

# **State Hazard Mitigation Plan Advisory Team**

Meeting Summary  
Tuesday, July 14, 2009  
1:00 p.m.

Sadowski Building  
Randall Kelly Training Center Room 305  
2555 Shumard Oak Blvd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

## **Introductions**

The State Hazard Mitigation Plan Advisory Team (SHMPAT) meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. on Tuesday, July 14, 2009 by Patrick Vicknair. Patrick introduced himself and mentioned his goal to get the State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) to fewer than 500 pages and to create a document that the public will actually want to read. Participants were asked for their name and the agency they represented, including those on the conference call.

## **Meeting Overview**

He discussed the reorganization of the SHMP, the agenda and what has been done since the last meeting. He discussed how the updated SHMP would be easier for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to review because the new structure matched the Blue Book guidance. He explained how the enhanced elements will now be integrated into the appropriate sections of the plan. He explained how all of the FEMA crosswalk questions were included in the outline to make sure we answer the questions. The template will also help make the updated plan more streamlined and consistent. Patrick showed everyone the Plain Language Guide and his intent to have all writers use it.

## **Risk Assessment**

Laura Herbert informed the SHMPAT that IEM was selected as our contractor and is responsible for updating the Risk Assessment section and mentioned the Kickoff meeting on June 21, 2009. It was noted that CSA is working with the Department of Forestry to update their wildfire risk assessment by June 30, 2010. The Division of Forestry mentioned they will still be contributing to the SHMP as with the previous plan, but this is an opportunity for future collaboration. Laura discussed her desire to continue to meet with the Risk Assessment sub-group to make sure everyone had the opportunity to contribute to the updated SHMP. A SHMPAT member asked a question about the inclusion of man-made hazards and Laura said the focus of the plan is natural hazards. She mentioned IEM will be including as much risk data as possible and will make sure the plan is consistent with other relevant documents. Another SHMPAT member asked the IEM representative what "best available data" would be used. The IEM representative didn't know because she was filling in for the project manager.

## **Planning Process**

Marybeth Groff discussed her intent to summarize the Prerequisites section and will make sure everything relevant remains. She deemed the Planning section to be the most important of her sections and her main focus. She intends to have these two sections in draft form by mid-August.

The Plan Maintenance section will be an on-going process. A SHMPAT member asked if the updated plan will be more user friendly in the new format. Marybeth agreed and mentioned it would also be easier for FEMA to review. A SHMPAT member asked if the enhanced part of the plan would allow for continued active participation from SHMPAT members. Marybeth said that Patrick would talk about that later, and that yes we were working on methods of inclusion.

### **Severe Repetitive Loss**

Joy Duperault discussed the Severe Repetitive Loss addendum and its location in the current plan and how its approval granted us additional money from FEMA. The updated plan will have a separate section for Severe Repetitive Loss as outlined in the Blue Book guidelines. We will integrate the enhanced requirements into the appropriate sections of the updated plan. Florida has a lot of Severe Repetitive Loss properties, so FEMA will expect us to complete this section really well. We're moving forward with NFIP and floodplain management goals. A SHMPAT member asked Joy to talk about our current goals. Joy talked about the outreach strategy and how we remind locals about the options to mitigate. Our new planning manager, Shameeka Hopkins has been very busy with the outreach strategy by travelling to local communities and explaining the mitigation process, the community's role in the process, answering questions, showing people how they can save money over time and what communities should do with property acquisitions they cannot care for. This outreach strategy focuses on repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties. We are in the middle of a grant cycle and there have been lots of applications submitted under the SRL program. There are other programs under FMA for projects like local drainage. We have tried to move applicants to the best program that suits them; some are more competitive and some have more money that goes unused. We are being very proactive because of being an enhanced state.

### **Mitigation Strategy**

Patrick provided the SHMPAT with a handout which identified the goals and objectives that were discussed during the previous meeting. The handout also included proposed objectives that were submitted from various SHMPAT members since the previous meeting. He requested the SHMPAT members provide feedback on these objectives and to suggest new ones as necessary.

