

# TRE Focus Group: Facilitation Plan & Discussion Questions

## Focus Group Facilitator Assignments

- Morning
  - City Planners/ Public Works- Kim (Kristen- back-up)
  - Emergency Responders- Dani
- Afternoon
  - Natural Resource Managers- Kim (Kristen- back-up)
  - Community/ NGO- Dani (if not combined with Natural Resource Managers)

### I. How do you currently use maps? (10min)

**Format:** Break out groups

**Materials:** Flipcharts & markers

**Validation Question:** Do any of you have logged data on what areas in the River Valley currently flood? (If yes, write down person's name to follow-up)

- Ex. lifeguards/ firefighters log where they frequently see/ experience flooding

#### Part I:

**Method:** Open-ended. Track what is said and see if there is agreement/disagreement. The options are only there for prompts – you don't need to give them the multiple choice options unless the discussion isn't taking off.. Note-takers documenting responses throughout discussion. If the options are read, note-takers track the number of people who raise their hand.

- When talking about floods what terms do you use to describe them?
  - 100-year storm
  - 1% chance flood
  - 100 year return period
- Do you use or reference flood risk maps? If so, how often?
  - Daily
  - Weekly
  - Monthly
  - Annually
- If you use maps, where do you get your maps from?
  - FEMA
  - Other government agencies (NOAA, State..)
  - Consultants
  - Universities/ Academia
  - Online (open source)
  - Made in-house (GIS staff)
- Do you use other tools/ resources (besides maps) to communicate about flooding? If so, what?
  - Photos
  - Website
  - In-person meetings
  - Media (newspaper, TV..)
  - Journal Articles
  - Technical Presentations (with other colleagues)

**Purpose 2:** Understand stakeholders' relationship with flood risk

**Outcome:** Focus group discussions provide insight into:

1. How different stakeholder groups understand and interact with flood risk (identifying similarities and differences in perception)
2. How stakeholders interact with flood risk in their professional and/ or personal lives

**Purpose 3:** Inform communications strategies

**Outcome:** Focus group discussions inform the development and/ or implementation of flood risk communication strategies in the TRV.

1. What kinds of information need to be communicated
2. How to best communicate the information (e.g., maps, other visualizations)
3. Identify opportunities for innovative, novel communication strategies

**Purpose 7:** Identify opportunities to engage in broader discussions

**Part II:**

**Materials:** Each person should have one index card with RID# (handed out when they signed in). Flipcharts & Markers.

**Method:** Have participant number the card 1, 2, & 3 and answer each question one at a time. Have participant hand the cards to the facilitator, and the facilitator will tally the results on the flipchart to share with the group, and if there is time, prompt discussion about agreement/disagreement. When finished tallying the facilitator should ensure the index cards are securely collected and filed away for research purposes.

1. How important would you say maps are in informing decisions about flood risk within your **job**?
  - a. Important
  - b. Somewhat important
  - c. Unimportant
  - d. N/A or No Opinion
2. How important would you say maps are in **communicating to the public** about flood risk? (if not a job function, e.g. communicating with a friend/ neighbor living in the River Valley?)
  - a. Important
  - b. Somewhat
  - c. Unimportant
  - d. N/A or No Opinion
3. How important would you say maps are in informing decisions about flood risk within your **personal life** (ex. where do I buy a home)?
  - a. Important
  - b. Somewhat
  - c. Unimportant
  - d. N/A or No Opinion

(If there is time, facilitate participants to expand on their answers for the last three questions)

**Outcome:** The FloodRISE project will have a better understanding of where project results can best inform future discussions.

Through follow-up...

**Purpose 5:** Improve model accuracy

**Outcome:** Relevant data collected, leading to increased map accuracy

## II. FEMA Maps (10min)

**Format:** Break out groups

**Materials:** 11x17 handout for each participant – 1 map/person. Facilitator distribute map at start of discussion.

**Method:** Open-ended discussion format. Note-takers documenting responses throughout discussion.

### **Establish Common Understanding** (1 min):

- Each participant spend some quiet time looking over the assigned map. Feel free to mark up the maps or make notes on the handout.

