

# MT Eastern Region HMP Kick-Off: Meeting Minutes

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**Date:** 08-09-2022  
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm MST

**Meeting at:** Zoom Meeting  
Meeting ID: 841 5247 1478  
Password: 195784  
Link: <https://mt.gov.zoom.us/j/84152471478?pwd=S0tuVmJXaXJKU2J6UDZYaHZyR1YxUT09>

**Project:** MT Eastern Region Hazard Mitigation Plan

**Subject/Purpose:** Kick-Off Planning Coordination Call

**Attendees:** Counties, Tribes, MT DES, Wood planning team

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## 1. Introductions

- Wood and MT Department of Emergency Services (DES) introduced the project team and asked everyone participating in the meeting to use the Chat Box to enter their name, role, and agency or affiliation. Ms. Prosperi and Ms. Pool explained this will be how the team tracks participation. The team introduced the Slido poll platform as a way to encourage feedback and participation during the meeting.
- Approximately 51 jurisdiction and organization representatives, including counties, cities, and tribal nations participated during the meeting. Representatives present during the meeting are noted in the Stakeholder List (participation tracker tool); several jurisdictions also participated by phone and MT DES clarified who called in by phone.
- About half of the participants have worked on a hazard mitigation plan; the other half have not. The key discussion is summarized below; additional details can be found in the meeting PowerPoint presentation. The meeting was also recorded.

## 2. Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Planning

- Ms. Prosperi explained the concept of hazard mitigation and resilience planning and its importance in reducing risk. Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to human life and property from natural or human-caused hazards. She added that mitigation planning guides mitigation activities in a coordinated and economic manner to make Montana more disaster resilient. The U.S. Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA) requires state and local governments to draft and adopt a HMP, and update it every five years, to maintain eligibility for Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) hazard mitigation assistance (HMA) grants.
- Ms. Prosperi shared information on trends resulting in increased disaster costs associated with disaster response and recovery related to population growth and the increase in the types of events we experience as a community. More people are living in hazardous areas

and there is an increasing increased exposure of buildings, people, and infrastructure to risk, as evidenced by the increasing frequencies of billion-dollar disasters nationwide. The COVID-19 Pandemic is a good example of a circumstance that can cause a regional disruption in the community and to the economy.

- Ms. Prosperi added that plans reduce future recovery costs given hazard events are repetitive and predictive. She referenced a study that found that these plans are cost cost-effective, and for every \$1 spent on mitigation, \$6 is saved in disaster recovery and response costs.
- Ms. Prosperi provided an overview of the key elements in the Eastern Montana Regional HMP and emphasized the benefits of regional plans given they do not follow jurisdictional boundaries and generally cover hazards that affect multiple cities or counties at once. These plans strengthen communication between jurisdictions before a disaster happens and create resiliency within the region.
- The regional HMP will comply with the latest FEMA requirements and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Resilience Toolkit to ensure continued eligibility for HMA grants.

### **3. Regional Planning Process Overview**

- Ms. Prosperi summarized the four HMP process phases; she explained her team will be aligning this process with the EPA Regional Resilience guidelines.
- Ms. Prosperi displayed a slide of the Eastern Region planning area in Montana. All counties and two tribes are participating in the planning process. Fort Peck Reservation is completing their own Regional HMP.
- The Eastern Region Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee (HMPC) consists of representatives from each of the 26 counties and tribes, plus the cities and towns and key stakeholders within each County. Ms. Prosperi noted that every update cycle is an opportunity to include additional local government participating jurisdictions, which are defined by FEMA as any entity with a governing board. Because this is a “regional” process the HMPC is structured somewhat differently from local HMPs. There is regional oversight by MT DES and within each region, there will be Subregions organized to group counties with similar hazards or geography.
- Montana was split into three regions for the purposes of the Regional HMP. Of the regions, the Eastern region has the most subregions because it has the most counties. 26 jurisdictions will participate in the plan, split into subgroups E1 through E-6.
  - Subregions E1-3 need a full county plan update.
  - Subregions E4-6 need a yearly update – this process will be streamlined and focused on mitigation action status and complying with the 2022 FEMA guidance since these jurisdictions recently updated their counties’ HMPs recently.
- Each County or Tribe will be asked to develop a county or tribal planning team (CPTs/TPTs) that consist of county and tribal staff, municipalities and regional or organization stakeholders. This is where the work will be done related to developing mitigation actions.

