Heavy snowfall in the northern plains during the winter of 2018-2019 brought more than two to five times the amount of snow that normally falls. This set up conditions for record long-term flooding along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers in March and April. In mid-April, when temperatures rose and snow melt occurred, the combination of melting snowpack from the northern plains, coupled with rainfall 200-300% above normal, set the stage for major river flooding into May. The high crests and prolonged period of flooding caused significant strain on area levees, resulting in inundated coastlines and farmlands.

According to the National Weather Service, the first six months of 2019 were among the 10 wettest January through June periods on record for the Mississippi River Valley states, the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes. May 2019 was, historically, the third wettest month on record, and during that month, 45 confirmed tornadoes hit Missouri. The five consecutive months of flooding in the state was historic in terms of the length of time, and in some areas of the state, was historic in terms of river crest height.

The extensive flooding, large amounts of rainfall and numerous tornados from March 2019 thru July 2019 resulted in disaster events that were declared under two separate declarations. Federal Emergency Management Agency Disaster Code DR 4435, covering the period of March 11, 2019, through April 16, 2019, addressed the straight-line winds and flooding. Disaster Code DR 4451 covers the period of April 29, 2019, through July 5, 2019, and includes tornadoes that ravaged many communities, as well as straight-line winds and flooding.

Two agencies, the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), worked together to create a new position, the state disaster recovery coordinator, to assist communities in their recovery following both declared and undeclared events. Using the FEMA National Disaster Recovery Framework as a model, Missouri has developed the Missouri Disaster Recovery Framework. The framework creates a coordinated structure to better address gaps and needs, avoid duplication of efforts, and leverage resources during long-term recovery.

The state disaster recovery coordinator, housed in the Missouri Department of Public Safety’s State Emergency Management Agency and the Missouri Department of Economic Development, is a position currently held by Jessica
Catron. Jessica is the first full-time state disaster recovery coordinator Missouri has had. In previous disasters, the role was assigned only for the length of the disaster and to an existing staff member. This model will allow the coordinator to follow up on undeclared events, and events in rural communities that need assistance with long-term recovery. It will provide these impacted communities with needed information and resources.

In addition to the coordinator, there are six recovery support functions (RSF) that seek to address the core capabilities needed for a community to recover successfully from a disaster or an adverse event. Recovery support functions provide a structure to facilitate problem-solving, improve access to resources and foster coordination among state and federal agencies, non-governmental partners and other stakeholders. Each RSF has a designated coordinating agency along with primary agencies and supporting organizations with programs relevant to each RSF functional area. At the state level, the following recovery support function areas have been activated for the two main disasters related to flooding and tornados in 2019:

- **Economic**, led by the Missouri Department of Economic Development;
- **Health and Social Services**, led by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services;
- **Housing**, led by the Missouri State Treasurer’s Office and the Missouri Housing Development Commission;
- **Infrastructure Systems**, led by the Missouri Department of Transportation;
- **Natural and Cultural Resources**, led by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources;
- **Community**, that is led by local management and builds planning capacity; and
- **Agriculture**, led by the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

Although the state of Missouri has engaged in building the Missouri Disaster Recover Framework since 2016, the disasters from 2019 represent the first Presidentially-declared disasters where all of Missouri’s recovery support functions and a full-time state disaster recovery coordinator are working actively alongside federal and state partners toward long-term recovery.

The groups have hosted two large-scale community partner meetings, each drawing approximately 130-160 attendees. The groups worked on ways the many partners, including non-profit organizations/associations and other state and federal agencies, can work together. The state has been active in drafting the “Mission Scoping Assessment,” “Recovery Support Strategies” and resource guides. These documents are available on the recovery.mo.gov website, that also features links to news articles about state progress toward recovery, lists of available resources for individuals as well as communities and more. An important document created by the Missouri Municipal League has been actively involved in the community partner meetings and represents member cities to the fullest extent possible.
by this group is the "Recovery Resource Guide," a tool for grant awareness, capacity building and potential resources municipalities can use to research possible funding sources and assistance. This document can be found at: https://recovery.mo.gov/media/pdf/recovery-resource-guide.

The Missouri Municipal League has been actively involved in the community partner meetings and represents member cities to the fullest extent possible. The League has been providing input into a variety of areas and is working to bring this information to members. Unfortunately, it appears the state of Missouri is headed towards another year of flooding. The League wants to make sure municipalities are as prepared as possible. If you have any suggestions or questions regarding this group and its activities, please contact Ramona Huckstep, MML Membership and Policy Associate, at rhuckstep@mocities.com or at 573-635-9134.

The State Emergency Management Agency's mission is to help our fellow Missourians prepare for, respond to and recover from all emergencies. Learn more at https://sema.dps.mo.gov/.