



## **Section 1: Overview**

This section addresses the following DMA 2000 requirements:

*Requirement §201.6(c)(5): [The local hazard mitigation plan shall include] documentation that the plan has been formally adopted by the governing body of the jurisdiction requesting approval of the Plan (e.g. City Council, County Commissioner, Tribal Council).*

### **Introduction**

The Snyder County Board of Commissioners, in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000)<sup>1</sup>, spearheaded a county-wide hazard mitigation planning effort to prepare, adopt, and implement a multi-jurisdictional HMP for the County and 19 of its 21 municipalities.<sup>2</sup>

The Snyder County Planning Department (SCPD), in collaboration with the Snyder County Emergency Management Agency (SCEMA), was charged by the Board of Commissioners to prepare this Plan. Technical assistance from a Pennsylvania-based consulting firm was also used to prepare this Plan. A Federal Emergency Management Agency Mitigation Planning Grant was secured and coupled with project funds budgeted by the County Board of Commissioners to pay for the Plan's preparation.

### **Hazard Mitigation Planning and the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000**

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act by repealing the previous mitigation planning provisions (Section 409) and replacing them with a new set of requirements (Section 322). Through this amendment, Section 322 prescribes new and revitalized approaches to hazard mitigation planning and emphasizes the need for state, tribal, and local entities to closely coordinate mitigation planning and implementation efforts. Of note for Snyder County and its municipal governments is the requirement for state and local governments to have an approved HMP as a prerequisite to receiving post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds after November 1, 2004.

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<sup>1</sup> Disaster Mitigation Act, Public Law 106-390 of October 10, 2000

<sup>2</sup> Chapman, Union and Monroe Townships have FEMA-approved Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans  
[http://www.fema.gov/fima/approved\\_plans\\_req3.shtm#pa](http://www.fema.gov/fima/approved_plans_req3.shtm#pa)



**DMA 2000—Section 322, Mitigation Planning**

“(a) Requirement of Mitigation Plan — As a condition of receipt of an increased Federal share for hazard mitigation measures under subsection (e), a State, local, or tribal government shall develop and submit for approval to the President a mitigation plan that outlines processes for identifying the natural hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities of the area under the jurisdiction of the government.

“(b) Local and Tribal Plans — Each mitigation plan developed by a local or tribal government shall — (1) describe actions to mitigate hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities identified under the plan: and (2) establish a strategy to implement those actions.”

To implement the new DMA 2000 hazard mitigation planning criteria, the Federal Emergency Management Agency published an Interim Final Rule (the Rule) in the **Federal Register** at 44 CFR Part 201. The Rule clearly establishes the hazard mitigation planning criteria for state and local plans. According to Section 201.1(b) of the Rule, the purpose of hazard mitigation planning is for state, local, and Indian tribal governments to:

- identify the natural hazards that impact them
- identify actions and activities to reduce any losses from those hazards
- establish a coordinated process to implement the plan, taking advantage of a wide range of resources

The Rule describes three general types of hazard mitigation plans: standard state mitigation plans, enhanced state mitigation plans, and local mitigation plans. Regardless of the type, the hazard mitigation planning process must be open to the public and provide an opportunity for comment during the drafting stage and prior to plan approval. Public involvement is important to provide a more comprehensive approach to hazard mitigation planning and to increase the opportunity for successful implementation.

**Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Requirements<sup>3</sup>**

Local Mitigation Plan requirements in Section 201.6 of the Rule apply to both local jurisdictions and tribal governments that elect to participate in FEMA mitigation grant programs as a sub-applicant or sub-grantee (henceforth referred to as local jurisdictions). The local mitigation planning requirements in this section encourage agencies at all levels, local residents, businesses, and the non-profit sector to participate in the mitigation planning and implementation process. This broad public participation enables the development of mitigation actions supported by these various stakeholders and reflects the needs of the community.

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<sup>3</sup> Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.



Private sector participation, in particular, may lead to identifying local funding that otherwise would not have been considered for mitigation activities.

As with state plans, the DMA 2000 requires that local mitigation plans need only address natural hazards. FEMA recommends, however, that local plans address manmade and technological hazards, if possible. In many instances, natural disasters have secondary effects, such as dams breaking due to floods, or hazardous material releases due to tornadoes. Multi-hazard plans will better serve communities in the event of such disasters.

States are required to coordinate with local governments in the formation of hazard mitigation strategies. Local strategies combined with initiatives at the state level to form the basis for the state mitigation plan. With the information contained in local mitigation plans, states are better able to identify technical assistance needs and prioritize project funding. Furthermore, as communities prepare their plans, states can continually improve the level of detail and comprehensiveness of statewide risk-assessments.