- The HMPC is working through the initial steps of the planning process and tailoring an outreach strategy and reviewing the Eastern Region's capabilities and conducting the Risk Assessment.
- Ms. Prosperi emphasized the importance of including the public in the planning process to strengthen community support for the plan and ensure the plan is meeting the specific needs in of the region. FEMA requires two opportunities for public involvement during the planning process: during the draft stage and prior to plan approval.
- Ms. Prosperi stated her team will develop surveys and press releases and ask the HMPC to advertise and distribute them to their respective communities. Wood will document this process; this involves meetings with stakeholders or other organizations. County and Tribal Planning Teams are encouraged to provide outreach beyond the regional planning outreach, such as noting the Regional HMP at existing public meetings.
- Next, Ms. Prosperi talked about existing capabilities. She explained that the team will examine existing policies and programs and evaluate the effectiveness of the mitigation gaps and shortfalls to see where there are areas for improvement. Her team will also look at each jurisdiction's fiscal abilities to understand where there could be funding options for mitigation not limited to grants. The capability assessment is also being aligned with current FEMA planning policy and will be an area of focus during the update.
- Ms. Prosperi discussed the risk assessment and explained the three components of the risk assessment: hazard (what can happen here), vulnerability (what will be affected), and community capability (what are our existing capabilities to reduce risk). She covered the aspects of natural hazards included in the assessment and how those hazards overlap with community assets.
- Most counties within the Eastern Region have existing HMPs in place. These resources will be used to develop a list of hazards which that will be profiled in the plan.
- Ms. Prosperi explained that the vulnerability assessment looks at a range of assets in the Region: residential/commercial structures and critical facilities and infrastructure. She stated her team will align this update with recent FEMA Community Lifeline framework. She stated that understanding risks to lifeline facilities and identifying ways to minimize those risks with mitigation actions, will better position the plan for grant funding. She also stated we will look at development trends and natural resource areas in terms of assets that may warrant protection from hazard impacts.
- Ms. Prosperi talked about the FEMA National Risk Index (NRI) tool and the Rural Capacity Map tool developed by Headwaters Economics. These are tools the team will use to determine the disproportional impacts of hazards on vulnerable populations. Based on the FEMA definition, underserved communities have been denied a full chance to participate in social opportunities and there is a requirement to incorporate social vulnerability, equity and inclusion into resilience and hazard mitigation planning.
- Ms. Prosperi said the mitigation strategy begins with reviewing the plan's existing goals and mitigation actions, which are specific and measurable. She emphasizes that the goals should reflect the risk assessment, with actions targeting the greatest hazards.

- Ms. Prosperi and Mr. Brislawn stated that the region can choose to create one set of goals and objectives for the region, or different goals specific to each County and Tribal Planning Teams, or both, depending on the preferences of the HMPC.
- Ms. Prosperi discussed typical categories of mitigation actions and the reference guides for mitigation action alternatives, such as FEMA's Mitigation Ideas and the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System (NFIP CRS) guidance. The HMPC will need to review and select the alternatives for new actions as part of the plan update process. Each jurisdiction will need at least one new action, and actions will need to be prioritized. This will be done by applying selection and prioritization criteria, such as whether it will work, whether it is cost-beneficial, affordable, legal, and fair.
- Ms. Prosperi stated that the HMPCs will also need to provide information on the status of actions from existing HMPs.
- Ms. Prosperi talked about the FEMA Mitigation Grants and pointed out the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the HMGP Post Fire will be competitive in the State of Montana. She then reviewed typical mitigation projects eligible for FEMA funding for wildfire, flood, and other mitigation projects.
- Ms. Prosperi talked about the layout of the base plan and the county and tribal annexes. There will be four drafts of the plan: (1) Internal HMPC Review; (2) Public Review (3) State Review, and (4) FEMA Review. The HMPC will review and agree upon plan maintenance procedures. Each county, tribe, and municipality will need to adopt the plan to secure the buy-in for the process. Ms. Prosperi explained the importance of continual monitoring, evaluating, and updating of the plan to maintain its effectiveness.

