

Section Two

Planning Process

Introduction

The process utilized to develop a hazard mitigation plan is as important as the final planning document itself. Las Animas County utilized and adapted the four-step hazard mitigation planning process as outlined by FEMA to fit the needs of the county, specific jurisdictions, and changing circumstances during the planning process period. The following section describes the planning process including project schedule; project meeting times, dates, agendas, and attendees; outreach efforts to the general public, neighboring jurisdictions, and available stakeholders; general information relative to the risk assessment process; general information relative to local/county capabilities; plan review and adoption; and a brief discussion of plan maintenance.

Requirement § 201.6(b): Planning Process. An open public involvement process is essential to the development of an effective plan. 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 state 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 and 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.

Multi-Jurisdictional Approach

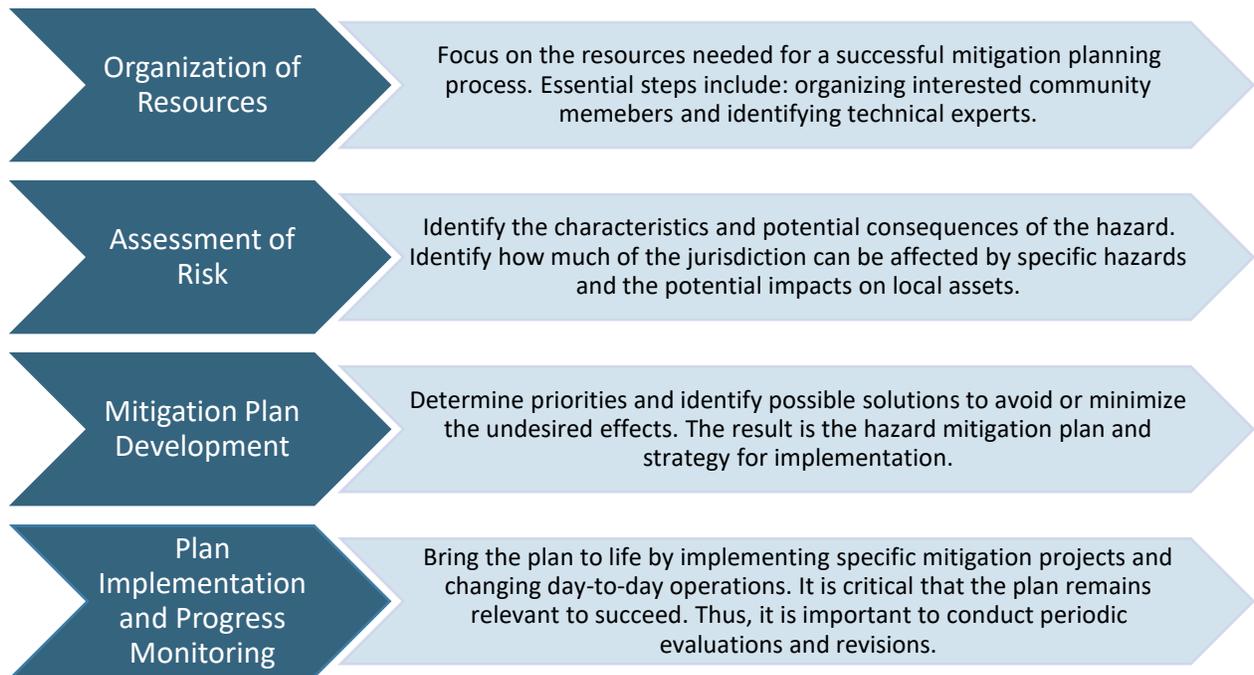
According to FEMA, “A multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan is a plan jointly prepared by more than one jurisdiction.” For the purpose of this planning process, the term ‘jurisdiction’ refers to any eligible (i.e. taxing authority) participating entity. Title 44 Part 201, Mitigation Planning in the CFR, defines a ‘local government’ as “any county, municipality, city, town, township, public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments, regional or interstate government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government; any Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, any rural community, unincorporated town or village, or other public entity.” For the purposes of this plan, a ‘taxing authority’ was utilized as a qualifier for jurisdictional participation. FEMA recommends the multi-jurisdictional approach under the DMA 2000 for the following reasons.

- It provides a comprehensive approach to the mitigation of hazards that affect multiple jurisdictions.
- It allows economies of scale by leveraging individual capabilities and sharing cost and resources.
- It avoids duplication of efforts.
- It imposes an external discipline on the process.

