

I. Introduction

This section provides a general introduction to the El Dorado County Hazard Mitigation Plan. It is broken down into the following six sections:

- *Background*
- *Purpose*
- *Scope*
- *Authority*
- *Participants in the Planning Process*
- *Description of the Planning Process*

BACKGROUND

Natural hazards, such as floods, tornadoes and hurricanes, are a part of the world around us. Their occurrence is natural and inevitable, and there is little we can do to control their force and intensity. However, through *hazard mitigation planning*, we can control what comes afterward. By minimizing the impact of natural hazards upon our built environment, we can prevent such events from resulting in disasters.

“**Hazard mitigation**” is simply a term for reducing risks to people and property from natural hazards. It includes both structural measures, such as protecting buildings and infrastructure from the forces of wind and water, and non-structural measures, such as natural resource protection and wise floodplain management. These activities can target existing development or seek to protect future development by avoiding any new construction in hazardous areas. It is widely accepted that the most effective mitigation measures are implemented at the local government level, where decisions on the regulation and control of development are ultimately made.

The best way for a community to implement hazard mitigation is through the development and adoption of a local **hazard mitigation plan**. A mitigation plan will ensure that measures to reduce the present and future vulnerability of a community are thoroughly considered before, during, and after the next disaster strikes.

Mitigation planning offers many benefits that include:

- saving lives and property;
- saving money;
- speeding recovery following disasters;
- reducing future vulnerability through wise development / redevelopment;
- expediting both pre-disaster and post-disaster grant funding; and
- demonstrating a firm commitment to improving community health and safety;
- educating the community in the role they can play in insuring their own safety.

Recently, both the State of California and the U.S. Congress made the development of a hazard mitigation plan a specific eligibility requirement for any local government applying for mitigation grant funding. Communities with an adopted plan will therefore become “pre-

positioned” and more apt to receive any available mitigation funds. This requirement also applies to all forms of “local government” which has been defined by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) to include counties, cities, school districts, special districts, Indian tribes, and other small and large governmental entities. Based on that broad requirement, the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) and FEMA have encouraged multi- jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans, and this plan has been designed to serve a multi-jurisdictional function. Besides the County of El Dorado, this plan serves the jurisdictions of the Cities of South Lake Tahoe and Placerville. El Dorado Irrigation District, El Dorado County Office of Education, and South Tahoe Public Utilities District also have Local Hazard Mitigation Plans that have been included as Annex’s. Later versions of this plan may also include other jurisdictions, because broadening the multi-jurisdictional function is the intention of El Dorado County.

Mitigation planning has the potential to produce long-term and recurring benefits by breaking the repetitive cycle of disaster loss. A core assumption of mitigation is that current dollars invested in mitigation practices will significantly reduce the demand for future dollars by lessening the amount needed for emergency recovery, repair and reconstruction. Further, these mitigation practices will enable local residents, businesses and industries to re-establish themselves in the wake of a disaster, getting the community economy back on track sooner and with less interruption.

Mitigation planning will also lead to benefits that go beyond solely reducing hazard vulnerability. Measures such as the acquisition or regulation of land in known hazard areas can help achieve multiple community goals, such as preserving open space, maintaining environmental health and natural features, and enhancing recreational opportunities.

El Dorado County, with a population of 176,075 (US Census Bureau estimate for 7/1/2008) persons, is located in a region of California that is particularly vulnerable to the effects of a range of natural hazards. These hazards threaten the life and safety of County residents, and have the potential to damage or destroy both public and private property and disrupt the local economy and overall quality of life. The County government, its residents and businesses have in fact suffered disaster losses in years past that resulted in significant property damage and the loss of life.

El Dorado County has an established commitment to reducing the potential for future disaster losses. With the majority of the County land area owned or controlled by Federal agencies, there is a large amount of development within or proximate to the public forests. Development in proximity to the higher elevations, steeper slopes, and within the wildland/urban interface places structures and residents close to fire prone lands, and far from fire protection units, water supplies and other services. There are numerous successful efforts to work with private landowners and public agencies to reduce the potential for catastrophic fires and aid evacuation planning. There are also a significant number of policies and programs identified in the El Dorado County General Plan to carefully plan development projects in light of the hazards, to promote safe, and thoughtful growth.