#### **4. Regional, County, and Tribal HMPCs**

- Ms. Prosperi reviewed the role and responsibilities of each group within the HMPC. The county and tribal DES Coordinators will be the main points of contact concerning meeting logistics and coordinating local planning teams. Each coordinator will convene the CPT or TPT within each participating entity. The CPTs or TPTs will include members of appropriate departments (e.g., road and bridge, planning, public works, police/fire/public safety, and emergency management) and include municipalities and could include special districts (e.g., fire and school).
- The CPTs and TPTs are responsible for participating in the planning process, assisting in updating the content of the plan, and reviewing the draft plan to ensure it meets specific needs and local issues. Finally, each county, municipality, and tribe will need to formally adopt the plan by their local governing body.
- Ms. Prosperi emphasized the importance of including stakeholders in the planning process. She reviewed a slide listing various stakeholders who will be included in the process, which lists representatives from the state or federal government, and private, and non-profit entities who will be affected by the assessment and potential strategies in this HMP.

- She asked the group if any other key stakeholders should be involved in the process. Responses include the Access and Functional Needs Organizations. See attached document for a complete list of responses.
- Participating jurisdictions participation includes attending and participating in planning meetings/workshops, providing available data requested of the County and Tribal coordinator and Wood, providing input on local mitigation strategy (actions/projects), advertising and assist with public input process and reviewing and commenting on the draft plan. Participating jurisdictions also must coordinate formal adoption.
- Stakeholders have various options for their level of participation, such as attending planning meetings, providing data and information, partnering in mitigation efforts, and reviewing the draft plan.

## 5. Review of Identified Hazards

- Ms. Prosperi explained the hazard profiled starts by comparing hazards addressed in the Montana State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) to the hazards profiled in the existing HMPs. She reviewed the top 15 hazards identified and compared the hazards across jurisdictions shown below.

	Wildfire	Severe Winter Storms	Flood	EQ	Severe Summer Storms	Terrorism	Drought	Landslide	Disease Outbreak	HazMat	Tornadoes & Wind	Dam Failure	Transport Accident	Avalanche	Volcanic Ash
Carbon	H	M	H	M	M		H		M	L	M	M		M	L
Carter	H	M	L	L	H	M	H		M	M	H/M				
Crow Tribe	H	H	M		H	L	M	L	L	L		M			L
Big Horn County & Crow Reservation	H	H	H		H	L	M	M	L	M		M			
Custer	H	H	H	L	H	M	H	L	M	H		M			L
Daniels	M	M	L		M				M	L	L	L			
Dawson	M	H	H		H	L	M	L	M	H	H				
Fallon	H	M	L		H/M	M	H		M	M	H/M	M			
Fort Peck Reservation	H	H	H	H/M		H	M				H	H/M			
Garfield	H	H	M		H	L	H	M	L	M					
Golden Valley	M	H	H	L	M	M	M	L	H	M		M			L
McCone	M	H	M		H	L	M	L	M	M		L			
Musselshell	H	H	H	L	H	L	M	L	M	M		M			L
Northern Cheyenne Tribe	H	M	M	L	M	L	M	L	H	M	M	L			M
Powder River	H	H	M		H	L	H		L	M					
Prairie	M	H		L	H	L	L		M	L	H	L			L
Richland	M	H	M		H	L	M	L	M	M		L			
Roosevelt	M	L	M	L	M				M	M		M			
Rosebud	H	M	M	L	H	H	M	L	M	M		M			L
Sheridan	M	M	M		M				M	L	L	M			
Stillwater	H	H	H	L	H	M	M	H	H	M		M		L	L
Treasure Valley	H	M	M	L	H	L	H	M	M	M		M			L
Wheatland	M	M	H	L	H	L	M	L	H	L		M			L
Wibaux															
Yellowstone	H/M	H/M	H	L	H	M	L	H/M		H	H/M	M			L

- Risk rankings varied across jurisdictions as noted in existing HMPs, but some hazards, such as wildfire, severe winter storms, severe summer storms, and flood were ranked as high risk across most of the jurisdictions. Ms. Prosperi asked the group what additional hazards should be considered for the regional plan. Responses included agricultural incidents as well as ditch and drainage failure. Yellowstone County DES Director, asked about how to approach civil unrest and terrorism hazards. Ms. Prosperi and Ms. Pool said

that discussions on how to incorporate civil unrest and terrorism hazards will happen during the upcoming monthly planning meetings.