Both FEMA and DHSEM recommend this multi-jurisdictional approach. Las Animas County utilized the multi-jurisdictional planning process recommended by FEMA resources (Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide¹, Local Mitigation Planning Handbook², and Mitigation Ideas: A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards³) to develop this plan.

Hazard Mitigation Planning Process

The hazard mitigation planning process as outlined by FEMA has four general steps which are detailed in the figure below. The mitigation planning process is rarely a linear procedure. It's common that ideas developed during the initial assessment of risks may need revision later in the process, or that additional information may be identified while developing the mitigation plan or during the implementation of the plan that results in new goals or additional risk assessments. The four-step approach is described in the figure below.



Organization of Resources

Plan Update Schedule

JEO Consulting Group (JEO), was contracted in August 2021 to assist, guide, and facilitate the HMP planning process and the plan assembly. Las Animas County secured PDM grant funding for their multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan (HMP) in 2019. As the county sponsor, Kim Chavez (Emergency Manager) served as the primary contact from Las Animas County. A timeline of this plan update process is provided in Figure 1.

1 Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2011. "Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide." https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1809-25045-7498/plan_review_guide_final_9_30_11.pdf
 2 Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2013. "Local Mitigation Planning Handbook." https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1910-25045-9160/fema_local_mitigation_handbook.pdf
 3 Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2013. "Mitigation Ideas: A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards." https://www.fema.gov/media-librarydata/20130726-1904-25045-0186/fema_mitigation_ideas_final508.pdf

Figure 1: Project Schedule



Project Kickoff

A project Kick-off meeting was held on September 23, 2021, to discuss an overview of the planning process between JEO staff, Las Animas County, and identified key contacts. Discussion at this meeting included participation requirements for eligible jurisdictions, project description, review of plan goals and objectives, identification of hazards for the risk assessment, identification of all potential plan participants or key stakeholders, and the overall schedule for the planning process. This meeting also assisted in clarifying roles and responsibilities, strategies for public engagement throughout the process, and a brief discussion of applicable COVID-19 safety measures and contingency plans for the HMP update process. The following table shows the date, location, and attendees from the Kick-off Meeting.

Table 1: Kick-off Meeting Information

Meeting Date and Location		Agenda Items
September 23, 2021, at 9:30 am via Zoom		-Consultant, hazard mitigation, and local planning team responsibilities -Overview of plan update process and changes from 2017 HMP -Public engagement and participants -Goals and Objectives/Hazard Identification
Name	Title	Jurisdiction
Kim Chavez	Emergency Manager	Las Animas County
Christe Coleman	South Region Field Manager	DHSEM
Kathy Kumm	Clerk	Town of Cokedale & Cokedale Volunteer Fire Department
Tim Howard	Fire Chief	Trinidad Fire Department
Kim Peters	Extension Agent for Agriculture and 4-H	Colorado State University
Derek Navarette	Sheriff	Las Animas County
Tyra Avila	Clerk	Town of Aguilar
Beatriz Portillo	Disaster Program Specialist	Red Cross
Dave Bacharach	Fire Chief	Hoehne Fire Protection District
Phil Rico	Mayor	City of Trinidad
Michael Aragon	Executive Director	Colorado Department of Human Services
Jolynn Gurule	-	Colorado Department of Human Services
Marion Sanchez	-	Colorado Department of Human Services
Phil Luebbert	Project Manager	JEO Consulting Group
Karl Dietrich	Planner	JEO Consulting Group

Neighboring Jurisdictions

Neighboring jurisdictions were notified of the Las Animas County HMP update and invited to participate in the planning process. The following table lists the neighboring communities or entities notified of the planning process. All entities were emailed or mailed an invite to HMP update meetings. A representative from Huerfano County attended the Round 1 Meeting. No comments or revisions were received from any neighboring jurisdictions.

Table 2: Notified Neighboring Jurisdictions

Neighboring Jurisdictions	Individual
Baca County, CO	Emergency Manager
Bent County, CO	Emergency Manager
Colfax County, NM	Emergency Manager
Costilla County, CO	Emergency Manager
Huerfano County, CO	Emergency Manager
Otero County, CO	Emergency Manager
Pueblo County, CO	Emergency Manager
Union County, NM	Emergency Manager

Stakeholders

Potential stakeholders were identified by the consultant, plan sponsor, and key contacts at the kickoff meeting. These stakeholders were notified of the HMP update and invited to participate in the planning process. The following table lists entities notified of the planning process. In addition, stakeholders were asked to review the plan and provide comments during public review. No comments were received from the notified stakeholders.