### **Current Experiences** (9 min):

- Do you currently use FEMA maps in your current job?
  - If yes, why (ex. regulatory requirement). What does it inform?
  - If no, why or why not?
- Is this map useful in informing decisions (both professional and personal)?
  - If yes, why? What kind of decisions is it useful in informing?
  - If no, why not?
- Would you like to see additional information, details, etc. represented in this map (that is not currently there)? If yes, what?
- If given the option, would you prefer to use different maps than FEMA?
  - If yes why?

**Purpose 3:** Inform communications strategies

**Outcome:** Focus group discussions inform the development and/ or implementation of flood risk communication strategies in the TRV.

1. What kinds of information need to be communicated
3. Identify opportunities for innovative, novel communication strategies

**Purpose 4:** Understand how to best use maps to communicate about flood risk

**Outcome:** Focus group conversations offer attendees an opportunity to become part of the mapping process. Providing a better understanding of:

4. How innovative, novel representations of flood risk are received, in contrast to traditional industry standards

**Purpose 7:** Identify opportunities to engage in broader discussions

**Outcome:** The FloodRISE project will have a better understanding of where project results can best inform future discussions.

### III. Feedback on Maps Highlighting Different Aspects of Flooding (Part I)

(15min/map= 30min)

**Format:** Break out groups (with break after two maps)

**Materials:** 11x17 handouts for each participant – 2 maps/person. Facilitator will hand out each map individually based on what map is being discussed - do not hand out ahead of time.

**Method:** Open ended discussion format. Note-takers documenting responses throughout discussion. **Repeated for each individual map** (5 maps total). If the groups begin to separate in terms of timing (e.g. one group moving faster than another), then Adam can float and introduce a new map to each group as needed.

**Establish Common Understanding** (7 min): (whole room together)

- (1min) Map intro by Adam (No ppt)-
  - Are there any questions about what you are seeing on map x?
- (1min) Each individual participant spend some quiet time looking over the assigned map. Feel free to mark up the maps or make notes on the handout.
  - Pay attention to details (legend, scale...)
- (3min) Are there any questions about what you are seeing on map x?
  - If no, can someone explain to me what this map is showing?

**Current Experiences** (5min): (separate into break out groups)

- Would this map be useful in informing decisions (professional or personal)?
  - If yes, why? What kind of decisions would it useful in informing?
  - If no, why not?
- Does anything surprise you about this map?

**Map specific questions**

- Contours of Depth (2)
  - What are your thoughts on the legend “ankle, knee...” when compared to numerical numbers (1m, 2m...)?
- Contours of Probability (Depth) (3)
  - What could you use this map to for? (e.g. identify flood prone areas)

**Feedback on the Map** (3min)

- Is there additional information, details, etc. you would like to see depicted in this map (that is not currently there)?
  - (Facilitator note: Geographic features (roads...) may be mentioned, note this, but also encourage other contributions related to model outputs)

**Purpose 3:** Inform communication strategies

**Outcome:** Focus group discussions inform the development and/ or implementation of flood risk communication strategies in the TRV. Providing a better understanding of:

4. What visualization products are useful and/ offer an opportunity for integration into existing practices

**Purpose 4:** Understand how to best use maps to communicate about flood risk

**Outcome:** Focus group conversations offer attendees an opportunity to become part of the mapping process. Providing a better understanding of:

2. What visualizations are most effective
3. How innovative, novel representations of flood risk are received, in contrast to traditional industry standards

**IV. Break (10min)**

**Format:** Walk-About

**Materials:** 2 large poster maps (Probability - Depth) in back of room (duplicate maps). Post-its & Markers.

**Method:** Participants walk about the back of the room and place sticky notes on the portions of the map that are inaccurate. At end of exercise, notetakers take pictures of the map and collect each map, carefully rolling it up keeping the post-its in place.

