

2. Planning Process

Update Information

During the planning process, there were numerous public meetings held to maintain and expand involvement of the public sector. There was outreach done to include major economic players in the County as well as the non-profit and private sectors.

Existing plans and studies were reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure that the LMS update is properly and efficiently included. Many other plans reference elements within the LMS, so the LMS had to be consistent with the information needed for those plans.

In the creation of the 2010 LMS update, the plan was divided into four sections that were reviewed and updated: the planning process, risk assessment, mitigation strategy, and implementation and evaluation.

The planning process section involved public meetings and participation, incorporating government agencies and private sector involvement into the development of the plan. Meetings were held throughout the year as the plan was updated and public comment and opinion was incorporated into the LMS.

The risk assessment portion included gathering updated data regarding hazards that affect the County. The plan identifies each hazard and presents each jurisdiction's level of risk for each possible hazard, including damage estimates and probability of occurrences. It also provides updated inventories of facilities and buildings.

The mitigation strategy portion includes those actions that the County and its jurisdictions propose to carry out in order to protect themselves from natural disasters. The plan list was updated, indicating the status of projects and including new ones. It also prioritizes the projects using a cost-benefit review.

The evaluation and monitoring portion sets up the method of ensuring the plan is carried out and kept up to date. It was reviewed and adjusted as necessary, citing the agency responsible for monitoring and updating the plan.

Public Involvement

The Polk County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group (LMSWG) is tasked with creating, implementing, and updating the Polk County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS). They meet continually throughout the year to discuss updates, amendments, and/or resolutions to be passed. The LMSWG is composed of a representative from each of the 17 jurisdictions as well as other non-governmental organizations (NGOs), corporations, non-profits, and other interested parties.

The LMSWG convened throughout the planning process to specifically discuss the 2010 LMS update. They met on the following dates and discussed the following topics:

December 2, 2008

- Introduction of the LMS update
- Re-assignment of LMSWG members from jurisdictions

February 17, 2009

- Reviewed LMSWG responsibilities
- Discussed mitigation projects
- Discussed goals and objectives

March 17, 2009

- Discussed funding options related to mitigation projects
- Finalized goals and objectives

July 21, 2009

- Discussed mitigation projects list and update needs
- Presented risk assessment methodology
- Solicited ideas for new projects
- Discussed NFIP participation

August 21, 2009

- Presented draft of LMS for public comments
- Solicited mitigation projects
- Discussed updated prioritization method for mitigation

All meetings of the LMSWG were open to public involvement from any interested parties. The meetings were noticed through the Lakeland Ledger as well as through electronic correspondence and phone calls. Each jurisdiction in the County was invited and encouraged to attend and participate. Documentation regarding the meetings, including minutes, agendas and releases, is included in Appendix A.

Participants

FEMA guidelines dictate that an LMS must be updated and approved every five years. Polk County Emergency Management provides the chairperson for the LMSWG and also leads the development of the five year update. The following people were involved in the update process.

Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group Members

County Agencies

Budget Office
Central Florida Development Council

Coop Extension Service
County Attorney
Emergency Management

Emergency Medical Services
Equal Opportunity
Financial and Strategic Planning
Fire
Growth Management
Healthy Families
Information Technology
Land Development
Natural Resources
Public Safety
Records Management
Solid Waste
Support Services
Transit Services

Utilities

Municipalities

Auburndale
Bartow

Davenport
Dundee
Eagle Lake

Frostproof
Ft. Meade
Haines City

Highland Park
Hillcrest Heights
Lake Alfred

Lake Hamilton
Lake Wales
Lakeland

Mulberry
Polk City
Winter Haven

Decia Smith
Doretha Brooks
James DeGennaro
John Brenneman
Randy Mink
Pete McNally
Paul Womble
Rick Savage
Alex Velazquez
Fran McAskill
Mike Linkins
Curtis Knowles
Lilian Nolin
Ed Wolfe
Randall Vogel
Jay Jarvis
Jim Bell
Gary Loyed
Edward Sparks
Bob Stanton
Paul Simmons
Ivan Maldonado
Bill Beasley
Timothy Todd

Mickey Etherton
Jay Robinson
Gary McLin

Pete Gardner
Dawn Bialy
James Keene

Ken Sauer
Michael Stripling

Art Bodenheimer
Danny Monroe
Doug Leonard
Jennifer Nanek
Robert Chen
Chris Kaelin
Richard Perez
Bonnie Titus

Chris Humphrey
Garry Knotts

Non-Profits/Other Members

Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Lakeland Housing Authority
Rebuilding Together
Red Cross

Chuck Carter
Steve Boyer
Alice Spivey
Linda Sciallo

Other Participants

County Agencies

Board of County Commissioners
County Probation
Emergency Management

Charlies Fairchild
Greg McMillin
Billy Abernathy
Jonathan Thomas
Mike Crumpton
Steve Bennett
Stanley Harris
Tina White
Kenney Cooper
Ken Wade
Allan Choate

Environmental Resource
Fleet Management
Land Development
Public Safety
Roadway Maintenance
Traffic Operations
Waste Resource Management

Other Participants

Agape Food Bank – Catholic Charities
American Compliance Technologies
Florida EM, Hardee EM
Florida EM, Region IV
Lakeland Regional Medical Center
Lakeland Regional Medical Center

Katrina Pelham
Jeff Kincart
Jessica Hand
Paul Siddall
Alice Hornigan
Kenneth Stone

Integration with other Plans

As part of the annual series of meetings of the Polk LMSWG, members will dedicate at least one meeting to ensuring that the goals, priorities, actions, and projects established in this plan are incorporated into ongoing county and city planning activities. This plan will be incorporated into the following planning mechanisms as indicated below prior to submission of the next update for approval by the Florida Division of Emergency Management and FEMA:

Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) – The LMS will be incorporated into the CEMP by reference, and utilized as the plan’s mitigation section.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan – The LMS will be incorporated through the integration of the risk assessment section into the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Capital Improvement Plan – The LMS will be incorporated into the Capital Improvements Plan by scheduling select mitigation projects utilizing local funding.

Flood Plain Management Plan – The LMS will be utilized as the Flood Plain Management Plan, including the risk assessment, NFIP compliance, and flood related mitigation actions.

Community Rating System – To further reduce the cost of flood insurance under the NFIP, the LMS will be incorporated by reference.

Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP) – The LMS is referenced for having corresponding goals as the PDRP and the current LMS hazard analysis is used within the plan. The mitigation actions in the LMS help to address the issues faced by the PDRP.

Eagle Lake Stormwater Master Plan – The City of Eagle Lake produced a study which provided mitigation projects and needs to be included in the LMS regarding flooding and stormwater improvements.