

OUTER BANKS REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE

HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING COMMITTEE – MEETING #3

October 21, 2024, 2pm, Currituck County Public Safety Center

ATTENDANCE

There were seven attendees in person and nine online. The following individuals were in attendance:

Mary Beth Newns, Currituck EM Director
Olivia Doherty, Currituck County EM Deputy Director
Jason Litteral, Currituck County Planning
Patrick Leary, Currituck, Planner I
Millicent Ott, Currituck, Planner II
Tab Winborne, Currituck Stakeholder
Michael Strader, Currituck Stakeholder
Andrea Webster, NCORR
Holly White, NCORR
Carl Baker, NCEM
John Mello, NCEM, Hazard Mitigation Planner
Chris Crew, NCEM
David Stroud, WSP
Abby Moore, WSP
Ranger Ruffins, WSP
Kimmy Hansen, WSP

AGENDA

- Project Overview & Where we are in the Planning Process
- Capability Assessment
 - New Capabilities
 - Substantial Damage Estimate Procedures
- Mitigation Strategy
 - Review Goals & Objectives
 - Mitigation Action Updates
- Discussion
- Next Steps

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Abby Moore with WSP began the presentation by explaining where we are in the planning process. Currently, the plan update is in Phase 3 of the four-phase planning process which involves development of the mitigation strategy, including setting goals, reviewing possible activities, and drafting an action plan. Abby reminded the committee that there will be one more committee meeting and one more public meeting where WSP will present the draft plan. Afterwards, the plan will be sent to the State for review.

CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

A capability assessment measures local resources and tools available to support or implement mitigation projects. It identifies gaps, conflicts, and opportunities in existing local plans, policies, and programs. Additionally, a capability assessment identifies mitigation measures already in place or underway.

Indicators of capability in this plan update include the following:

- Plans and Regulatory – plans, programs, ordinances
- Administrative & Technical – staff, training, expertise
- Fiscal Resources – bonds, fees, taxes, CIP, grants
- Education and Resources – engaged stakeholders, public outreach, warning & notification
- Mitigation Resources – grants, past mitigation projects performance
- Political Will – public and leadership support for mitigation, investments, regulation enforcement

Previous Capability Self-Assessment Results

Abby reviewed the previous capability self-assessment results which can be found in the table below. Abby asked if these ratings should be changed and reminded the committee that all comments or revisions about the capability self-assessment results can be emailed directly to Abby.

Jurisdiction	Plans, Ordinances, Codes and Programs	Administrative and Technical	Fiscal	Education and Outreach	Mitigation	Political	Overall
Currituck County	High	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High
Dare County	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Duck	High	Moderate	Moderate	High	Limited	Moderate	Moderate
Kill Devil Hills	High	High	Moderate	High	Limited	Moderate	Moderate
Kitty Hawk	Moderate	Limited	Moderate	Limited	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Manteo	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Limited	Limited	Moderate	Moderate
Nags Head	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Southern Shores	High	High	High	High	High	High	High

Changes Since the Last Plan Update

Abby reviewed the changes in capability that have occurred since the last plan update and mentioned other new resources such as comprehensive plan updates, flood damage prevention ordinance updates, the Albemarle Regional Resilience Portfolio, the NC 12 Task Force & Report, and the Joint Hazardous Material Commodity Flow Study. Abby asked the committee if there were any changes that were missing from the list. The HMPC indicated that Emergency Management has expanded the use of social media for outreach, and Everbridge participation is increasing. Additionally, seven homes were elevated through an HMGP grant. It was also noted that the Soil & Water Conservation District received grant funding for ditch maintenance and Currituck County applied for a BRIC grant for stormwater improvements in Corolla; this application was not selected but the County will apply again during the next BRIC cycle.

New FEMA Requirements

Abby briefly noted that there is a new FEMA requirement for substantial damage estimate procedures. The plan must include information on how participating communities use the NFIP to reduce risk after a disaster through substantial damage and substantial improvement (SD/SI) procedures.

Capability Vs. Mitigation

Abby emphasized the difference between capability and mitigation actions and gave examples of different scenarios found on slide 13. Mitigation actions should be applicable to the next five years and should be specific actions that help achieve the plans goals and objectives. It is important to focus on projects that reduce risk and vulnerability. Abby noted that the jurisdictions do not need to include actions that focus on established or ongoing practices.

MITIGATION STRATEGY

A mitigation strategy is meant to reduce the impact of hazards on existing development and ensure future development occurs in a way that minimizes vulnerability.

Goals & Objectives

David reviewed the existing goals and objectives from the previous plan update and discussed potential revisions to implement with the committee for the current plan update.

Goal 1: Reduce the risk of loss of life and personal injury from hazards.

- Objective 1-1: Educate citizens to encourage individual responsibility to protect themselves and their families from hazards.
- Objective 1-2: Reduce the risk and impact of future hazards by mitigating risk of development in both known hazard areas and areas expected to face future hazard risk.