Dani ask participants before they get up to look at the maps and think about:

- Are there areas of the map that you think are inaccurate? Do the maps reflect your experience of flooding in the TRV?

Adam stands back by map for questions  
(note-takers: placed in back of room to capture the conversation)

Dani asks if folks have had time to look over the maps when five minutes left in the break (Dani)

**Purpose 5:** Improve model accuracy

**Outcome:** Relevant data collected, leading to increased map accuracy

## V. Feedback on Maps Highlighting Different Aspects of Flooding (Part II)

(15min/ map = 45 min)

**Format:** Break out groups (with break after two maps)

**Materials:** 11x17 handouts for each participant – 3 maps/person. Facilitator will hand out each map individually based on what map is being discussed - do not hand out ahead of time.

**Method:** Open ended discussion format. Note-takers documenting responses throughout discussion. **Repeated for each individual map** (5 maps total). If the groups begin to separate in terms of timing (ex. one group moving faster than another), then Adam can float and introduce a new map to each group as needed.

**Establish Common Understanding** (7 min): (whole room together)

- (1min) Map intro by Adam (No ppt)-
  - Are there any questions about what you are seeing on map x?
- (1min) Each individual participant spend some quiet time looking over the assigned map. Feel free to mark up the maps or make notes on the handout.
  - Pay attention to details (legend, scale...)
- (3min) Are there any questions about what you are seeing on map x?
  - If no, can someone explain to me what this map is showing?

**Current Experiences** (5min): (separate into break out groups)

- Would this map be useful in informing decisions (professional or personal)?
  - If yes, why? What kind of decisions would it useful in informing?
  - If no, why not?
- Does anything surprise you about this map?

**Map specific questions**

- Contours of Force (4)
  - What are your thoughts about the indicators used in the legend (child toppled, home being damaged...)?
    - Do you have other suggestions for indicators that could be used? (e.g. erosion threshold)
- Contours of Probability (Force) (5)
  - What could you use this map for? (e.g. identify areas most likely to be dangerous in a storm)
- Dominant Flood Driver (6)
  - Is the cause of flooding important to you? If so, when understanding the primary causes of flooding, what is important to you? (e.g. having different flood drivers distinguished).

**Feedback on the Map** (3min)

- Is there additional information, details, etc. would you like to see depicted in this map (that is not currently there)?
  - (Facilitator note: Geographic features (roads...) may be mentioned, note this, but also encourage other contributions related to model outputs)

**Purpose 3:** Inform communication strategies

**Outcome:** Focus group discussions inform the development and/ or implementation of flood risk communication strategies in the TRV. Providing a better understanding of:

5. What visualization products are useful and/ offer an opportunity for integration into existing practices

**Purpose 4:** Understand how to best use maps to communicate about flood risk

**Outcome:** Focus group conversations offer attendees an opportunity to become part of the mapping process. Providing a better understanding of:

4. What visualizations are most effective
5. How innovative, novel representations of flood risk are received, in contrast to traditional industry standards

## VI. Report Out (10min)

**Format:** Break out groups with opportunity to come together as group at end

**Materials:** Each person should have one index card with RID# (handed out when participant signed in). Flipcharts & Markers. Each 11x17 map laid out on the table 1-6 (includes FEMA map)

**Method:** Have them number the index card 1, 2, & 3 and answer each question one at a time. Have them hand the cards to the facilitator, and the facilitator will tally the results on the flipchart to share with the group. When finished tallying the facilitator should ensure the index cards are securely collected and filed away for research purposes.

1. Which map is most likely to help inform your **professional decisions**? (general plan, local policies/ projects)
2. Which map would you use to **communicate with the public**? (if not a job function, e.g. communicating with a friend/ neighbor living in the River Valley?)
3. Which map would be most useful to informing **personal decisions**? (e.g. where to buy a home)

If there's time - ask people why they voted the way they did?

