

Programmatic Principles for the Flood Ready Neighborhoods (FRN) Pilot Program

UNH Cooperative Extension, NH Sea Grant, and NHDES Coastal Program programs and policies are consistent with pertinent Federal and State laws and regulations on non-discrimination regarding race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, handicap or veteran's status. This document lays out overarching principles that guide FRN work. These principles are in addition to all UNH Cooperative Extension, NH Sea Grant, and NHDES Coastal Program policies.

PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

- **Respect for local knowledge and humanity** – We acknowledge that people should determine what their own neighborhoods and communities want, need, and are willing to do, and we respect their interests, needs, and willingness to participate (or not) in FRN. We believe that all people are knowledge holders and all ways of knowing are valuable (cultural, experiential, western scientific, etc). We believe that incorporating a diversity of thought is an asset to solution-building. We commit to enter into collaborations with respect and humility. We commit to active listening, to approaching constructive feedback without defensiveness, and to being adaptable to new ideas and criticisms.
- **People have a right to their own story** – Individuals and their neighborhoods have a right to their own story and with whom that story is shared. They know best what represents a benefit and what represents harm to their community and a story's power to do either. We seek to understand what these stories mean to them and/or their community so that we can honor this in our work. We will respect their preferences for how and where their stories are shared, regardless of potential cost to the research process or outside ideas of success. We will ensure that we check with them prior to spreading any of their stories beyond our immediate project team.
- **Equity** – We recognize that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and address structural imbalances in systems in order to achieve just outcomes. Successful efforts prioritize the most marginalized: those who experience the most vulnerability to climate change, disproportionate exposure to environmental injustice, and the biggest barriers to benefitting from climate solutions. We acknowledge that centering equity within FRN is an ongoing process, requiring us to continually identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures, such as racism, economic inequality, ableism, and ageism. Focusing on equity allows us to better navigate the complex social, economic, and environmental challenges faced by FRN participants and their broader communities.
- **Honest, committed support** – We strive to support the interests and needs of participants in FRN. We acknowledge that neighborhood priorities and needs may at times be inconsistent or even in conflict with FRN objectives. We will commit to be honest about the support FRN can and cannot offer and will strive to support neighborhood priorities that are consistent with FRN objectives, even if they will not lead to immediate achievement of objectives. We will be honest about the amount of time and funding available to provide neighborhood support. We commit

to maintain contact with the neighborhoods over the long-term and continue to provide what support we are able, even if FRN is no longer a funded program.

- **Collaboration** – We will strive to build and strengthen new and existing relationships and to work together in partnership with neighborhoods rather than provide them with one-directional assistance or knowledge. We will also strive to encourage collaboration among neighborhood residents in order to strengthen neighborhood resilience against many stressors, including flooding, erosion, and the compounding impacts these can have on a wide variety of geophysical and socioeconomic hazards.
- **Science and technical accessibility** – Scientific and technical information will be made accessible to all audiences, ensuring that FRN participants do not feel excluded.
- **Environmental resources** – We acknowledge that environmental resources are a common good, improving the resilience of all members of the community. As a result, nature-based approaches to improve flood resilience and the protection and restoration of environmental resources will be emphasized, where feasible.
- **Time** – We recognize that building connection and trust takes time, and we commit to allowing the time needed to develop community relationships, even if that means sacrificing efficiency.