- Ms. Prosperi reviewed the 45 declared disasters in the Eastern Region and asked the group what other significant hazard events have occurred in the past 5 years. The responses include recent regional hazards such as the Exxon Fire in March 2022 and the power outage caused by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT)'s grid issues in Garfield County. See attached document for a list of all responses to the poll question.
- Ms. Prosperi summarized hazard information sources, including the previous local HMPs and the 2018 SHMP. She explained that the Data Collection Guides will help MT DES and her team collect and determine the county, tribal, and municipal assets that already exist.
- The vulnerability assessment needs to discuss hazards' potential impacts on future development and growth areas, and Ms. Prosperi asked the group what growth and development trends in the past 5 years have communities experienced that may increase or decrease vulnerability to hazards. (i.e. more homes in wildland-urban interface, floodplain development pressure, etc.) Some of the responses include new county-wide construction and significant population growth in Yellowstone County. See the attached document for all responses to the poll.

## **6. Coordination with Other Agencies, Related Planning Efforts, and Recent Studies**

- The team discussed how to coordinate the planning process with other agencies, related planning efforts, and recent studies to meet one of the DMA planning requirements. This is also an opportunity to develop a holistic plan and integrate related mitigation efforts. Ms. Prosperi reviewed a slide on plans that are related to the Regional HMP, as well as another slide that lists plans that should be linked with the Regional HMP. She asked the group what other existing or recent plans, reports, or studies should be reviewed for the planning process. Some of the responses include Point of Distribution Plans, Yellow County Source Water Protection Plan, and Hazardous Materials Plans. See a full list of responses to the poll in the attached document.
- Ms. Prosperi explained that integrating this Regional HMP into other plans is equally as important. She asked the group what opportunities exist to coordinate or integrate the Regional HMP with other planning mechanisms. There was no feedback.

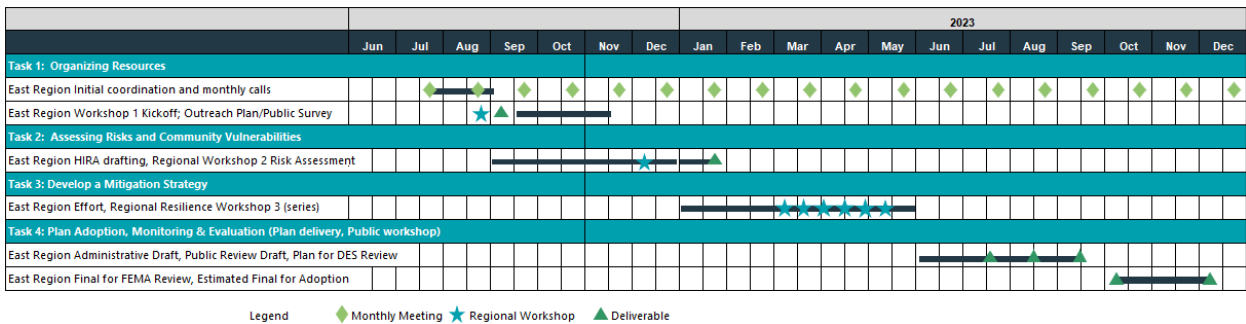
## **7. Planning for Public and Stakeholder Involvement**

- There are various tools that will be used for public and stakeholder involvement. Ms. Prosperi encourages involvement through online surveys, a virtual and interactive engagement room, workshops, public meetings, and a draft plan for public review. Counties and jurisdictions will be responsible for discussing the regional plan at county commissioner meetings and tribal/town council meetings. Additionally, jurisdictions will aid in posting the draft plan online and advertising, as well as hosting additional meetings as desired.

- Ms. Prosperi reviewed the project website that will be used to share data on the planning process. Ms. Prosperi and Ms. Pool then asked the group what other upcoming opportunities for outreach at scheduled public meetings or events exist. There was no response to this question.

