



## **Blue Acres Bulletin – November 2023**

# **Three Open Application Periods | New Webpage Launches for Local Governments | Blue Acres to Attend League of Municipalities Conference | To Build or Not To Build Homes in Risky Places**

## **HUD-funded Buyout Eligibility Application Open to Authorized Homeowners**

Blue Acres is **now accepting HUD-funded Buyout Eligibility Applications** from homeowners, in consultation with the NJ Department of Community Affairs and the NJ Governor's Disaster Recovery Office. Authorized homeowners were notified in late October and invited to apply for a HUD-funded buyout. **This application period will close on November 30, 2023.** Homeowners and local governments with questions should contact Blue Acres at 609-940-4140 or [BlueAcres@dep.nj.gov](mailto:BlueAcres@dep.nj.gov).

In case you missed it: A **previous eligibility application intake round** closed on June 22. Blue Acres reviewed completed applications and identified 33 households as Low-to-Moderate Income. Applicants were notified in early October and their flood-prone properties were proposed for a HUD-funded buyout to begin in the first quarter of 2024.

## **Flood Buyout Webpage for Local Governments Launches**

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- [NJDCA Smart Move Program Application Open to Local Governments](#)
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Local government officials can find various resources on the newly launched [Blue Acres webpage for Local Governments](#), including FAQs, land use guidance, and more.



Stay tuned as additional resources are forthcoming! Feel free to suggest new resources by emailing [BlueAcres@dep.nj.gov](mailto:BlueAcres@dep.nj.gov).

## FEMA Buyout Funding Application Open to States and Local Governments

The [fiscal year 2023 funding opportunities for two Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs](#) are now posted. FEMA's two competitive mitigation grant programs provide states, local communities, tribes and territories funding to address high-level future risks to natural disasters, including increased flooding, to foster greater community resilience and reduce disaster suffering.



**The application period will close on Feb. 29, 2024.** Blue Acres submits FEMA funding requests in consultation with the NJ Office of Emergency Management and the Governor's Disaster Recovery Office.

## See You at the League of Municipalities Conference!

Blue Acres staff will be at the [New Jersey League of Municipalities annual](#)



[conference](#) from **November 14-16** in Atlantic City.

If you're a municipal official seeking insights on buyouts and resilience planning, don't miss the chance to have a one-on-one discussion with a member of the Blue Acres team. You can find Blue Acres staff tabling in the exhibitor's area. And if you're a resident passionate about flood resilience, consider urging your local officials to connect with Blue Acres while they are at the event.

## About the DEP Office of Climate Resilience

The Office of Climate Resilience at NJDEP helps New Jersey communities make informed decisions about climate resilience. We coordinate across DEP programs and state agency partners to plan for the climate change impacts and hazards that will affect our communities, businesses, infrastructure, and natural resources.

Learn more about resilience resources, tools, and core programs run by the Office of Climate Resilience using the links below and keep an eye out for additional content in future NJDEP Weekly Updates!

- [Resilient NJ](#)
- [Blue Acres](#)
- [The Interagency Council on Climate Resilience](#)
- [NJ Coastal Management Program](#)

## About the DEP Blue Acres program

Blue Acres is part of the DEP Office of Climate Resilience

Since its inception in 1995, Blue Acres has worked to better protect public safety and the environment by relocating New Jersey families whose homes are subject to repeated flooding and acquiring property for use as natural flood storage,

Additional staff from the DEP Office of Climate Resilience will be present in consulting capacities, including the Chief Resilience Officer, Blue Acres program manager, Resilient NJ lead planner, and more!

## “A little bit of everything adds up to a lot of flood protection”

This article by NPR explores why it's so hard to stop building homes in places at risk from climate change: [To build or not to build homes in risky places](#). NJ Chief Resilience Officer Nick Angarone and Blue Acres Program Manager Courtney Wald-Wittkop provide their perspectives.



## NJDCA Smart Move Program Application Open to Local Governments

The NJ Department of Community Affairs [Smart Move Program](#) is a housing development pilot program that will work with local units of government that have partnered with developers to create quality, energy-efficient, resilient, and affordable single-family housing in lower flood risk areas within or near disaster-impacted communities. Phase One of the Smart Move Program is housing development and Phase Two of the Smart Move Program is homebuyer assistance.



Local governments that have partnered with developers may now apply with a housing development project as part of Smart Move Phase One. **The application period for Smart Move Phase One will close April 4, 2024.** Phase Two of the Smart Move Program will be launched as projects in Phase One are nearing completion.

parks, and community open space.

### Today, DEP Blue Acres has two core missions:

**Disaster Recovery:** Blue Acres helps New Jersey residents whose homes have been damaged in flooding events, such as those whose homes were destroyed or damaged when the remnants of Tropical Storm Ida impacted New Jersey in September 2021.

**Preparedness:** Blue Acres contributes to New Jersey's Climate Change Resilience Strategy through a proactive approach to guide state acquisition of lands that increases host community resilience through the strategic acquisition of lands that have been damaged, or may be prone to future damage, due to sea-level rise, storms, or storm-related flooding, or that may buffer or protect other lands from such damage.

The Blue Acres website includes a [webpage for homeowners](#) interested in selling their flood-prone home and learning more about the buyout process steps.

## Contact Blue Acres

*DEP Blue Acres helps New Jersey residents and communities identify and avoid risks of flooding through strategic climate resilience planning and the state-led acquisition of flood-prone property.*

Email: **BlueAcres@dep.nj.gov**

Phone: **(609) 940-4140**