**Goal 1:** Enhance and maintain state capability to implement a comprehensive statewide hazard loss reduction strategy. **Objective 1:** *“Secure Federal mitigation funding.”* **Objective 2:** *“Continue to provide training opportunities and encourage staff to pursue professional development so that qualified mitigation personnel can be retained.”* **Objective 3:** Pursue technological advancements that will enhance the efficiency of providing mitigation services. We discussed all the proposed objectives for Goal 1. We discussed technological changes specifically relating to Geographic Information Systems. A SHMPAT member commented on the competitive nature of HMGP and under-representation of state agencies vs. local communities in grant funding. Then there was a long discussion of the merits and shortcomings of 9G-22 that we deliberated at great length. We discussed the difference between objectives, actions and initiatives. A SHMPAT member suggested adding other hazards to Objective 3 rather than just technological to include anything that may be worth researching. We all agreed to change **Objective 3:** *“Pursue technological or other advancements that will enhance the efficiency of providing mitigation services.”*

**Goal 2:** Support the development and enhancement of local capability to practice hazard mitigation. Objective 1: Provide technical support and mitigation training to rural communities. Training was clarified to mean planning as needed and we would make sure counties with more resources wouldn't be excluded if they still needed help. We all agreed to change **Objective 1:** *“Provide technical support and mitigation training”* Objective 2: Monitor and maintain up-to-date risk assessment data for local communities. Joy discussed the merits of Objective 2 and whether or not it could be achieved. It was suggested to reword the objective to prevent local communities from assuming we will do their assessments. Richard discussed the intent of MEMPHIS, the capabilities of GIS, how to use available data for risk assessment and the state law requirements. It was suggested that locals have better data that is relevant to their risk assessment, but that we should assist locals that need it. “Monitor and maintain risk assessment data and methods in cooperation with local communities” was suggested as the final wording for this objective. Richard stated that methodology would be what locals need more than just data, that GIS can be misused and the State should be a leadership resource to locals on proper methods. We all agreed to change **Objective 2:** *“Monitor and maintain risk assessment information in cooperation with local communities.”* Objective 3: Encourage communication between local jurisdictions and the State during the update of hazard mitigation plans. It was suggested to change “communication” to “technical assistance”. There was discussion about the two-party nature of communication rather than the service nature of technical assistance. It was suggested to add “continue communication between state and local planners” to emphasize we continue to do so. “Continue to provide technical support and mitigation training” was suggested. We all agreed to change **Objective 3:** *“Continue to provide communication, technical support and mitigation training”* Objective 4: Ensure that all communities are aware of mitigation funding cycles and available funding sources. It was suggested this be included as an action item as well. A SHMPAT member discussed a pilot project that incorporated MPO long-range transportation plans in Charlotte County into hazard mitigation. Patrick suggested we interact with MPOs more systematically to make sure they are including hazard items. Joy suggested integration of our plan, not just MPOs and transportation long-range plans. A list of appropriate plans to integrate could be included in the text of this section or as an appendix. We all agreed to change **Objective 4** *“Assist local communities to integrate hazard mitigation information and strategies into all local planning efforts”*

**Goal 3** Increase public and private sector's awareness and support for disaster loss education practices as a means of developing a culture of hazard mitigation in Florida. We discussed changing Goal 3 to say “enhance mitigation success”. Objective 1: Utilize resources from the Florida floodplain management office to increase awareness of flood programs. Joy suggested an alternative and we all agreed to change **Objective 1** *“Utilize available resources to increase awareness of mitigation opportunities.”* There was discussion about specifying federal and state resources, a floodplain management office or water management districts. There can be examples of where to find information in the mitigation measures. Joy suggested we focus on commercial entities and reach out to our businesses and try to educate them about mitigation. It was stated that Miles has discussed the commercial perspective in the past and that FEMA thought a business that addresses hazard mitigation was a good idea. It was stated that private sector was already involved in the hazard mitigation process through the working group. There was discussion that there didn't need to be extra effort devoted to private sector because that

wasn't what the goal said. It was suggested that the outreach to private sector could be included as an action item rather than an objective. It was commented that some businesses wanted to create their own post-disaster plans and felt out of the loop. It was suggested that business be added to the first objective, but that it might be redundant to the goal. Patrick asked that Joy submit wording for a second objective and we discuss at the October meeting. At this point there was a break from 3-3:18 p.m.