In an effort to sustain this local commitment to hazard mitigation, El Dorado County prepared the first version of its Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2004. At its most inner core, the Plan recommended specific actions to combat the forces of nature and protect its residents from hazard losses. These actions go beyond recommending localized solutions to reduce

existing vulnerability, such as fuel reductions and fire break projects. Local policies on community growth and development, incentives for natural resource protection, and public awareness and outreach activities are examples of other actions considered to reduce El Dorado County's future vulnerability to natural hazards. The Hazard Mitigation Plan was designed to be a living document with implementation and evaluation procedures included to help achieve meaningful objectives and successful outcomes.

The current Hazard Mitigation Plan (2010) makes use of the 2004 plan as a foundation, then incorporates the lessons and strategies learned from recent disaster events that have occurred both locally and state wide to expand on the recommended mitigation measures.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Hazard Mitigation Plan is:

- To protect life, safety and property by reducing the potential for future damages and economic losses that result from natural hazards;
- To qualify for additional grant funding, in both the pre-disaster and post-disaster environment;
- To speed recovery and redevelopment following future disaster events;
- To demonstrate a firm local commitment to hazard mitigation principles; and
- To comply with both state and federal legislative requirements for local hazard mitigation plans.

SCOPE

This Hazard Mitigation Plan will be maintained to fully address the hazards determined to be "high risk" and "moderate risk." Other hazards will be considered, but are not required to be fully addressed within this Plan.

The geographic scope for the Hazard Mitigation Plan includes all unincorporated areas of El Dorado County, as well as the area encompassed by the boundaries of all of the participating jurisdictions. As a multi-jurisdictional plan, each of the participating agencies will also address specific or unique hazards to their jurisdiction in an appendix to the overall plan.

AUTHORITY

This Hazard Mitigation Plan has been adopted by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors. This Plan has been developed to be in accordance with current rules and regulations governing local hazard mitigation plans. The Plan shall be routinely monitored to maintain compliance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency

Assistance Act as amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390 – October 30, 2000); and all related laws and regulations.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

The participants in the development of this Hazard Mitigation Plan include the persons and agencies listed in the following table. Those who participated in a lead role are identified with one asterisk (*) after their name. Agencies with two asterisks (**) are new to the update of this hazard mitigation plan. All others are continuing from our previous hazard mitigation planning effort. Those agencies who did not participate in this update planning process include The City of South Lake Tahoe, the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, and the United State Forest Service.

Name	Agency /Community
Sgt. Bernie Morton	Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services
Marty Hackett	EDC Emergency Services Authority – Fire Districts **
Tom Celio *	El Dorado County Department of Transportation
Peter Maurer*	El Dorado County Planning Department
Chief George Nielsen*	City of Placerville – Police Department
Lt. Bryan Golmitz *	Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services
Mike Bristow *	El Dorado Irrigation District
Vicky Yorty *	El Dorado County Fire Safe Council
Kathy Daniels *	El Dorado County Office of Education
Phyllis Banducci *	CAL FIRE
Aaron Pratt *	City of Placerville – Police Department **
Eric Peterson	Diamond El Dorado Fire **
Greg Schwab *	Georgetown Fire **
Blake Bartel	Marble Mountain CSD **
Walt Rivas	Garden Valley CSD **
Chris Couper	Latrobe Fire Protection District **
Randy Hackbarth	Nashville Trail CSD **
Steven Gau	Georgetown PUD **
Gary Miller	Cameron Estates CSD **
Joe Tyler	Cameron Park CSD **
Chris Sauer	Fallen Leaf Lake CSD **
Rob Cima *	El Dorado County Fire **
Tiffany White	Cameron Park Airport District **
Bob Bryant	Tahoe City PUD **
Robert Gill *	Pioneer Fire Dept **
Bob Davis *	Mosquito Fire **
Dennis Planje	El Dorado Hills Fire **
Heather Schelske	Georgetown Divide Recreation **
Dana Murphy	Cameron Park Estates CSD **
Jeff Michael *	Lake Valley FD **
John Pang *	Meeks Bay FD **
John Poell	Lake Valley FD **
Cynthia Lewis	Showcase CSD **
Hank White	Georgetown PUD **

Tom Keating *	Rescue FD **
Bob Hollis	Rolling Hills CSD **
Bob Hovland	Grizzly Flats CSD **
Prestin Skinner	EDC Mental Health **
Carol velasquez	Marshall Hospital **
Dave Boucke	Consumnes River CSD **
Chris Weston *	EDC Public Health **
Tammy Stoelting	Marble mountain CSD **
Chrystie Davis	Golden West CSD **
Edwin White	Golden West CSD **
Norman Allen	Rising Hill road CSD **
Jose Crummett *	EDC GIS
Dave Johnston *	EDC Environmental Management
Ross Johnson	S. Tahoe PUD

