

MULTI-JURISDICTION/MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION

Mitigation Goals:

The natural hazard mitigation goals listed in this portion of the plan are multi-jurisdictional in nature and are intended to help guide the direction of and prioritize future natural hazard mitigation activities at the local level aimed at reducing risk and preventing loss from natural hazards.

1. Protect Life and Property

- Implement mitigation activities that will assist in protecting lives and property by making homes, businesses, infrastructure, and critical facilities more resistant to natural hazards.
- Continue the Skagit Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) Program to provide citizens from all areas of Skagit County with the information and tools they need to help themselves, their families, and their neighbors in the hours and days immediately following an emergency or disaster event.
- Encourage homeowners and businesses to purchase insurance coverage for damages caused by natural hazards.
- Encourage homeowners and businesses to take preventative actions in areas that are especially vulnerable to natural hazards.

2. Increase Public Awareness

- Develop and implement additional education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of the risks associated with natural hazards.
- Continue the current flood awareness programs conducted by various jurisdictions as part of the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System.

3. Encourage Partnerships

- Strengthen inter-jurisdiction and inter-agency communication and coordination and partnering of jurisdictions and agencies to foster the establishment and implementation of natural hazard mitigation strategies and/or projects designed to benefit multiple jurisdictions.

4. Provide for Emergency Services

- Encourage the establishment of policies at the local level to help insure the prioritizing and implementation of mitigation strategies and/or projects designed to benefit critical/essential facilities, services, and infrastructure.
- Where appropriate, coordinate and integrate natural hazard mitigation activities with existing local emergency operations plans.

Multiple-Hazard Mitigation Action Items:

For the purpose of this plan, multiple-hazard action items are those strategies and/or activities that pertain to earthquake, fire, flood, land movement, severe storm, and volcanic event. Action items were not identified for avalanche, drought, and tsunami/seiche as explained below:

- The avalanche hazard in Skagit County does not affect any populated areas. Due to the fact that avalanche is a concern only to those persons engaged in isolated, backcountry activities, specific mitigation action items were not identified for this hazard.
- While there is a remote possibility of drought affecting Skagit County, there is no record of a severe or long-term drought event that has seriously impacted persons or the economy of individual jurisdictions within Skagit County. Fire danger as a result of short-term drought conditions is addressed in the Fire section of this plan and it is anticipated that individual jurisdictions will promote mitigation actions such as public awareness and education regarding fire risk and prevention as part of this plan. For these reasons, specific mitigation action items were not identified for this hazard.
- While there is a very remote possibility that a damaging tsunami or seiche may affect certain areas of Skagit County, there is no record of such an event affecting communities in Skagit County. A study of Whidbey Island, Anacortes, and the Bellingham Bay areas is currently being conducted to determine the threat of tsunami in these areas. Should future evidence become available that damaging tsunami and/or seiche activity could affect specific areas within Skagit County, specific mitigation action items will be identified for this hazard.

The action items included in this section of the plan may be short-term, long-term, or on-going in nature. Some actions may include activities that jurisdictional agencies may implement with existing resources and authorities. Other more complex actions may require new or additional resources or authorities as well as multi-agency and/or multi-jurisdictional partnering.

Some of the mitigation actions and/or projects included in this plan are focused on reducing the effects of various natural hazards on new buildings and infrastructure. Examples of these mitigation actions and/or projects include:

- Mitigation strategies and/or ordinances and codes regarding building regulations and construction set-backs from unstable or steep slopes, alluvial fans and other critical areas.
- Community Rating System Program activities designed to reduce or limit damage from flooding to structures built within the 100-year floodplain.

Some of the mitigation actions and/or projects included in this plan are focused on reducing the effects of various natural hazards on existing buildings and infrastructure.

Examples of these mitigation actions and/or projects include:

- Construction and/or modification of river levee systems.

- Obtaining additional flood storage capacity within existing hydroelectric reservoirs located with the Skagit River and Baker River watersheds.
- Buy-out and/or elevation of flood repetitive loss properties.

Multiple-Hazard Action Item #1:

Each of the jurisdictions and Indian tribes participating in the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** shall establish their own Mitigation Planning Committee to assist the local governing body of that specific entity in the selecting, prioritizing, and evaluating of entity-specific mitigation measures.