**Goal 4:** Reduce Florida's hazard vulnerability through the application of scientific research and development. Objective 1: Investigate climate change and sea level rise. It was suggested the wording be changed from "investigate" to "monitor" and that the State should have a cautious role in this issue. It was suggested that Miles be included in this discussion. A comment was made that it would be ignorance to not include something, and to include the word monitor. We agreed to change **Objective 1:** *"Monitor climate change and sea level rise research."* A suggestion was made for a new objective: Pursue new hazards, continue to support research at universities on building materials, be more proactive in sharing information from these studies with the local communities and to add dissemination of research and development to Goal 4. We discussed adding Objective 2: Continue to support mitigation research. Mitigation measures could be added to include more examples of university studies with building materials. We instead agreed to change Goal 4 to *"Support research to reduce Florida's hazard vulnerability"*

**Goal 5:** Protect the State's cultural, economic and natural resources. Objective 1: Provide mitigation for agricultural losses and develop stronger collaboration between agencies. Agricultural should be addressed, but the collaboration part should be moved to Goal 7. There was concern that agriculture gets left out of the mitigation process. "Support mitigation efforts for agricultural loss..." Each objective must have one mitigation measure. Perhaps include other commercial interests. Agriculture wanted to be mentioned due to the lack of attention paid in the past. Comment that specifying agriculture was too specific, include in mitigation measures. We agreed to change **Objective 1:** *"Support mitigation efforts for economic loss."* Objective 2: Provide mitigation funding to harden cultural and historic sites with methods which will not destroy or detract from the historic or cultural significance of the resource. This seemed redundant because the State is not allowed to destroy historic resources. It was suggested this objective focus on best practices. 1000 Friends of Florida did some research on best practices but it seems like a separate objective. There was some consensus that the idea was good but the wording needed work. We agreed to change **Objective 2:** *"Continue to support and encourage mitigation funding of cultural and historic sites."* This would include a list of the appropriate building materials from specific time periods so it would be known what mitigation could be done. These could be included as mitigation measures. Objective 3: Mitigate natural resources by using natural methods (reduce beach erosion through sea oat plantings) and updated designs for facilities which take advantage of the natural landscape for protection (build boardwalks between dunes instead of elevating over dunes). There was discussion that this was more of a project rather than an objective. The intent was to mitigate through natural resources- not necessarily to include them in mitigation planning directly. There was discussion about the lack of concern for natural resources in the mitigation process. There was a comment that protecting the natural resources allowed them to be later used as mitigation but that there were two parts to this objective. "Enhance natural resources to provide mitigation for coastal development."

This could be misunderstood to mean encouraging coastal development so we agreed to change **Objective 3:** “*Enhance natural resources to reduce vulnerability.*” Objective 4: Protect life, property, and the economy by eliminating or minimizing the present and future vulnerability to wildfire hazards. This objective should be summarized to include all hazards rather than just wildfires. This seems more like the goal of the entire plan, yet including all hazards with their own objective would be too specific. We ran out of time so the mitigation strategy discussion will resume at the next SHMPAT meeting.

### **State Capability Assessment**

Patrick discussed the State Capabilities Assessment requirement and requested that each participating state agency update their mitigation programs and policies. Handouts were given to each state agency representative attending the meeting and they were asked if they were the most appropriate person to update their mitigation programs and policies. Patrick said he would reach out to the other state agencies who didn't attend the meeting. Two proposed SHMP covers were presented and a vote was held to determine which was most appropriate. 5 voted in favor of the cover with the big picture of a hurricane with five smaller hazard pictures and 4 voted in favor of the cover with the nine hazard pictures. There was a discussion that the hurricane cover focused on hurricanes and all other hazards were secondary.

### **Adjourn**

The participants were thanked and the meeting was concluded at 4:18 pm.