



Chapter 3. Planning Process

3.1 Planning Team

In 2016 and 2017 the NRVRC worked with local governments and key stakeholders to update the New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan. The NRVRC is responsible for organizing and coordinating the steering committee and working groups and conducting the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment to update all mapping and analysis with the latest available data (through the end of 2015 unless otherwise noted). Additionally, the NRVRC is responsible for the required public involvement process for plan adoption. The Radford University team who participated in the 2011 update developed unique and in-depth analysis of several hazards of particular concern in the region (i.e., rockfall and landslide) that are included in this update of the plan because they continue to represent the best available data for this plan.

The Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee is comprised of a dedicated group of professionals from across the region. Participants on the committee include participating locality staff, representatives from state and federal agencies, and other interested local stakeholders. The steering committee oversaw the progress of the HIRA development, the work being done by the working groups, and the public involvement process. In addition to these supervisory duties, the steering committee provided valuable input on the plan development and identifying regional projects to include in the plan.

The working groups met once to provide expert input on the HIRA information and on the development of the mitigation objectives and strategies. Local topical experts were invited to the working groups and steering committee members were also encouraged to attend these meetings.

Figure 3.1 below illustrates the organizational structure of the planning team.



Figure 3.1. NRV Planning Team Organization



3.2 Planning Process

The original New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan was drafted in 2004 and approved by FEMA in 2005. In 2009, Radford University received FEMA funds to partner with the NRVRC to conduct the five-year update of the Plan. The second update of this plan began in 2011 with a regional kick-off meeting held at the New River Valley Business Center on September 1, 2016. At this meeting, the NRVRC reviewed the process for updating the plan.

The steering committee continued to meet monthly from October 2016 to May 2017. All meeting agendas and sign-in sheets for steering committee and working group meetings are provided in Appendix 1. From October 2016 to February 2017, working groups came together to focus on specific hazards. Prior to each meeting, local topical experts were identified and invited to participate in the meeting. The meetings all followed a standard agenda. First the data was presented and participants had an opportunity to comment and provide input on the data and/or mapping. Second, the previously determined mitigation goals were reviewed and discussion was open for any changes or modifications to the goals based on the data provided. Following this review, the group then brainstormed mitigation objectives and strategies to include in the plan.

Following the completion of the working group meetings in February 2017, the steering committee resumed their monthly meetings. These meetings provided the steering committee the opportunity to review and approve the data/mapping, conduct plan review, identify regional projects, and oversee the public involvement process.



3.3 Plan Participation

Localities are required by FEMA to meet standards of participation in plan development. Meeting these standards makes them eligible to apply for and receive mitigation funding. For the NRV plan, participating localities were required to meet at least two of the optional requirements and both of the required standards. The following are the optional requirements: 1) attendance at a minimum of three steering committee and/or working group meetings, 2) submission of requested data, 3) review and comment on draft materials, 4) host opportunities for public involvement, or 5) link to the project website from the locality website. After a substantial number of the steering committee and working group meetings had been completed, NRVRC staff worked with localities that had not been present at a minimum of three meetings to ensure that they had fulfilled the participation requirements. Localities that had not been attending meetings have limited staff time and resources – Rich Creek and Pembroke, both in Giles County. These localities participated by providing local assistance in data collection, public outreach, plan review, and mitigation project development.

In addition to meeting at least two of the previously discussed standards, all participating localities were required to adopt at least one specific project and formally adopt the plan. All adoption resolutions are included in Appendix 2.

Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, the City of Radford, and the Towns of Christiansburg, Blacksburg, Narrows, Pearisburg, Pembroke, Pulaski, and Rich Creek have all elected to participate in the update of the plan. Table 3.1 below indicates plan participation in the 2005 original plan and the 2011 and 2017 updates. The Town of Dublin has chosen not to participate in the regional plan due to staff limitations and indicating that they prefer Pulaski County to handle any necessary mitigation projects. While adopting the plan in 2005, the Town of Floyd has elected not to participate in the updates of the regional hazard mitigation plan and will rely on Floyd County to handle mitigation projects on their behalf. The Town cited severe limits on town staff as well as an extremely limited town size, the smallest in the Commonwealth, as their primary reasons for not participating. The Town of Glen Lyn has also opted out of plan participation due to limited staff availability to participate in the planning process and will rely on Giles County for mitigation assistance. Beyond those changes, no other changes in participation occurred (Table 3.2).