In order to maintain continuity in the mitigation planning process, at least one member of this Mitigation Planning Committee shall represent the participating jurisdiction or Indian tribe as a member of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee.

LEAD AGENCY: Local elected governing body (board of county commissioners, city or town council, tribal senate or tribal council)

FUNDING SOURCE: Jurisdiction/Indian tribe Budget and/or available grant funding

TIME-LINE: Within one (1) year of completion and promulgation of this plan

NOTE: Due to the lack of staff of many special purpose districts, *this action item does not apply to the special purpose districts that participate in this plan.* However, if a special purpose district elects to do so, the district may participate in this process. Non-participation in this process does not preclude a special purpose district from membership on the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee.

Multiple-Hazard Action Item #2:

Where appropriate, incorporate the goals and action items identified in this section of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** into other existing plans and/or regulatory documents and programs. Possible plans, documents, and programs include:

- Jurisdictional Code(s)
- Jurisdictional Ordinance(s)
- Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan
- Jurisdictional Capital Facilities and/or Improvement Plan
- Jurisdictional Critical Areas Ordinance(s)
- Skagit County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Growth Management Act
- Coordinated Water System Plan
- Jurisdictional Flood Plan(s)
- Jurisdictional National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System Program

LEAD AGENCY: Jurisdiction and/or Indian tribe Planning Department and/or Public Works Department

FUNDING SOURCE: Jurisdiction/Indian tribe Budget and/or available grant funding

TIME-LINE: Upon completion and promulgation of this plan and as each jurisdiction and/or Indian tribes adoption process allows

It is important to note that the development and adoption of a multi-jurisdictional natural hazards mitigation plan is a new concept for the Indian tribes, jurisdictions and special purpose districts of Skagit County. Some jurisdictions, Indian tribes, and special purpose districts have begun this activity and listed in those entities portions of SECTION IV of this plan are links between on-going mitigation activities and in-place plans, programs, and directional documents. Unless stated otherwise within an individual entities portion of SECTION IV of this plan, the process by which mitigation action items and/or activities will be incorporated into existing plans, documents and programs should (at a minimum) involve the following components:

1. Lead Agency identifies appropriate plans, programs, and directional documents where mitigation actions items and/or activities may be inserted.
2. Public hearings and participation of all involved agencies throughout the incorporation process.
3. Inter-jurisdictional and/or inter-agency cooperation and partnering formalized by signed inter-local agreements.
4. Inter-jurisdictional and/or inter-agency studies or work sessions.
5. Final approval by the local elected governing body such as the board of county commissioners, city or town council, tribal senate or tribal council, school board, or special purpose district board of commissioners.

Multiple-Hazard Action Item #3:

Continue and/or enhance existing education programs aimed at mitigating natural hazards, and reducing the risk to citizens, public agencies, private property owners, businesses, and schools. Possible ideas include:

- Continue to make the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** available to the public by providing a link to the plan on local jurisdictional websites.
- Continue and/or enhance and expand the Skagit Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) Program.
- Continue the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System Program to inform citizens in participating jurisdictions about the flood risk in Skagit County.
- Continue to make public awareness materials and programs available from various sources available to the public to help inform the citizens of all communities within Skagit County as to the risks associated with various natural hazards.

LEAD AGENCIES: Skagit County Department of Emergency Management and local Community Rating System coordinators

FUNDING SOURCES: Jurisdiction Budget; Region 3 Life Safety Council Budget; various grant monies such as Washington State Department of Ecology Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP) funds

TIME-LINE: These programs are currently active and on-going

Multiple-Hazard Action Item #4:

Develop partnerships with various jurisdictions and agencies as well as private business and industry to identify and pursue funding opportunities to implement local mitigation activities and

to foster coordination and collaboration of natural hazard mitigation goals, strategies, and projects within Skagit County. Possible actions include:

- Identify and encourage partnering with various agencies and organizations within Skagit County that have an interest in or have established natural hazard mitigation programs.
- Identify and encourage partnering with various state and federal agencies that have programs that support natural hazard mitigation programs such as the Flood Control Assistance Account Program administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

LEAD AGENCY: Local elected officials; jurisdiction/Indian tribe department/agency directors; Skagit County Department of Emergency Management; Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee

FUNDING SOURCE: Local Jurisdictional/Private Business Funding via Budget Process

TIME-LINE: Short term (less than 3 years from funding)

Multiple-Hazard Action Item #5:

Establish procedures for the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee for the development of a sustainable process for monitoring and evaluating multi-jurisdictional mitigation activities. Possible ideas include:

- Develop roles/responsibilities for members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee.
- Develop surveys and/or identify and utilize other reporting methods to monitor hazard mitigation activities implemented by participating entities.
- Develop procedures to facilitate annual review of current mitigation activities.
- Develop procedures to enable the modification of current mitigation activities to meet newly identified goals and objectives.
- Develop procedures to facilitate a full review of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** every 5 years.

LEAD AGENCY: Skagit County Department of Emergency Management; Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee

FUNDING SOURCE: Local Jurisdictional Funding via Budget Process

TIME-LINE: Within two (2) years of completion and promulgation of this plan

Multiple-Hazard Action Item #6:

In cooperation with the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division, establish local requirements and/or procedures for non-participating jurisdictions, Indian tribes, and special purpose districts located within Skagit County to adopt the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as their plan and thereby become eligible for future federal hazard mitigation grant funding.

LEAD AGENCY: Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee

FUNDING SOURCE: Local Jurisdictional Funding via Budget Process

TIME-LINE: Within two (2) years of completion and promulgation of this plan

Multiple-Hazard Action Item #7:

Strengthen emergency services preparedness and response by linking emergency services with natural hazard mitigation programs. Possible ideas include:

- Promote inter-agency response planning and training among various first response agencies within Skagit County.
- Continue involvement at the county level with the Northwest Region Fire Defense Board and the Northwest Region Fire Mobilization Plan.
- Encourage local fire service, emergency medical, and law enforcement agencies to include Skagit C.E.R.T. members in training opportunities.

LEAD AGENCY: Skagit County Department of Emergency Management

FUNDING SOURCE: Department of Emergency Management Budget and/or available grant funding

TIME-LINE: Short term (less than 3 years from funding)

Prioritization of Mitigation Measures:

Because this plan is multi-jurisdictional, the prioritizing of mitigation measures will be made at the jurisdictional level with direct involvement of the designated lead agency as well as the local elected governing body such as the board of county commissioners, city or town council, tribal senate or tribal council, school board, or special purpose district board of commissioners.

Due to local budget constraints, most of the mitigation measures incorporated into this plan are dependent upon local jurisdictions receiving outside funding; as a general rule, local funding is not available. As a result, local jurisdictions are unsure as to when these mitigation measures will be implemented and the conditions and/or requirements under which implementation may occur.

Unless stated otherwise within an individual entities portion of SECTION IV of this plan, the individual entities participating in this plan should prioritize their proposed mitigation measures based on the following factors:

- Mitigation measures that have a positive cost/benefit analysis.
- Mitigation measures that reduce or eliminate repetitive loss properties.
- Mitigation measures that are multi-jurisdictional and or multi-agency in nature.
- Mitigation measures that provide the greatest good for the greatest number.
- Mitigation measures that have broad-based public and/or elected official approval.
- Mitigation measures for which funding has already been secured.
- Mitigation measures that qualify for alternate and/or matching funding.

For jurisdictions and Indian tribes with a mitigation planning committee, the mitigation planning committee is charged with the responsibility to develop a prioritized preliminary list of mitigation measures. This prioritized list is then recommended to the jurisdictional or tribal governing body for final prioritization.

While it is highly recommended that each of the entities participating in this plan utilize the above-listed factors in prioritizing their mitigation measures, it is recognized that final

prioritization of mitigation measures is determined by the entities elected governing body. A change in local elected officials, changing environmental requirements, public acceptance of a project, or the occurrence of an actual disaster event may dramatically affect the priority ranking of mitigation measures at the local level.

