

Chapter 7. Plan Maintenance

This section of the 2011 New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan has been updated and revised from the 2005 Plan.

7.1 Plan Adoption

It is anticipated that the 2011 revision of the New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan will be adopted in early spring 2011. All resolutions for adoption of the plan by participating localities will be included in Appendix 2. The plan was submitted for public comment at two points in the planning process, during the draft phase and prior to adoption by participating localities. The NRVPCD assisted localities in guiding the plan through the adoption process with all necessary public hearings and providing draft language for adoption resolutions.

7.2 Plan Implementation

The New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan will be implemented in two primary ways: 1) policy changes that avoid development in hazard areas or that protect buildings from future impacts, and 2) implementation projects that physically change the environment to reduce impacts or educate landowners and residents on how to protect themselves and their property in the case of an event. The goal of implementing the identified strategies is to reduce the loss of life and/or property due to natural hazard events.

Policy changes are an ongoing way to implement the hazard mitigation plan. As local plans are updated, such as comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, or capital improvement plans, strategies for mitigating hazard impacts can be included. Changes to these plans do require some foresight and public involvement but can be a way for localities to make significant progress with little capital investment. The NRVPCD works regularly with its member localities as they update these plans and is willing to provide technical assistance for including hazard mitigation specific strategies and language when requested.

Implementing projects require more work and investment from the locality or lead agency. Many of the identified projects are contingent on finding grant funding and partnering with other agencies and organizations to complete the project. Grant funding is especially critical in the current economic situation. In addition to finding grant funding, localities will be forced to justify any spending outside of normal budgets. Prioritizing projects and being able to illustrate the benefits outweighing the costs of the project will allow localities to justify these projects.

Appendix 4 contains a list of all projects identified by the region and participating localities, since the 2005 plan and the 2011 plan. This project list includes projects and initiatives that have been completed since the original 2005 plan. Projects were prioritized based on the STAPLEE criteria suggested by FEMA and developed by the Steering Committee. A more detailed discussion of this prioritization strategy is discussed in Chapter 5: Mitigation Strategy.

Some localities have not had an opportunity to incorporate the strategies and objectives of the 2005 hazard mitigation plan into their planning processes. Of those who have incorporated findings from the hazard mitigation plan, the following steps were taken:

- The region’s localities are participating in the regional water supply planning effort, to help ensure reliability and maximum cost-effectiveness, with respect to drought hazards.
- From information and training gained during the preparation of the 2005 plan, Floyd County added a wildfire mitigation component to their manufactured home park plan.
- Montgomery County incorporated flood zone designations into GIS layers for staff use during the permitting process. Hazards and corresponding goals have been detailed in the Environmental Resources section of the 2025 comprehensive plan. In addition to floodplain data, the County has utilized its GIS system capabilities by adding additional layers to identify Claytor Lake inundation zones, wildfire risks, karst areas, shrink-swell soils and underground gas pipeline locations.
- The Town of Blacksburg’s Floodplain Overlay section of the zoning ordinance was updated to reflect new FEMA maps and regulations in 2009. The Town does utilize both a subdivision and zoning ordinance based on the town comprehensive plan to guide growth and development. The most recent comprehensive plan was approved by the Town Council in 2006. Additionally, the Town of Blacksburg does have an open space plan that guides acquisition and development of open spaces and parks around the town. Emergency Operation Plans are in place in the Police Department, Fire Department, Rescue Squad, and the Public Works Department. There is also a draft Emergency Management Plan that the Emergency Preparedness Committee has reviewed. In the next year the Emergency Preparedness Committee will finalize the Emergency Management Plan and review it with all Town Departments.
- Pulaski County is working with VDOF to develop a county-wide community wildfire plan for numerous communities throughout the County.

Other relevant strategies are described as part of their guidance documents and activities in Chapter 6, under their respective “mitigation” headings.

7.3 Plan Maintenance

The NRV Hazard Mitigation Plan will be reviewed annually by the staff of the New River Valley Planning District Commission with local government staffs to ensure that the project list stays up-to-date (and completed projects are noted). If necessary, the plan will be reviewed and revised after significant hazard events impacting the region. Cost-effective projects may be added to the locality project list each year, with that local government’s approval. This review and potential update may be conducted electronically or through an annual meeting of the Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee. The method of review will depend on the events of the previous year and the extent of potential revisions to be made. An annual report of the status of mitigation actions will be reviewed and sent to VDEM to reduce the burden of evaluating strategies for the required five-year revision.

In five years, the NRVPC will work to find funding to update the NRV Hazard Mitigation Plan. Any update of the plan will include a public input session or strategy to engage the community in this planning effort. At the time of the next update, the effectiveness of the mitigation strategies will be evaluated by determining any reduction in vulnerability to a particular hazard. New vulnerabilities will be identified by looking at event history in the past

five years, as well as development that may have occurred in hazard areas. During the interceding five years, the NRVPCDC will maintain the hazard mitigation website and will update it periodically with grant funding availability and project updates from localities, if available. This will also allow for continued public input throughout the plan implementation phase.