Table 3.1. Locality Participation 2005, 2011, 2017

Locality	2005	2011	2017
Floyd County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Floyd, Town	Yes	No	No
Giles County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Glen Lyn, Town	No	No	No
Narrows, Town	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pearisburg, Town	Yes	Yes	Yes



Locality	2005	2011	2017
Pembroke, Town	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rich Creek, Town	Yes	Yes	Yes
Montgomery County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Blacksburg, Town	Yes	Yes	Yes
Christiansburg, Town	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pulaski County	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dublin, Town	No	No	No
Pulaski, Town	Yes	Yes	Yes
City of Radford	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 3.2. Plan Participation

Representative	Organization	Steering Committee	Working Groups	Other Participation
Mike Wilson	AEP - Manager Distribution, Christiansburg		geologic, flooding	
Jay Eanes	City of Radford	X	winds, flooding	
Melissa Skelton	City of Radford	X	winter, winds, geologic	x
Jennifer Whiteis	City of Radford		geologic, flooding	
Rodney Haywood	City of Radford		winter	
Kevin Sowers	Floyd County	X	Drought/wildfire/human	
Lydeana Martin	Floyd County	X	winds, Drought/wildfire/human	x
John Ross	Giles County	X	winds, geologic, Drought/wildfire/human, flooding	x
Emily Gibson	Montgomery County	X	winds, flooding	x
Dari Jenkins	Montgomery County		Flooding	
Caleb Taylor	NRV Regional Water Authority		Winter	
Eli Sharp	NRVRC	X	Drought/wildfire/human, flooding	
Peter Corrigan	NWS/NOAA	X	Flooding	
William Perry	NWS/NOAA		Winds	
Patrick Wilson	NWS/NOAA		Winds	
Jim Hudgins	NWS/NOAA		Winter	



Representative	Organization	Steering Committee	Working Groups	Other Participation
Phil Hysell	NWS/NOAA		winter, Drought/wildfire/human, flooding	
Danny Wilson	Pulaski County	x	Drought/wildfire/human	
Josh Tolbert	Pulaski County	x	Flooding	X
Jared Linkous	Pulaski County		Flooding	
Todd Branscome	Radford University	x	winter, winds, Drought/wildfire/human	
Grady DeVilbiss	Radford University	x	winter, winds, Drought/wildfire/human	
Kafi Howard	Town of Blacksburg		geologic, Drought/wildfire/human, flooding	
Kali Casper	Town of Blacksburg	x	winter, winds, geologic	X
Lori Lester	Town of Blacksburg		Drought/wildfire/human	
Sara Morgan	Town of Christiansburg		geologic, Drought/wildfire/human, flooding	
Will Drake	Town of Christiansburg	x	geologic, flooding	X
Andrew Warren	Town of Christiansburg		Winter	
John Burke	Town of Christiansburg		Flooding	
Buddy Kast	Town of Narrows	X	winds, flooding	X
Rick Tawney	Town of Pearisburg	x		X
Mary Kay Carroway	Town of Pembroke			X
Robbie Kiser	Town of Pulaski	X	winds, geologic, Drought/wildfire/human, flooding	X
Roger Jones	Town of Rich Creek			x
Charley Banks	VA DCR		Flooding	
Kristin Owen	VA DCR		Flooding	
Justin Haga	VDEM		Drought/wildfire/human, flooding	



Representative	Organization	Steering Committee	Working Groups	Other Participation
Willie Richardson	VDEM - Region 4	x	winds, geologic, Drought/wildfire/human	
Sara Harrington	VDEM - Region 4	x	winter, winds, geologic, Drought/wildfire/human	
Jonathan Simmons	VDEM - Region 6	x	winter, winds, Drought/wildfire/human	
David Linkous	VDH		winds, geologic	
Anamaria Bukvic	Virginia Tech		winds, flooding	

All meetings of the steering committee and working groups were open to the public as an opportunity for interested businesses, non-profit agencies, and individuals to participate. Meeting dates and times were published on the NRVRC's bimonthly newsletter, both in print and electronically, as well as on the project website. Periodic updates were also published in the newsletter. The NRVRC project website was the primary means of communicating about the planning process to those interested parties not directly involved in the process.