For the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program, local jurisdictions must have an approved mitigation plan to receive a project grant. Local jurisdictions must have approved plans by November 1, 2004, to be eligible for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding for presidentially declared disasters after this date. Plans approved after November 1, 2004, will enable communities eligible to receive PDM and HMGP project grants.

FEMA's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Review Crosswalk (Plan Review Crosswalk) provides a checklist of HMP requirements and was used by the SCPD to ensure this document met the requirements for a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Plan Review Crosswalk is based on the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, published by FEMA in March 2004. This Plan Review Crosswalk is consistent with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-390), enacted October 30, 2000 and 44 CFR Part 201 – Mitigation Planning, Interim Final Rule (the Rule), published February 26, 2002.

**Multi-jurisdictional Plan Adoption**

*Requirement §201.6(c)(5): For multi-jurisdictional plans, each jurisdiction requesting approval of the plan must document that it has been formally adopted.*

A governing body's formal adoption of a HMP is a prerequisite to receiving FEMA's final approval. As such, the Snyder County Board of Commissioners and the governing bodies of each participating municipality executed resolutions proclaiming their approval and acceptance of this Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Copies of these resolutions are provided in Appendix A.



Adoption of this Plan by Snyder County and its municipalities will not only allow each municipality to be eligible for disaster mitigation grant funds, but also provides each municipality with a thorough understanding of its vulnerability to various hazards and a blueprint for mitigating damaging effects.

**Multi-jurisdictional Planning Participation**

*Requirement §201.6(a)(3): Multi-jurisdictional plans (e.g., watershed plans) may be accepted, as appropriate, as long as each jurisdiction has participated in the process...Statewide plans will not be accepted as multi-jurisdictional plans.*

Snyder County used an open, public process to prepare this HMP. Meetings with municipal officials, including municipal emergency management coordinators, were conducted to inform and educate them about DMA 2000 and its requirements for Local Hazard Mitigation Plans. In turn, municipal officials provided information related to existing codes and ordinances, the risks and impacts of known hazards on local infrastructure and critical facilities, and recommendations for related mitigation opportunities. The pinnacle to the municipal involvement process was the adoption of the final Plan.

**The Planning Process**

*Requirement §201.6(b): In order to develop a more comprehensive approach to reducing the effects of natural disasters, the planning process shall include:*

- (1) An opportunity for the public to comment on the plan during the drafting stage and prior to plan approval;*
- (2) An opportunity for neighboring communities, local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation activities, and agencies that have the authority to regulate development, as well as businesses, academia and other private non-profit interests to be involved in the planning process; and*
- (3) Review and incorporation, if appropriate, of existing plans, studies, reports, and technical information.*

*Requirement §201.6(c)(1): [The plan shall document] the planning process used to develop the plan, including how it was prepared, who was involved in the process, and how the public was involved.*

The SCPD was responsible for preparing and coordinating the adoption of this Hazard Mitigation Plan. To assist in this task, the Snyder County Board of Commissioners retained the professional services of Delta Development Group, Inc. (Delta) of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, to assist in preparing and submitting the aforementioned FEMA Mitigation



Planning Grant. Delta's services were also used to prepare and assist the SCPD in executing the project work plan.

Extensive efforts were made to involve local elected officials and solicit their input to identify and prioritize local hazards, assess their impacts on community assets, and develop sound and feasible mitigation strategies. Meetings were conducted and information regarding the Snyder County Hazard Mitigation Plan was distributed to each municipality and posted to the County's Web site. A news release regarding the project was developed and issued to local media contacts and distributed to each municipality. Appendix B contains copies of the various meeting notices and communications distributed by the County to solicit public participation in the planning process.

Snyder County's public involvement process also included discussions with numerous public and private stakeholders, including: The Greater Susquehanna Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce, Susquehanna University, National Weather Service, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, and major employers.

The Selinsgrove Chamber of Commerce and the Beaver Springs Chamber of Commerce were contacted to assess the impact hazards have on County businesses. The Chamber stated power outages pose the greatest threat to member businesses, because there are few economic centers located in the floodplain. Mitigating these hazards was seen as essential, because critical functions, such as pumping water, are halted during lengthy power outages. The Chamber also noted few hazardous effects attributable to the proposed expansion of U.S. Route 11/15.

External contributors were given an opportunity to gauge and contribute to the hazard mitigation planning process through public meetings in two Snyder County locations. Nearly all Snyder County municipalities were represented by local elected officials at these meetings. Other organizations were also notified to attend and provide feedback and insight into the planning process. Mark Wilson, project engineer from Wilson Consulting Group, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, offered extensive information on the current conditions and the necessary improvements of local bridges in Snyder County.