with update.*

### Budget/Cost Items

- Follow-up with Snowmobile Club (Dana) regarding County funding, review trail projects completed

### Miscellaneous Items

- Franklin County Driveway Entrance Permit – Researching typical MDOT criteria.
- Road Commissioner/Supervisor training and seminars
- Best Practices and Procedures for bridge cleaning and maintenance

### Ongoing Items

- Constituent follow-up
- Shoulder gravel/grading
- Perched undersized culvert
- Ditching and culvert cleaning

### Vehicle Maintenance

- Service up to date
- New tires Fall 2024?

## **Proposal for Funding: Installation of River Gauges in Franklin County**

**Objective:** Franklin County Emergency Management Agency seeks approval to apply for funding through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to fund the installation of two river gauges. This project aims to improve flood monitoring and response capabilities within Franklin County.

### **Project Cost and Funding Structure:**

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### **Grant Duration:**

- **Three Years**, including installation and two years of maintenance

**Funding Request:** Given the substantial land mass and unique challenges of the Unorganized Territories in Franklin County, we are requesting a 50% contribution of the required 25% local match from the TIF, amounting to \$18,925. The remaining \$18,925 will be sought from individual towns within Franklin County to fulfill the local match obligation.

### **Justification for Focus on Unorganized Territories:**

1. **Geographic Scope:** The Unorganized Territories constitute a significant portion of Franklin County's land area, with limited infrastructure and resources for flood monitoring. The installation of river gauges in these areas will address the unique challenges posed by their size and remoteness.
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