At end, Dani will encourage the facilitators to report out on the findings from within their group findings to whole room (only in situations where there is more than one focus group occurring).

**Purpose 3:** Inform communications strategies

**Outcome:** Focus group discussions inform the development and/ or implementation of flood risk communication strategies in the TRV

6. What visualization products are useful and/or offer an opportunity for integration into existing practices

## VII. Duration of Flooding Map (Interest in this additional map?) (10min)

**Format:** Break out groups

**Materials:** None

**Method:** Open ended discussion format. Note-takers documenting responses throughout discussion.

### Establish Common Understanding (4 min):

- (1 min) Intro by Adam (No ppt)-
  - Explain the additional option of an inundation map.
    - What the map would show
    - Why it's technically complicated (Why we currently don't have this map available)
- (3 min) Are there any questions about what this additional map would include?
  - If no, can someone explain to me what an inundation map would show?

### Current Experiences (6min):

- Would this map be useful in informing decisions (professional or personal)?
  - If yes, why? What kind of decisions would it useful in informing?
  - If no, why not? Is there additional information that could be included in the map to make it more useful?
- Is duration of flooding following a storm important to you?

**Purpose 3:** Inform communication strategies

**Outcome:** Focus group discussions inform the development and/ or implementation of flood risk communication strategies in the TRV. Providing a better understanding of:

6. What visualization products are useful and/ offer an opportunity for integration into existing practices

**Purpose 4:** Understand how to best use maps to communicate about flood risk

**Outcome:** Focus group conversations offer attendees an opportunity to become part of the mapping process. Providing a better understanding of:

7. What visualizations are most effective

8. How innovative, novel representations of flood risk are received, in contrast to traditional industry standards



## VIII. SLR (15min)

**Format:** Break out groups

**Materials:** 11x17 handout for each participant – 2 maps/person (7a & 7b). Inundation map - current tidal conditions vs. future tidal conditions.

### Part I (5 min)

**Materials:** Each person should have one index card with RID# (handed out when participant signed in). Flipcharts & Markers.

**Method:** Have them number the index card 1 & 2 and answer each question one at a time. Have them hand the cards to the facilitator, and the facilitator will tally the results on the flipchart to share with the group. If there is time, prompt discussion. When finished tallying, the facilitator should ensure the index cards are securely collected and filed away for research purposes.

1. When considering sea level rise, what information is most useful?
  - Daily conditions (Inundation - New high water mark)
  - Storm events (Sea level rise + Coastal Storm flooding)
  - Other (please specify)
2. What time horizon is most useful to be mapped?
  - 15 years (2031)
  - 30 years (2046)
  - 50 years (2066)
  - 100 years (2116)
  - Other (please specify)

### Part II (10 min)

**Materials:** None

**Methods:** Open ended discussion format. Note-takers documenting responses throughout discussion.

Adam- won't introduce these maps but will be available for questions

- Are you currently integrating climate change, in general, into your future planning?
- Do you use SLR maps?
  - If yes, who produced them? Were they useful? Pros/cons?
  - If not, why not? Do you have plans to use them in future?
- In your opinion, is there anything that might prevent a sea level rise mapping product from being useful for planning and decision making?
  - Institutional Frameworks
    - Planning Frameworks (e.g., required to use FEMA maps)
    - Capacity (Time, money)
    - Too many other immediate concerns (e.g. concerned about current flooding, don't have time to worry about the future)
  - Models
    - Modeling scale (SLR models not local)
    - Appropriate scenarios not mapped (1m, 2m, storms....)
    - Not understanding what available SLR maps are showing
    - Time frames/ time scales presented (e.g. 2100 not relevant)
  - Climate change opinions/ perceptions
    - Politics around climate change
    - Uncertainty

**Purpose 3:** Inform communication strategies

**Outcome:** Focus group discussions inform the development and/ or implementation of flood risk communication strategies in the TRV

1. What kinds of information need to be communicated

**Purpose 4:** Understand how to best use maps to communicate about flood risk

**Outcome:** Focus group conversations offer attendees an opportunity to become part of the mapping process. Providing a better understanding of:

4. How innovative, novel representations of flood risk are received, in contrast to traditional industry standards

**Purpose 7:** Identify opportunities to engage in broader discussions

**Outcome:** The FloodRISE project will have a better understanding of where project results can best inform future discussions.