## 8. Information Needs & Next Steps

- The Regional HMP will be developed over the next 9-12 months. The next meeting will focus on the risk assessment and goals update, which will require the Wood team to conduct the assessment itself and complete the analysis. Other deliverables include the public survey coordinating data request needs prior to the next two planning meetings scheduled for this winter.



- Wood will coordinate data gathering and update information from the CPTs/TPTs. Each county, tribe, and municipality will be asked to provide data based on various department inputs; this request will be included in a Data Collection Guide. Ms. Prosperi will be working with Ms. Pool to distribute this Guide within a week following the Kick-Off Meeting. The guide will capture recent hazard impacts, specifically those in the last five years as well as input on capability assessment updates.
- GIS data collection is already in process; statewide GIS portals/data will be leveraged where possible. Ms. Pool emphasized that the Data Collection Guides will be sent to counties, municipalities, and tribal nations by mid-August.

## Chat Log

- 11:52:09 From Patrick Gilchrist to Everyone:  
Patrick Gilchrist, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, National Weather Service Glasgow, MT
- 11:53:07 From Shea to Everyone:  
Shea Miller, Clerk, Town of Jordan, MT
- 11:53:11 From ittie to Everyone:  
Rebecca McEuen, Powder River County DES Coord.
- 11:54:32 From Anne Miller to Everyone:  
Anne Miller, DES Coordinator - Garfield County
- 11:56:00 From Stamey - Stillwater Co to Everyone:  
David Stamey - Emergency Mgr - Stillwater County
- 11:56:25 From Mary Nyhus to Everyone:  
Daniels County DES. Mary Nyhus

11:56:45 From K.C. Williams Yellowstone County DES to Everyone:  
KC Williams Yellowstone County DES Director

11:56:55 From Town of Culbertson to Everyone:  
Tiffani Jasper, Clerk/Treasurer, Town of Culbertson

11:56:57 From Jennifer Marsh to Everyone:  
Jennifer Marsh, Clinic Manager Billings Clinic - Miles City

11:57:12 From Jon S. in Richey to Everyone:  
Jon Senner, Clerk/Treasurer, Town of Richey

11:57:13 From Town of Culbertson to Everyone:  
Amber Fox, Utility Clerk, Town of Culbertson

11:57:23 From Cyrina Allen Carbon County to Everyone:  
Cyrina Allen, Carbon County Emergency Manager

11:57:41 From Shane Halverson to Everyone:  
Shane Halverson, Public Works Director, City of Poplar

11:57:52 From Jason Strouf to Everyone:  
Jason Strouf, Custer County Commissioner

11:58:11 From Scott Field - Wood Facilitator to Everyone:  
Scott Field, Wood E&IS

11:58:18 From Kellyk to Everyone:  
Kelly Keysor  
LYREC  
Sidney MT

11:58:23 From Shea to Everyone:  
Since you are recording this can we get a copy of the recording?

11:58:32 From drook to Everyone:  
Darren Rook

11:58:39 From drook to Everyone:  
Musselshell County DES

11:58:59 From ittie to Everyone:  
Clint Peterson, Vet and Fireman Powder River County

11:59:45 From Cindia Ellis oneHealth Custer County Public Health to Everyone:  
Cindia Ellis One Health/Custer County Public Health Nurse

12:00:05 From Mike Powell (Yellowstone County GIS) to Everyone:  
Mike Powell, Yellowstone County GIS

12:00:43 From ittie to Everyone:  
Adam Johnson, Ambulance Director of EMS operations Powder River County

12:00:44 From Kellyk to Everyone:  
👍

12:01:17 From Rick Seiler DES Coordinator to Everyone:  
Rick Seiler Valley County

12:01:34 From Rob Pressly, FEMA R8 to Everyone:  
Rob Pressly, FEMA Region 8

12:01:38 From Jamie George to Everyone:  
Jamie George, Grants Manager, Crow Tribe

12:01:49 From Debi Meling to Everyone:  
Debi Meling, City of Billings

12:01:53 From Robert Brunelle to Everyone:  
Robert Brunelle, Glasgow Fire, Long Run Fire, and Valley County SAR

