



LOUISIANA WATERSHED INITIATIVE

working together for sustainability and resilience

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La. Hosts Interstate Summit on Watershed Management

Ark., Miss., Texas officials to discuss management of shared watersheds

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative will host flood- and water-management representatives from Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas at the inaugural Interstate Summit from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on June 12 at the Bossier Civic Center in Bossier City. The meeting is open to the public.

Participants include a wide range of experts in flood risk, water management, emergency response, disaster recovery, resilience, habitat preservation and environmental quality. They will discuss potential coordination with Louisiana's new watershed approach to reducing risks of flood damage. The approach is organized along regional watersheds, several of which are shared with neighboring states.

"Interstate cooperation is absolutely critical to a true watershed strategy," Pat Forbes, executive director of the Office of Community Development, said. "We want to let

neighboring states know what we're doing, learn about their water management efforts and start the conversation on working together for everyone's benefit.”

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative is the programming arm of the state's Council on Watershed Management, which Gov. John Bel Edwards created last year in response to the state's historic 2016 floods. In 2018, Congress allocated \$1.2 billion to support the state's flood mitigation efforts.

Under the new approach, the state is working at the watershed level to coordinate efforts that reduce the risk of flood damage. Ultimately, communities in each watershed must set priorities, develop policies and make decisions based on how water moves within the watershed, regardless of city and parish lines. Louisiana is one of the first states to implement the watershed approach on a statewide level.

The watershed approach also emphasizes the use of objective, scientific data for decision-making and priority-setting. In its next steps, the Watershed Initiative will develop a statewide network for collecting high-quality data on rainfall and river levels, along with advanced computer modeling that tracks and predicts water movement throughout each watershed.

More information about the Interstate Summit is available [here](#). A high-resolution map of Louisiana's watershed regions is available for download [here](#).

About the Louisiana Watershed Initiative

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative serves as the programming arm for the Council on Watershed Management established by Gov. John Bel Edwards in 2018. Along with its private- and public-sector partners statewide, the Watershed Initiative coordinates Louisiana's pioneering effort in organizing flood protection according to natural, regional watersheds to reduce the risks from future flooding and make communities more resilient.

Learn more about our mission and how you can be part of the progress at watershed.la.gov.