Table 3: Notified Stakeholders

Notified Stakeholders	Individual
Mt. San Rafael Hospital	Director of Special Programs
Trinidad Inn Nursing Home	-
Colorado Department of Human Services	Executive Director
Spanish Peaks – Purgatoire River Conservation District	District Manager
Las Animas – Huerfano Counties Health Department	Executive Director
Colorado State University Extension	County Director
Piñon Canyon Maneuver Site	Fire Captain
Holy Trinity Academy	Principal
Grace Christian School	-
Corazon Square	Executive Director
Evergreen Natural Resources LLC	Safety Coordinator
Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management	State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Mitigation Planning Supervisor, Mitigation Planning Specialist
Colorado State Forest Service – La Veta Field Office	Southeast Area Manager, Forester
Colorado Geological Survey	Hazards Analyst
Colorado Water Conservation Board	Section Chief – Watershed and Flood Protection
Colorado Department of Transportation	Region 2 Transportation Director, Maintenance Superintendent
Colorado Office of Dam Safety	Dam Safety Engineer – Division 2 Office
Colorado Climate Center	Climatologist
Colorado Resilience Office	Director
USACE – Albuquerque District	High Hazard Dam Owner / Dam Safety Section
Apishapa Dam	High Hazard Dam Owner

Notified Stakeholders	Individual
American Red Cross – Southeastern Colorado	Disaster Program Specialist

High and Significant Hazard Dam Owners

All high and significant hazard dam owners within or affecting Las Animas County were invited to participate in the planning process by attending meetings and providing comments. The table below show the notified dam owners. The City of Trinidad attended all meetings and provided information as a participant in the plan. The USACE provided risk information and reviewed the Dam/Levee Failure risk assessment portion of the plan. Mr. Huffman did not provide comments or attend planning process meetings. Comments and information provided by the dam owners was incorporated into applicable community profiles and the Dam/Levee Failure risk assessment.

Table 4: Notified High and Significant Hazard Dam Owners

High and Significant Hazard Dam	Owner
Monument Lake Dam	City of Trinidad
North Lake Dam	City of Trinidad
Pinon Canyon Detention Dam	City of Trinidad
Fisher Peak Detention FPC-1 Dam	City of Trinidad
Fisher Peak Detention FPC-2 Dam	City of Trinidad
Apishapa Mitotes Dam	Todd Huffman – Private Citizen
Trinidad Dam	USACE – Albuquerque District

Participant Involvement

Participants play a key role in reviewing information, identifying hazards of top concern, providing descriptions of localized impacts from hazard events, identification and prioritization of potential mitigation projects and strategies, and the development of plan maintenance procedures.

To be a participant in the development of this HMP update, jurisdictions were required to:

- Attend Round 1 and Round 2 meetings, view the meeting recordings, or have a one-on-one meeting with JEO planning staff,
- Provide relevant information throughout the plan update process, and
- Pass an *Adoption Resolution* for the approved HMP.

Jurisdictions had to have at least one representative present at meetings. Some jurisdictions sent multiple representatives to meetings. For jurisdictions who only had one representative at meetings, they were encouraged to take materials back to their governing bodies to include a diverse input on the meeting documents.

Outreach to eligible jurisdictions included notification prior to all public meetings, letters, phone calls, and emails. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 during the planning period, an emphasis was made on virtual and electronic outreach. The following table provides a summary of outreach activities utilized in this process.

Table 5: Outreach Activity Summary

Activity	Intent
Project Website	Informed the public and local planning team members of past, current and future activities related to the HMP process (https://jeo.com/las-animas-hmp)
Meeting Invitations (Round 1 and Round 2)	Letters, emails and phone calls were used to notify participants of meeting agenda/data/time/locations for Round 1 and Round 2 meetings. Round 1 and Round 2 meetings were held virtually.
Follow up Emails and Phone Calls	Correspondence to all participating jurisdictions to remind and assist them with the collection and submission of required local data
Project Flyer	A flyer was developed and shared with all meeting attendees to post locally. Information included why and how to be involved in the process.
Local Outreach	Project sponsor and the consultant provided follow up to jurisdictions on an as needed basis.