12:01:56 From ittie to Everyone:  
Raymond Ragsdale, Broadus Fire Department, Public Works Powder River County

12:01:59 From Cory Mottice - NWS Billings to Everyone:



Cory Mottice, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, National Weather Service Billings, MT

12:01:59 From Amy Carr - Wood E&IS to Everyone:  
Amy Carr, Hazard Mitigation Planner, Wood E&IS

12:02:17 From Charitina - Plenty Doors CDC to Everyone:  
Charitina Fritzler, representing Plenty Doors Community Development Corporation located on the Crow Reservation in Big Horn County

12:02:18 From K.C. Williams Yellowstone County DES to Everyone:  
Linda Oberg with Yellowstone County DES in with KC

12:02:27 From Ray Ezell, RiverStone Health, Yellowstone County to Everyone:  
Ray Ezell, RiverStone Health Emergency Preparedness, Yellowstone City/County Health Department

12:02:31 From Doris Leader to Everyone:  
Doris Leader, Valley County

12:02:42 From Andy Schell to Everyone:  
Andy Schell- AFMO- USFWS Fire

12:03:29 From Mary Nyhus to Everyone:  
So glad it wasn't me! I had on my calendar 11 then it was 1 and I tried Microsoft first. 😊

12:04:10 From Audrey Stromberg to Everyone:  
Audrey Stromberg, Administrator, Roosevelt Medical Center

12:04:43 From Lindsey to Everyone:  
Lindsey McNabb, Roosevelt County DES. Gordon Oelkers, Commissioner

12:04:59 From Kellyk to Everyone:  
Kelly Keysor  
Operations Manager  
Lower Yellowstone Rural Elec  
Sidney MT

12:05:02 From Joe Marcotte to Everyone:  
Joe Marcotte, Billings Clinic, Yellowstone County LEPC

12:05:30 From Brian I Nelson to Everyone:  
Brian Nelson DES Wibaux County

12:05:35 From Vicki Ruby to Everyone:  
Vicki Ruby - Sheridan County Public Health & Red Cross

12:05:45 From Lauren Brown to Everyone:  
Lauren Brown, RiverStone Health, Yellowstone County Emergency Preparedness

12:07:38 From ittie to Everyone:  
Isn't this the same as the last meeting

12:07:45 From Ray Ezell, RiverStone Health, Yellowstone County to Everyone:  
What was the code for slido again?

12:07:48 From Scott O'Connell- American Red Cross to Everyone:  
Scott O'Connell American Red Cross

12:08:19 From Lindsey McNabb to Everyone:  
Gary Macdonald, Roosevelt County Commissioner

12:08:38 From ittie to Everyone:  
snipe hunting

12:08:47 From janderson to Everyone:  
Jon Anderson, Undersheriff, Sheridan County Sheriff's Office.

12:14:36 From kory to Everyone:  
Kory Opp with Town of Medicine Lake & Sheridan Electric Coop

12:17:02 From Lindsey McNabb to Everyone:  
Lindsey McNabb, Roosevelt County DES and Gordon Oelkers and Gary Macdonald, Commissioners

12:29:53 From K.C. Williams Yellowstone County DES to Everyone:  
Madisson Yatch Facilities Management for Yellowstone County

13:08:23 From Joe Marcotte to Everyone:  
one more possible group missed is critical resource suppliers

13:11:37 From ittie to Everyone:  
When and were are these forms

13:32:38 From Shari Pool to Everyone:  
I will be sending out the Data Collection Guides later this week or early next week.

13:34:07 From Shari Pool to Everyone:  
I will also be sending out the slides and recordings from the meeting last week and this week. working on making sure the recording actually works without frustration for anyone.

13:40:27 From Shari Pool to Everyone:  
I will get you all the link for the planning web page when the Eastern Region plan page is ready

13:45:13 From Doris Leader to Everyone:  
Doris Leader, Valley County Stakeholder

13:46:17 From Cyrina Allen Carbon County to Everyone:  
Thank you!

13:46:33 From Lindsey McNabb to Everyone:  
Thank you!

13:46:38 From Anne Miller to Everyone:  
Appreciate working the regional approach! Thanks all!

13:46:39 From Jennifer Marsh to Everyone:  
Thank you!