



### Why This Matters

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) develops programmatic agreements with States and Tribal governments as an alternative to Section 106 compliance of the *National Historic Preservation Act*.

The purpose of the Mississippi Secondary Programmatic Agreement is to mitigate the loss of the historic and archaeological resources of the Mississippi Gulf Coast as a result of Hurricane Katrina and to provide planning information in the event of future disasters.

### DHS Response

FEMA concurred with our findings and recommendations at the exit conference. FEMA's written response is due within 90 days.

## FEMA's Implementation of the Mississippi Secondary Programmatic Agreement under Hurricane Katrina

### What We Determined

FEMA generally complied with the requirements of the agreement and contractors supporting work under the agreement were in compliance with contract terms. However, we identified three areas that need attention to improve implementation of the agreement:

- 1) Archaeological efforts can be reduced: The overall number of sites planned for evaluation can be reduced and still meet FEMA's obligation under the agreement, thus resulting in labor cost savings.
- 2) Closer coordination for identifying structural historical districts: Closer coordination between FEMA and the State on the identification and approval of new structural historical districts will prevent unnecessary costs.
- 3) Timeliness of Deliverables: Closer oversight of work being completed to satisfy the agreement will assist in a more timely completion of deliverables.

### What We Recommend

We recommend that the FEMA Regional Administrator, Region IV, requires the Director of the Mississippi Recovery Office to:

- 1) Work with the State Preservation Officer and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to negotiate a more realistic goal of the number of archeological sites to be surveyed.
- 2) Coordinate with the State Preservation Officer on the identification of new historical districts and obtain State Preservation Officer concurrence prior to engaging in the intensive labor effort of documenting the potential new historic district.
- 3) Update the deliverable schedule completion dates and closely monitor the performance of the environmental staff once archaeological sites have been negotiated by the agreement stakeholders.

### For Further Information:

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