David suggested rewriting objective 1.2 to make it more concise.

Goal 2: Maintain critical facilities and infrastructure and protect them from damage.

- Objective 2-1: Retrofit or otherwise protect critical facilities and infrastructure.
- Objective 2-2: Increase redundancy of critical systems and services.

There was discussion surrounding the wording of objective 2.2 between committee members. David clarified that the definition of critical facilities and infrastructure is not finite and can cover other types of systems such as water infrastructure. Some committee members felt that this objective should remain. Holly White with NCORR noted that by adding EV chargers or solar panels to critical facilities it may open the doors to additional sources of funding through the EPA.

Goal 3: Ensure that hazard mitigation practices, construction techniques, policies, and ordinances are integrated for both new development and post-disaster development to enhance resiliency and enable speedy recovery.

- Objective 3-1: Adopt protective development standards and establish post-disaster redevelopment policies.
- Objective 3-2: Preserve and protect natural and beneficial floodplain functions and key natural resources.
- Objective 3-3: Explore, develop, and implement new pre-disaster opportunities that build community resilience.

David suggested removing the “pre” and “post” development language from this goal.

Goal 4: Improve inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination, especially regarding the reduction of hazard impacts.

- Objective 4-1: Coordinate development standards across jurisdictions.
- Objective 4-2: Encourage and enable inter-jurisdictional communication.

Chris Crew encouraged the committee to consider adding an objective to goal 4 that will provide a regional resilience approach for both counties to participate in. If one doesn't currently exist, Chris suggested adding a new regional project. It was noted that it will be important to properly represent all jurisdictions in the region.

Mitigation Action Requirements

David informed the committee that FEMA requires at least one mitigation action for each identified hazard in the plan update. All mitigation actions will need to be organized into the categories found below. David noted that to maximize CRS credit they should include flood-related actions in at least five of the six mitigation categories.

1. Prevention (land development plans & zoning, freeboard requirements)
2. Property Protection (acquisition, elevation, floodproofing, backup generators)
3. Structural Projects (floodwalls, stormwater improvements, harden critical infrastructure)
4. Emergency Services (warning systems, response capacity & capability improvements)
5. Natural Resource Protection (dune or wetland restoration, vegetative management, open space preservation)
6. Public Education (mailings, websites, social media campaigns, interactive map tools, hazard disclosure requirements, targeted outreach and engagement)

Current Action Plans

David reviewed the current action plans in terms of what mitigation categories they cover and what hazards they address. The tables found on slides 19 and 20 include the status updates that have already been sent to Abby. Drought, earthquake, extreme heat, and severe winter storm have the fewest hazard-specific actions.

PRI Summary Results

David briefly reviewed the PRI summary results with the committee. Flood, hurricane and coastal hazards, and excessive heat were the only hazard profiles to be rated a “High Risk” for the Outer Banks Region. David reminded the committee that it is important to consider adding more mitigation actions for the high priority hazards. A question was asked concerning the spatial extent of cyber attack and that it should be rated higher than “small” as it has the potential for impacting the whole community. David pointed out that spatial extent was taken from a physical context to represent a cyber attack on single buildings such as hospitals. Additionally, it was noted that FEMA and the State will not be evaluating cyber attack as they only look at the natural hazard profiles. Comments on the HIRA can be sent to Abby.

High Risk (≥ 3.0)	Flood Hurricane & Coastal Hazards Excessive Heat
Moderate Risk (2.0 – 2.9)	Tornadoes & Thunderstorms Severe Winter Storm Terrorism Transportation Infrastructure Failure Wildfire Drought Cyber Attack Hazardous Materials Incident
Low Risk (< 2.0)	Earthquake Radiological Emergency

New Mitigation Action Ideas

David discussed potential new mitigation action ideas that could be added into the plan update. He reminded the committee that these are only ideas to help them think of new actions and have not been added to the plan update. The action ideas presented can be found on slides 23-27. David encouraged the committee to look for plan integration opportunities by incorporating actions from comprehensive plans, capital improvement plans, and RCCP Resilience Strategy Project Portfolios.

Survey Results

David reviewed results of the public survey which received a total of 475 responses. Abby will send a copy of the survey responses, which can be sorted by jurisdiction to help give specific feedback to the different communities regarding proposed mitigation action ideas.

DISCUSSION

Holly noted that Currituck County has drainage/stormwater requirements for subdivisions and commercial development. A new action could be to update those requirements to the Atlas 14/15 numbers. That would bring them up to planning for the rainfall of today. If trying to be more resilient, they could explore how future rainfall might impact that numbers as well. The climate office is working on this and would have that data to help inform that.

NEXT STEPS

David discussed the key milestones and upcoming meetings that will be facilitated by WSP. The HMPC was asked to review all mitigation actions and send updates to Abby by the end of November. WSP will provide a draft plan for the committee to review at the next meeting which will be tentatively scheduled in December. Following the committee's review of the plan WSP will send the plan to the State for review. The existing plan is set to expire in June of 2025.