Assessment of Risk

Round 1 Meeting: Hazard Identification and Assessment and Plan Integration

The Round 1 Meeting is an opportunity to familiarize participating jurisdictions with the HMP update process, review information from the previous HMP, and begin the hazard identification at the local level. At the meeting, the local jurisdictional representatives serve as the Local Planning Teams to review the hazards to be profiled in this HMP update and provide information about local impacts, historical occurrences, and overall community exposure to the various hazards. For a complete list of hazards reviewed in the 2022 Las Animas County HMP, see *Section Four Risk Assessment*.

The Round 1 Meeting is also used as an opportunity to discuss Plan Integration components. Each participating jurisdiction was asked to either describe or provide a copy of other planning mechanisms which support the goals and intent of the HMP for inclusion. These included Local Emergency Operations Plans, Comprehensive Plans, 1- & 6-Year Plans, Zoning Ordinances, Floodplain Ordinances, Building Codes, or other plans used by the jurisdiction. The following table shows the date and time for the Round 1 Meeting. Note that due to the prevalence of COVID-19, the Round 1 Meeting was held as a virtual meeting.

Table 6: Round 1 Meeting

Agenda Items	
General overview of the HMP planning process; discussion of participation requirements; begin risk assessment and impact reporting discussion; review and identification of critical facilities; update capability assessment; and review and integration of other community planning mechanisms.	
Virtual Meeting	Date and Time
Thursday, December 9, 2021, from 10:00-11:00 am	

The intent of this meeting was to familiarize the jurisdictional representatives with an overview of the work to be completed over the next several months as the plan progressed, discuss the responsibilities of being a participant, and to collect preliminary information to update the HMP. Data collected at the meeting included: hazard prioritization for each jurisdiction; review/update the list of critical facilities; plan integration; and to begin reviewing community profiles for demographics and capabilities. The meeting also served as an opportunity to gather input on the identification of hazards, such as records of historical occurrences and the community’s capability to mitigate and respond to those events. The following table shows the attendees for each jurisdiction who attended the Round 1 Meeting. Follow up one-on-one meetings were offered for communities who did not have representatives present at public meetings through conference calls with JEO Staff. No one-on-one meetings were held for Round 1 meetings.

Table 7: Round 1 Meeting Attendees

Name	Title	Jurisdiction
Dave Bacharach	Fire Chief	Hoehne Fire Protection District, Trinidad Fire Department
Derek Sokoloski	Southeast Area Manager	Colorado State Forest Service - La Veta Field Office
Kathy Kumm	Clerk	Town of Cokedale
Phil Dorenkamp	County Administrator/Road and Bridge Superintendent	Las Animas County
Paula Lucero	Administrative Assistant	Las Animas County
Kim Chavez	Emergency Manager	Las Animas County
Tony Hass	County Commissioner	Las Animas County
Kristee Coberly	Finance Director	Las Animas County
Derek Navarette	Sheriff	Las Animas County
Robert Lucero	Planner/Building Inspector	Las Animas County
Brittney Ciarlo	Emergency Manager	Huerfano County
Rose Holman	Clerk	Town of Starkville
Audra Garrett	City Clerk	City of Trinidad
Mike Valentine	City Manager	City of Trinidad
Phillip Rico	Mayor	City of Trinidad
Kim Gonzalez	Executive Director	Las Animas-Huerfano Counties Health Department
Paul Blanford	Superintendent	Kim School District
Adam Casillas	Emergency Manager	Town of Aguilar
Jeff Roybal	Facility Manager	Trinidad School District
John Jenkins	Fire Chief	Stonewall Fire District
Phil Luebbert	Project Manager	JEO Consulting Group
Karl Dietrich	Planner	JEO Consulting Group
Anthony Kohel	Planner	JEO Consulting Group

Mitigation Plan Development

Round 2 Meeting: Mitigation Strategy and Plan Maintenance

The identification, update, and prioritization of mitigation measures is an essential component in developing effective hazard mitigation plans. The Round 2 Meeting is designed to allow participating jurisdictions an opportunity to update previous mitigation actions from the 2017 Las Animas County HMP and identify and describe new mitigation strategies to address prioritized hazards; as well as identify any gaps in planning, response, or resiliency from the Round 1 Meeting. Participating jurisdictions were also asked to review the information collected from the Round 1 meeting related to their community through this planning process. The Local Planning Teams were asked to ensure all information included was up-to-date and accurate. Information/data reviewed include but was not limited to local hazard prioritization results, identified critical facilities and their location within the community, future development areas, plan integration, and overall growth trends.