At the beginning of the planning process several key stakeholders businesses in the region, including electric and gas utilities and higher education , were invited to participate on the steering committee. Some representatives chose to participate in the working groups. During the plan review phase, invitations were sent to local chambers of commerce and their members to review and provide comment on the plan. Additionally, a brief overview of the plan and the invitation to comment on the plan was included in chamber of commerce newsletters. Adjacent planning district commissions were individually invited to review the draft plan and provide comment. The steering committee developed a list of local non-profits that would be interested in the results of the plan and those non-profits were also invited to review and comment on the plan.

3.4 Plan Update

For the five-year update for the New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan, the planning team and steering committee reviewed and updated each chapter of the plan. the general plan chapters, such as the Introduction, Community Profile, Planning Process, and Plan Maintenance chapters were drafted and provided to the steering committee for review. Each of the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) sections were revised based on current information and the updated analysis of the most recently available data. The working groups discussed both historical information focused on each hazard as well as brainstorming new mitigation objectives and strategies. These new strategies are included in each hazard section and in the mitigation strategy chapter. The Community Summaries chapter was updated through discussions with each community's representative to the steering committee. Through these discussions, new information was added where necessary and specific mitigation projects identified by the community were included.



The planning team reviewed numerous local documents to include in various sections of the updated plan, including but not limited to local comprehensive plans, emergency operations plans, and capital improvement plans. The information gleaned from these sources was included as data in the HIRA chapter, as well as providing some of the basis of the capabilities assessment section. The local comprehensive plans were particularly useful in determining proposed areas for future growth and areas where hazards may have the most impact. A summary of plans reviewed are presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3. Plans Reviewed during Planning Process

Locality	Emergency Operations Plan	Floodplain Management Plan	Stormwater Management Plan	Comprehensive Plan	Open Space Plan	Watershed Protection Plan	Capital Improvement Plan
Floyd County	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x
Floyd, Town	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x
Giles County	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x
Glen Lyn, Town	x	x	x	~	x	x	x
Narrows, Town	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x
Pearisburg, Town	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x
Pembroke, Town	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x
Rich Creek, Town	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x
Montgomery County	~	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓
Blacksburg, Town	~	✓	✓	✓	*	x	✓
Christiansburg, Town	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x	*
Pulaski County	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	✓
Dublin, Town	✓	x	x	~	x	x	~
Pulaski, Town	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓
Radford, City	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	~

* Limited information was available or no plan maintained by locality

** Most plans are older and have not been updated

✓ = Reviewed

x = Does not maintain plan

~ = Not available for review



3.5 Public Involvement

Public input was solicited throughout the planning process. All steering committee and working group meetings were placed on the NRVRC calendar and were open to the public. A project website was created at: <http://nrvrc.org/hazardmitigation/>. This website allows the public to view not only parts of the plan, but also resources shared with the steering committee and working groups at meetings. This site also provides an input form for those members of the community to provide their input, even if they are unable to attend the public meetings.

One set of public meetings occurred in conjunction with the drafting of this plan. In May and June 2017, the NRVRC held an open house in each of the four counties and the city to facilitate access for the public. At these open house meetings, a brief overview presentation was given at the top of the hour to provide participants a context for the material they were reviewing. Key mapping to be included in the plan was displayed around the room for participants to examine and comment on, along with general information on hazard mitigation and featured elements of the plan such as the hazard ranking. Comment sheets were provided as well as the project website address for participants to use for their comments. Several comments were received and the contents addressed in the final plan. Copies of the meeting announcements and sign in sheets are included in Appendix 3.