



# FEMC Working Group Guidelines

## FEMC Mission and Vision

The mission of the Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative (FEMC) is to serve the northeast temperate forest region through improved understanding of long-term trends, annual conditions, and interdisciplinary relationships of the physical, chemical, and biological components of forested ecosystems.

The FEMC also promotes the efficient coordination of multidisciplinary environmental monitoring and research activities among federal, state, university, and private-sector agencies with common interests in the long-term health, management, and protection of forested ecosystems.

The vision of the FEMC is to provide a diverse network of public and private partners, residents, and communities in the Northeast have access to reliable knowledge, data, support, and network connections they need. The FEMC uses this knowledge to sustain more resilient and healthy forest ecosystems and communities.

## FEMC Working Group Expectations

FEMC Working Groups provide input on the development and progress of active FEMC projects. FEMC staff organize and lead the working groups by inviting cooperators to join, defining project objectives, and developing plans to achieve the objectives. The cooperative is notified through the FEMC newsletter and website, as well as through personal invitation, of the forming of a working group. Members with technical expertise and interest in the project topic are welcome to participate.

Projects are identified and developed by FEMC staff through the annual work planning process. Working group members act as guides for the project, identifying regional priorities, gaps, and challenges. They serve as an advisor to aid FEMC staff in completing tasks and provide expert analysis of the project outputs.

Participating on a working group allows cooperators the chance to provide valuable input in the creation of FEMC products, including online tools, analysis and synthesis, and outreach resources. Members are also able to build connections with others from across the region, gain skills in the topic and project management, and engage directly with FEMC staff.

The working groups are temporary, lasting for as long as needed to complete the project, typically no more than one year. The frequency of meetings is dependent on the project needs and determined by the group.

## Working Group Features

FEMC working groups:

- Are facilitated by FEMC staff.
- Work together on a specific project.
- Meet regularly via MS Teams.



- Connect between meetings via email.
- Convene for a specific period of time, or until the project is completed.
- Are not likely to invite rolling membership.

### Participation Expectations

FEMC working group members are expected to:

- Be active participants. Participation on the Working Group is voluntary, but if you elect to join, we ask that you be an active member by attending meetings, responding to requests, and contributing to activities. The success of the group, and project outcomes, depends on all members taking part. Members who do not participate will be asked to confirm if they would like to continue or if they should step down from their role.
- Respect the confidentiality of the group. Working group products-in-progress and discussion topics should not be shared with people outside the group without explicit consent from FEMC staff or by consensus from the group. This is to protect both the shared intellectual property of the group and the ability of members to have difficult and meaningful conversations. Where there is any doubt about what is available for reuse and under what terms, please contact the working group lead.

### What you can expect from participation

- To be included in decisions about when the group meets.
- To be sent calendar invites about working group meetings – and informed ahead of time when meetings are cancelled or rescheduled.
- To access working group resources in a shared folder.
- To help define specific goals and timelines for the group.
- To be kept up to date about deadlines, outputs and other information about the project.
- To be given credit for your contributions to the group.

### What to do if you no longer want to be a working group member

We know that interest and availability are personal resources that change over time. If, after some time in a working group you would like to step back, please reach out to a member of FEMC staff about offboarding. Offboarding will include:

- A short call to discuss confidentiality, credit for work done, and your willingness to participate in future working groups or activities.
- Removal from the shared drive.
- Removal from email mailing lists.
- Removal from the calendar invites to future working group meetings.

For more information about participating on a Working Group, please contact Elissa Schuett ([Elissa.Schuett@uvm.edu](mailto:Elissa.Schuett@uvm.edu))

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