If federal funding is involved in the implementation of a hazard mitigation project, the jurisdiction, Indian tribe, or special purpose district will conduct a cost/benefit analysis based on guidelines provided by the United States Department of Homeland Security (FEMA) and the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division on how to determine cost-effectiveness of mitigation projects and how to calculate the benefit-cost ratio. The purpose of the benefit-cost analysis is to determine if the benefits of the project exceed the federal costs of the project. Both the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program require a benefit-cost ratio of at least 1.0 for a project to be considered for funding. While it may be important to emphasize a positive cost/benefit analysis in the prioritizing of mitigation measures, it is also important to recognize the influence of local political factors, sovereign authority, community needs, traditional and cultural customs and values, historic properties, and habitat and environmental issues upon the selection of specific mitigation measures.

Due to local budget constraints, most of the mitigation measures incorporated into this plan are dependent upon local jurisdictions receiving outside funding; as a general rule, local funding is not available. As a result, local jurisdictions are unsure as to when these mitigation measures will be implemented and the conditions and/or requirements under which implementation may occur.

Implementation of Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation measures that are already in place at the jurisdiction level through existing plans, codes, and ordinances as well as programs such as the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System Program or the Skagit Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) Program are current and on-going programs funded through existing and established budgets.

The implementation of new and/or additional mitigation measures is dependent upon the approval of the local elected governing body such as the board of county commissioners, city or town council, tribal senate or tribal council, school board, or special purpose district board of commissioners as well as obtaining funding from outside sources that have not been secured at this time. As a general rule, local funds are not available for implementation of new mitigation measures. Funding for mitigation measures is largely dependent upon individual entities applying for and receiving federal and/or state hazard mitigation grant funding.

For each action item listed and described above (as well as the entity-specific mitigation measures contained in SECTION IV) every effort has been made to identify lead agencies, current or possible funding sources, and a time-line for implementation as part of the planning process.

It should be noted that ***short term*** action items and/or mitigation measures are those activities that are expected to be completed in less than 3 years from the receipt of funding by the local

entity. **Long term** action items and/or mitigation measures are those activities that are expected to require more than 3 years to complete from the receipt of funding by the local entity. Those action items and/or mitigation measures that are current and on-going have been so indicated.

The entities participating in the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** have a variety of local, state, and federal resources available to support the implementing and administering of the mitigation actions. The Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee will continue to identify additional resources to support the implementation of the action items. At this time, possible implementation funding sources include the following:

Local Funding Sources

Local implementation resources vary based on each entity's scope of function(s), authorities, and operational capability and capacity. They may include:

- Use of zoning ordinance and building codes.
- Enforcement of flood plain management ordinance.
- Participation in the NFIP Community Rating System.
- Incorporation into local emergency response plan(s).
- Incorporation into local economic development plan(s).
- Use and support of existing local personnel (planners, floodplain managers, city engineers, GIS specialists, emergency managers).
- Capital improvement project funding.
- Authority to levy taxes, special bonds.
- Fees for services.
- Other sources yet to be identified.

The current economic condition and funding level of the participating local entities drastically limits the use of local resources. State or federal funding will be needed to accomplish many of the action items and mitigation measures referenced in this plan.

State Funding Sources

- Growth management act requirements.
- Comprehensive plan requirements.
- State administered Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Flood Mitigation Act and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program.
- Department of Ecology Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP).
- Department of Transportation Emergency Relief Program.
- Office of Community Development Community Development Block Grants
- Programs administered by the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board
- Programs administered by the Washington State County Road Administration Board
- Other sources as yet to be identified.

NOTE: An extensive listing of state funding opportunities is available at the following web site:

www.infracfunding.wa.gov

Federal Funding Sources

- Stafford Act, Section 406 – Public Assistance Program Mitigation Grants.
- Stafford Act, Section 404 – Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.
- Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000– Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program Competitive Grants.
- United States Fire Administration – Assistance to Firefighters Grants.
- United States Small Business Administration Pre and Post Disaster Mitigation Loans.
- United States Department of Economic Development Administration grants.
- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Grants such as the Community Development Block Grant Program.
- United States Army Corps of Engineers.
- United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management.
- Federal Highway Administration.
- Other sources as yet to be identified.

An extensive listing of federal funding opportunities is identified in the document *"Federal Mitigation Programs, Activities, & Initiatives"* and is available at the following web site:

<http://www.fema.gov/doc/fima/fmpai.doc>

The document includes information on each federal program including the type of available assistance and contact information. A copy of the document is included in **Appendix D** of this plan.