Newly added to the Round 2 Meeting included a discussion of Plan Maintenance by the Local Planning Team and the importance of updating local profiles as priorities change, mitigation actions are completed, or after a disaster event.

A brief status update on project schedule, public review period, final local adoption, and the approval and grant opportunities available once the plan is approved by DHSEM and FEMA was also provided to all participants. Due to ongoing concerns for COVID-19, the Round 2 Meeting was held virtually. The following table shows the attendees for each jurisdiction who attended the

virtual Round 2 Meeting. Follow up one-on-one meetings were held for communities who did not have representatives present at public meetings through phone calls with JEO Staff.

Table 8: Round 2 Meeting

Agenda Items	
Review of the HMP planning process; review of Round 1 collected and integrated information; update previous mitigation actions; identify and prioritize new mitigation actions; and discussion of plan maintenance requirements.	
Virtual Meeting	Date and Time
Wednesday, March 2, 2022, from 9:00-10:00 am	

Table 9: Round 2 Meeting Attendees

Name	Title	Jurisdiction
Darren Kolakowski	Fire Chief	Hoehne Fire Protection District
Emily Palmer	Mitigation Planning Specialist	Colorado DHSEM
Irene Merrifield	Mitigation Planning Supervisor	Colorado DHSEM
Susan Wolfram	Safety Coordinator	Evergreen Natural Resources LLC
Kim Chavez	Emergency Manager	Las Animas County
Bud Broce	Mayor	Town of Kim
Mark Thompson	State Hazard Mitigation Officer	Colorado DHSEM
Tonya Valdez	Executive Director	Trinidad Housing Authority/ Corazon Square
Jared Fleming	Forester	Colorado State Forest Service - La Veta Field Office
D'Wayne Gaymon	Maintenance Superintendent	CDOT
Audra Garrett	City Clerk	City of Trinidad
Mike Valentine	City Manager	City of Trinidad
Michael Aragon	Executive Director	Las Animas County DHS
Paul Blanford	Superintendent	Kim Public Schools
Jeff Roybal	Facility Manager	Trinidad School District
Nick Medrano	Resource Director	Trinidad School District
Phil Luebbert	Project Coordinator	JEO Consulting Group
Karl Dietrich	Planner	JEO Consulting Group
Anthony Kohel	Planner	JEO Consulting Group
Mary Baker	Resiliency Strategist	JEO Consulting Group

Table 10: Round 2 One-on-One Meeting Attendees

Name	Title	Jurisdiction
Bud Broce	Mayor	Town of Kim
Rose Holman	Clerk	Town of Starkville
Caroline Glaze	Board Trustee	Town of Starkville
Charles Glaze	Mayor	Town of Starkville

Table 11: Jurisdictions that Watched the Meeting Recording

Name	Title	Jurisdiction
Christine Loudon	Council Member	Town of Branson
Adam Casillas	Emergency Manager	Town of Aguilar
Tyra Avila	Town Clerk	Town of Aguilar

Plan Implementation and Progress Monitoring

Public Review Period

Once the draft 2022 HMP was completed, a public review period was opened to allow for participants and community members at large to review the plan and provide comments and changes. The public review period was open from April 20, 2022, to May 20, 2022. All participating jurisdictions and relevant stakeholders were emailed or mailed a letter notifying them of the public review period. This draft HMP was also made publicly available on the JEO project website to download. Received comments and suggested changes were incorporated into the plan.

Plan Adoption

Based on FEMA requirements, this multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan must be formally adopted by each participant's governing body through the approval of an Adoption Resolution. The approval creates 'individual ownership' of the plan by each participating entity. Formal adoption provides evidence of a participant's full commitment to implement the plan's goals, objectives, and action items. A copy of the resolution draft submitted to participating jurisdiction is located in Appendix A. Copies of adoption resolutions may be requested from the State Hazard Mitigation Officer.

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

To be effective, HMPs need to be living documents. Once adopted, participants are responsible for implementing and updating the plan as described in their *Community Profiles*. Those who participated directly in the planning process would be logical champions for updating the plan. In addition, the plan will need to be reviewed and updated as projects are completed and particularly after major events occur. Participating jurisdictions outlined individual maintenance goals in respective profiles and were notified such amendments and updates can be shared via the plan sponsor or JEO for inclusion in the HMP. Additionally, HMPs should be integrated into other planning mechanism as they are reviewed and updated. At a minimum this includes county and local comprehensive or emergency action plans as applicable.