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

El Dorado County OES utilized the process recommended by the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) to develop this Hazard Mitigation Plan. The process included the following steps, listed in order in which they were undertaken:

1. Hazard Identification and Analysis
2. Community Vulnerability Assessment
3. Mitigation Capabilities Assessment
4. Mitigation Strategy
5. Mitigation Action Plan and Implementation Program

Step 1, the *Hazard Identification and Analysis*, describes and analyzes the natural hazards present in El Dorado County that can threaten human life and damage property. It includes historical data of past occurrences, events that have occurred in other similar jurisdictions, and input from public and private agencies, and the community at large.

Step 2, The Community Vulnerability Assessment, was completed through investigative research, community outreach for input, and GIS data, and data received through research studies. It includes tabular and narrative descriptions on community characteristics, such as El Dorado County's geographic, economic and demographic profiles, and discusses future development trends and implications for hazard vulnerability. To graphically depict hazard vulnerability, this section also includes community vulnerability assessment maps. Also included is a qualitative risk index based upon hazard frequency, magnitude and impact. Conclusions of both the quantitative and qualitative nature of risk and vulnerability form the basic foundation for concentrating and prioritizing mitigation planning and efforts.

Step 3, the *Mitigation Capabilities Assessment*, provides a comprehensive examination of El Dorado County's capacity to implement meaningful mitigation strategies, and identifies existing opportunities for program enhancement. Capabilities addressed in this section include staff and organizational capability, technical capability, policy and program capability, fiscal capability, legal authority and political willpower. The purpose of this

assessment is to identify any existing gaps, weaknesses or conflicts in local programs/activities that may hinder mitigation efforts, or to identify those local activities that can be built upon in establishing a successful community hazard mitigation program. Community members were asked to provide insight on mitigation strategies to prevent, and or mitigate the hazards and vulnerabilities they had identified.

The conclusion of these three background studies results in the formation of community goal statements (Step 4) and sets the stage for developing, adopting and implementing a meaningful Hazard Mitigation Strategy (Step 5) for El Dorado County. These two steps help make the Plan strategic and functional for implementation purposes, and ultimately are the “action” components of the plan. Following the completion of Step 5, El Dorado County concentrated on designing measures to ensure the Plan’s ultimate implementation, and adopted evaluation and enhancement procedures to ensure the Plan is routinely updated.

Meetings

Initial training of key County staff members took place in May 2009, followed by a meeting of County staff to assign principal roles and responsibilities. Additional pre-planning meetings took place between the County OES, Planning, Building, Department of Transportation, El Dorado Irrigation, Environmental Management, local fire protection districts, and City of Placerville staff members on May 4, 2009, where the initial scheduling of events was discussed, resulting in assignments being set:

1. May 21, 2009: Initial meeting of all interested jurisdictions, agencies, special districts, and public. Invitations were mailed to all known forms of “local government” in the County, plus all known interested agencies or parties.

June 25, 2009: Additional meeting of all interested jurisdictions, agencies, special districts, and public. Invitations were mailed to all known forms of “local government” in the County, plus all known interested agencies or parties.

Subject: Presentation made on the need for a local hazard mitigation plan, outline of the requirements necessary to gain approval of such a plan, and an invitation to all local government jurisdictions in the County to participate in a multi-jurisdiction plan. Assignments were made to various agencies for submitting drafts of each type of disaster handled by that agency at the end of July.

2. June, July 2009: Provide press releases to local newspapers requesting public input on the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Also, set up a web site on the Sheriff Departments, Office of Emergency Services home page, describing the process and provided an e-mail address, and phone number for the public to give input.

3. June 18-21, 2009: A flyer was passed out from two separate information booths to El Dorado County Fair attendees requesting public input on the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Subject: Requesting public input on impact of local hazards such as wildfires, winter storms, earthquakes, dam failures, land slides, droughts, Seiche Waves, and

terrorism events, listing concerns, and measures that should be taken to prevent or lessen the effect.

4. July 7, 8, 9, 2009: Public and open meetings for all participating jurisdictions as well as interested parties. Meeting occurred in Placerville, El Dorado Hills, and South Lake Tahoe.

Subject: Presentation made on the need for a local hazard mitigation plan, outline of the requirements necessary to gain approval of such a plan, and an invitation to all local government jurisdictions, and public in the County to participate in a multi-jurisdiction plan.

5. El Dorado County Board of Supervisors adopted the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan on*****.