

# Memorandum

March 17, 2021

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**TO:** Infrastructure Finance Authority Board  
**FROM:** Becky Baxter, Special Public Works Fund (SPWF) Program & Policy Coordinator  
**THROUGH:** Chris Cummings, Director and Ed Tabor, Programs and Incentives Manager  
**SUBJ:** Proposed Changes to SPWF Oregon Administrative Rules

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## Requested Action

Informational Only     For Board Input     For Board Action (see Recommended Motion)

## Request

IFA staff respectfully requests members to provide input to the proposed changes to the Special Public Works Fund (SPWF) Oregon Administrative Rules.

The SPWF Rules were last updated in 2016. Since that time there have been some minor edits, additional clarification and programmatic additions to the Administrative Rules for this program.

The most substantive of these changes are the additional definitions of "Natural or Green Infrastructure" and "Pre-Disaster Mitigation" under eligible projects.

Natural or Green Infrastructure is defined as an area or system that is either naturally occurring or naturalized and then intentionally managed to provide multiple benefits for the environment and human well-being. A natural or green infrastructure system is a strategically planned network of natural and working lands, such as forest, rivers, wetlands and waterways that conserve and enhance ecosystem values and functions, and provide associated benefits for safe and healthy communities and vibrant economies. This definition is taken directly from the Oregon Water Vision group.

Pre-disaster mitigation is defined as a project that addresses and reduces future losses, primarily from a natural hazard. FEMA has been providing more financial resources for communities through the Building Resilient Infrastructure Communities (BRIC) program. By working with communities to look at and prepare hazard mitigation plans, it takes a proactive approach to repairing or mitigating a problematic area to avoid or reduce the future potential impact should a disaster occur.

An additional section of rule was added to encompass grants for levee projects. In the 2019 legislative session, \$15 million in funding was appropriated through lottery bonds for the levee grant program. However with the impact of COVID, the bond sale didn't come to fruition and the program was not funded. During the current legislative session, \$10 million in funding is being proposed for this program. Should the levee grant program be funded, the department wanted to be poised to begin funding these important projects by having the rules adopted and in place.

Further edits and clarification are provided in the track changes document for your review and comment.

**Recommended Motion**

For the proposed Special Public Works Fund program rules, move to support proposed rule-making as presented by Business Oregon staff.