

Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan

Summary of December 1, 2020 Kickoff Meeting held Virtually via Zoom 1:00-3:00PM

Presentations, support documents, and other resources can be found at <http://www.a-npdc.org/accomack-northampton-planning-district-commission/coastal-resources/hazard-mitigation-planning/>.

Steering Committee Members Present:

Thomas Beasley, Town of Bloxom
Greg Hardesty, Town of Cheriton
Jeb Brady, Town of Cape Charles
Tom Brockenbrough, Accomack County
Jackie Davis, Town of Cheriton
Keith Greer, Town of Parksley
Chris Guvernator, Accomack County
Robert Williams, Town of Wachapreague
Arthur Leonard, Town of Chincoteague
Susan McGhee, Northampton County
Jayme Salazar, Town of Onley
Bryan Rush, Town of Chincoteague

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Charles Pruitt, Accomack County (alt pres)
Town of Painter
Town of Accomac
Town of Saxis
Town of Exmore
Town of Eastville
Town of Tangier
Town of Nassawadox
Town of Keller
Town of Belle Haven
Town of Hallwood
Town of Onancock
Town of Melfa

Steering Committee Alternates Present:

Jeanette Eby, Town of Bloxom
Danny Siegert, Town of Parksley
Mark Bowden, Town of Chincoteague
Billie Jean Miles, Accomack County

VDEM Present:

Bruce Sterling, Region V Coordinator
Harrison Bresee, All Hazards Planner

A-NPDC Staff Present:

Shannon Alexander
Jessica Steelman
Bobbie Wert
Drew Williams, Berkley Group
Thomas Hicks, Berkley Group

Planning Council Members Present:

Susan Bates, The Nature Conservancy
Jill Bieri, The Nature Conservancy
Mark Belknap, A&N Electric Cooperative
Lynn Brankley, A&N Electric Cooperative
Scott Hall, ESCC
Julie Head, ES SWCD
Chris Isdell, VDOT
Robie Marsh, ESVA Chamber of Commerce
Paul Muhly, Accomack County
Hali Plourde-Rogers, ESLT
Evelyn Shotwell, Chincoteague Chamber
Curtis Taylor, A&N Electric Cooperative

Welcome and Introductions

Shannon Alexander, Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) Director of Planning welcomed participants and guided all participants to introduce themselves, identify their affiliation, if they've been

Brief Hazard History of the Shore

Jessica Steelman, Coastal Planner for A-NPDC, reviewed the Eastern Shore's hazard history. High winds, coastal flooding, and coastal erosion from hurricanes, tropical storms, and nor'easters, constitute the majority of hazards.

Storm records date back to the 1600, but data are lacking regarding the extent of damage for most of the historical storms. What can be said is they occur with some regularity and the category of storm does not necessarily dictate its potential for danger. Storm track, speed, and direction, current ground conditions (i.e. soils that are already saturated from a recent storm), tide cycle, and other factors contribute to its potential to cause harm to people and property.

Other hazards discussed included storm water flooding from brief, high intensity rainfall that exceeds stormwater drainage capacity, blizzards and other ice and snow events, drought, pandemic/biohazards, and extreme heat and cold.

Hazard Mitigation Planning - Requirements & Process

Shannon Alexander described Hazard Mitigation Planning as a plan of policies and sustained actions to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards. At their most basic, the plans require jurisdictions to identify hazards and their vulnerabilities to them, and then identify goals, strategies and actions to reduce losses caused by these hazards.

The plan not only improves conditions before disasters, but also guides post-disaster recovery. A well-coordinated plan can be integrated into other plans, such as comprehensive plans, housing plans, and transportation plans, and can be implemented through local tools such as county zoning and building ordinances.

Once goals are set and strategies developed, mitigation actions are selected and prioritized. The plan is sent to VDEM and FEMA for approval and local units of government adopt it by resolution. From there, communities work towards meeting their goals, documenting progress, and updating the plan with additional strategies.

Communities that participate in hazard mitigation planning, and that adopt the final plan, are eligible for FEMA hazard mitigation grants. Some mitigation grants are pre-disaster, but large

amounts also become available during disaster recovery. Those localities that choose not to participate in hazard mitigation planning will not be eligible for any mitigation funding.

Planning Activity 1: Steering Committee & Planning Council

Participant Expectations

Shannon Alexander explained the Steering Committee and Planning Council roles. The Steering Committee is made up primarily of representatives of participating county and town governments. They will vote on the contents of the plan, because they are the ones who will have to adopt the plan in the end. The Planning Council is a wide-reaching stakeholder group that will participate throughout the process, offering expertise and experience. Planning Council members will be invited to attend all Steering Committee meetings and will receive all agenda and supporting materials.

A-NPDC staff and partners with the Berkley Group, LLC will provide technical assistance, process management, and accountability for meeting state and federal plan requirements.

Establish dates & times for Steering Committee meetings

After much discussion, the third Tuesday of each month at 2:00pm was chosen for the monthly virtual meetings.

Planning Activity 2: Review ES Hazards & Ranking Process

Shannon Alexander showed a table representing the hazards and their ranks included in the 2006, 2011, and 2016 iterations of the Plan. She quickly reviewed the process and stated that the first meetings of the Committee in 2021 would be completing this process.

The meeting ended at approximately 3:10 p.m.