## IX. Scenarios (15 min)

**Format:** Break out groups

**Materials:** Questionnaire

**Method:** Facilitators hand out questionnaire to each participant and collect them upon completion.

Adam will give a 5 min presentation on the different question categories. Important to manage expectations: This is a wish list but doesn't mean we have the capacity to provide you all with your requests.

Participants will have up to 10 min to fill out the questionnaire.

Adam float to answer any questions.

Facilitators let Dani know when all questionnaires have been collected so she can bring the room back together for Dave's final thank you

If there's time open up discussion within breakout groups - any reflections on how they answered certain questions?

**Purpose 4:** Understand how to best use maps to communicate about flood risk

**Outcome:** Focus group conversations offer attendees an opportunity to become part of the mapping process. Providing a better understanding of:

1. What scenarios to map
3. What interventions or management actions to map

## Background & Glossary

### Different Aspects of Flooding

Maps can show flooding in many different ways. Commonly, flooding maps only show “**flood extent**” of a storm during present day. These maps only tell an audience whether a place is wet or not. Different aspects of flooding can be mapped providing additional levels of detail needed to make informed local decisions about flood risk. The different scenarios include:

- **Depth:** Maximum water depth during the course of a flood
- **Force:** Maximum force of the flood. Maximum force of flowing water during the flood, or intensity of flood waters. This could be used to show areas where structural damage occurs (cars are moved, etc). Specifically, this is the water depth multiplied by water velocity.
- **Dominant Flood Driver** (Cause of Flooding): In systems where there are multiple causes of flooding, such as extreme high tides or riverine flows, the dominant causes (drivers) of flooding can mapped.
- **Contours of Probability:** the annual probability flooding will occur or an attribute of a flood will occur. For example, the annual probability flood waters exceed ankle depth could be shown on a map.
- **Duration of Inundation** (% time inundated by tide): The time flood waters persist during the course of a flood. In wetland areas, this could also be used to map the percent of time different areas are inundated during normal conditions (different portions of the tidal cycle).

### Flooding Event

- **Return Period:** The frequency of the simulated event, or how often the event is expected to occur. The return period is typically presented in years. For example, a return period of 1 means the event is expected every year. Additionally, a return period of 100 means the event is expected once every 100 hundred years (i.e., has a 1% chance of occurring annually). Simulated return periods could range from 1 – 500 years. However, the larger a return period, the more uncertainty there is in the simulation.
- **Flood Driver:** The physical process responsible for flooding. Typical flood drivers include wave overtopping, riverine flow, extreme high tides and storm surge, or pooled rainfall. In the Tijuana River Valley, common flood drivers include riverine flow from the canyons or the Tijuana River, extreme high tides, and wave overtopping.

**State of the System:** The prevailing physical conditions when the flooding event occurs. This could also be thought of as a scenario. Different scenarios are typically applied to test interventions (management strategies) or forecast flood risk. Possible states of the system include:

- **Year:** The year the flooding event occurs. The year the flooding event occurs will primarily affect mean sea level during the flooding simulations. However, the year will not affect riverine flows (in our modeling), since local precipitation responses to climate change are not well understood.
- **Level of Urbanization:** The amount of development in contributing watersheds. This can be used to predict future changes in riverine flows or rainfall driven flooding. Examples include present day, completely developed, or continued development.
- **Physical Interventions:** Proposed alterations to existing infrastructure/floodplain expected to change flood behavior. These include dredging channels, raising levees, removing levees, channelizing rivers, beach augmentations, raising sea walls, etc.