

## Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan

Summary of June 15, 2021 Steering Committee Meeting held Virtually via Zoom 2:00-4:00pm

*Presentations, support documents, recordings 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:**

Susan McGhee, Northampton County  
Tom Brockenbrough, Accomack County  
Bob Williams, Town of Wachapreague  
Patsy Stith, Town of Nassawadox  
Jeanette Eby, Town of Bloxom

### **Steering Committee Members Absent:**

Town of Painter  
Town of Accomac  
Town of Saxis  
Town of Exmore  
Town of Eastville  
Town of Tangier  
Town of Keller  
Town of Belle Haven  
Town of Hallwood  
Town of Melfa  
Town of Parksley

### **A-NPDC Staff Present:**

Ashley Mills, A-N PDC  
Thomas Hicks, Berkley Group  
Jon McCoy, Berkley Group  
Aaron Berryhill, Berkley Group

### **Planning Council Members Absent:**

Scott Hall, ESCC  
Hali Plourde-Rogers, ESLT  
Evelyn Shotwell, Chincoteague Chamber  
Susan Bates, The Nature Conservancy

## Welcome and Introductions

Thomas Hicks, The Berkley Group, welcomed participants. He gave a round of introductions for the planning team working on the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Ashley Mills from A-NPDC also provided a brief introduction and explained the In-Kind contributions tracking form. This form collects information on all work conducted on the project by various stakeholders. Using a google drive link, this form tracks activity to ensure that funding for projects and grants can be maximized.

## Funding Announcement

Thomas started by sharing a new funding announcement for the Community Flood Preparedness Fund from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Local communities should consider obtaining funding from this grant as they consider flooding hazards in their communities and begin to adopt the Hazard Mitigation Plan later this year.

Round Table Discussion: *What recent funding opportunities has your community secured? Do you have any advice to share regarding your experience?*

Committee members were asked to consider the discussion question about local funding opportunities for local communities related to hazard mitigation. Some respondents stated that most recent hazard mitigation efforts have been funded by money from local taxes, but that many communities are optimistic that the bail out money from the federal government can help fund hazard mitigation needs. Expertise and time to write grant applications is one barrier to receiving grant funding.

To improve access to grant funding, towns may coordinate grant writing and application strategies with their respective counties and with the PDC. Proactive strategizing for grants will be more successful in receiving funding as well. Finally, communities should also be careful to make sure that any outside help that works on grant funding truly understands the needs of the local community.

## Presentation on the National Flood Insurance Program

The presentation on the National Flood Insurance Program was postponed for this meeting due to a last-minute cancellation from the presenter.

## Chapter Updates

Next, the planning team provided an update of the progress of finalizing the draft of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Thomas and Jon gave an overview of each chapter in the plan that explained the status of each chapter and any remaining needs.

*Chapter 1:* This chapter gives a broad overview of the hazards in the Eastern Shore along with any recent updates. Thomas noted that the previous plan version covered major storm events up until Hurricane Sandy. He asked committee members if there were any notable storm events since that time that would be worth mentioning in the first chapter.

One attendee noted a storm in the summer of 2019 that downed multiple trees on Chincoteague and Assateague Islands. Committee members also noted a strong storm from 2018 that caused damage to roads. That storm specifically washed out the main road to Hillsborough and VDOT had to completely

reconstruct the road. The links below were shared during the meeting that provide pictures and descriptions of some of the recent storm events discussed in the meeting.

<https://www.delmarvanow.com/story/news/local/virginia/2019/05/16/washed-out-hillsborough-road-accomack-county-reopens-after-repairs/3691097002/>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vadot/albums/72157706484077335>

*Chapters 2 & 3:* These chapters discuss the overall planning process as well as the initial risk assessment of local hazards. These chapters are mostly complete and document the recent planning process for this plan. They also address the possible risks of various hazards in each community.

*Chapters 4-7:* These chapters expand on the high hazard risks identified in Chapter 3. This includes High Wind, Coastal Erosion, Coastal Flooding, Stormwater, Pandemic. These chapters are almost complete and have been updated with new references and adjusted to be consistent with the rest of the plan. The remaining need for these chapters is updated stories, details, and personal accounts as well as photos of recent hazardous events. Jon requested that committee members assist with providing any relevant information.

*Chapter 8:* This chapter takes a regional view of hazard mitigation while the subsequent chapters dive into the details for each respective local community. This chapter has been revised from previous iterations of the plan to remove redundant and repetitive information.

*Chapters 9-26:* These chapters address county and local community specific needs. Ashley has been in touch with each community to draft these chapters. These chapters are almost complete, but local communities are encouraged to respond to any outstanding requests from Ashley.

*Chapters 27-30:* These chapters contain the mitigation strategies for the localities. Thomas reminded the committee to update their mitigation objectives using the survey link (<https://arcg.is/bf54K>). Thomas stressed the importance of the mitigation objectives and encouraged all committee members to provide their update.

## Timeline

The meeting concluded with a brief overview of the timeline for the project. The project is on schedule and a complete draft will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) by August 1. VDEM will provide input and feedback on the draft for the planning team to address and change. Tentatively, a call will be scheduled in October to address any final needs and provide direction for proceeding towards final adoption by local communities at the end of year.

## Next Steps

The next steps for the project will be to complete all updates to the plan. A-NPDC staff will reach out to localities to ensure their chapter content is accurate. This content will be compiled into a complete draft to submit to VDEM by August 1. The meeting ended at 3:00 p.m.