



Rappahannock-Rapidan Region All-Hazard Mitigation Plan Revision

Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission

Meeting Minutes – April 20, 2010

Attendees:

Fritz Alderman	Town of Culpeper
John S. Bailey	Town of Orange
Charley Banks	Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation
Jenny Biche'	Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission
Arthur Candequist	Rappahannock County Emergency Management
Deirdre Clark	Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission
Graham Grosvenor	Fauquier County Emergency Management
John Harkness	Orange County
Kathy Hatter	Virginia Department of Health
Amy Howard	Virginia Department of Emergency Management
Debbie Kendall	Orange County
Sarah Makely	Fauquier County Emergency Management
Patrick Mauney	Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission
Carl Pumphrey	Madison County
Sarah Sitterle	Town of Warrenton
Bruce Sterling	Virginia Department of Emergency Management
Bo Tucker	Town of Warrenton

Introductions were made and attendees were asked to sign in and complete the Log Match Sheet*. Each locality had previously signed an agreement stating they will supply match to the grant that may include labor and travel.

**Deirdre Clark, Regional Planner
Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission**

Planning Process-Where are we?

Stage One should be completed by July, 2010. This includes summary and evaluation of the following aspects:

- Hazard ID & Risk Assessment
- Assets
- Vulnerability
- Capability Assessment

Currently, Stage One is incomplete; we are only at "Hazard ID & Risk Assessment." Stage Five: "Adoption and FEMA Final Approval" will require significant time to complete, so everyone is encouraged to complete their assignments in a timely fashion.

Worksheet #1: Hazards list is **incomplete**. All hazards listed are considered probable except:

- Avalanches
- Landslides due to earthquake
- Military accidents
- Transit-subway
- Volcanic-eruptions and ash

Under Hazards identified as High Intensity, Rappahannock County reported impacts from air transportation as a risk since Dulles Airport's flight paths, as well as those serving local airports, pass directly over Rappahannock and some surrounding areas.

Worksheet #2: Historic Hazard Events

Fauquier County was the only locality that listed the snow storms in December 2009 and February 2010 as historic events. It was noted that both storms were declared disasters by the Commonwealth. The December storm was declared a federal disaster. That determination has not yet been made regarding the February storm. Please review what state disasters have been declared in your locality since 2005 and record on worksheet #2.

Worksheet #3: Unique Hazard Risk

Terry Lasher, Virginia Department of Forestry, Warrenton Office, states that portions of each county in our region within response area are at risk of wildland fires. The USDA Department of Forestry defines Wild Urban Interface as "...zone where structures and other human developments meet, or intermingle with, undeveloped wildlands...where wildfire poses the biggest risk to human lives and structures. Terry provided maps (see Work Session 1 power-point*) identifying structures at risk in Rappahannock and Culpeper counties. As the housing development increases over the next several years, more and more people will build in the rural, mountainous areas of the region, increasing the hazard risk. Identify now what tools will be needed and determine whether or not they are currently available.

Christopher Strong, Warning Coordination Meteorologist National Weather Service Teleconference

Mr. Strong stated that our region was at risk for every weather threat except tidal surge from hurricanes. Flooding, tropical storms and flash flooding were identified as the greatest risk for the region. Tornados, thunderstorms with severe winds or hail, snow storms and fog threats should also be considered. Localities should have a warning coordination plan that will provide information to the public quickly and efficiently. Examples include the NOAA radio system that provides text alerts to the general public and Fire Support that enables state emergency staff to receive daily reports that are point specific. NOAA radio alerts can be accessed by PDAs, cell phones and home phones.

Rappahannock County shared information about their "Code Red" system that has had a directly beneficial impact on their response. They have utilized it both for wildland fires and for the recent snow storm. Warning information is sent to citizens who subscribe via email, text messaging, or voice mail. There is no charge to the citizens for this service. Fauquier County is looking at a similar system. It was suggested that IFLOW, a program that uses rain gauges to predict flash flooding, be incorporated into the Code Red or selected warning coordination system. Localities need to be able to identify and locate the threat and communicate the information to its citizens quickly.

Mr. Strong provided links (see Agenda 4/20/10*) that may be helpful when completing the worksheets and researching alert systems. He suggested reviewing "inws", an interactive National Weather Service site that provides timely weather information.

NEXT STEPS: Worksheets 4 through 9

Worksheets 4 & 5: Determining Vulnerability

Inventory Your Assets

- Critical facilities (hospitals, police stations, schools, pet shelters, etc.) & vulnerable populations (low income, people with pets, handicap, elderly, etc.);
- Number of buildings, infrastructure and critical facilities at risk/located in hazard areas (has been built or had a change in structure in the last five years: i.e., school roof replaced due to snow storm damage);
- Identify repetitive loss properties & severe repetitive loss properties (Amy Howard can provide a list of repetitive losses for your area—includes only those structures that had flood insurance and filed a claim).

Inventory what is available and what is needed: i.e. Transportation options for citizens during an evacuation. How will you reach the elderly/disabled in rural areas and what will they need to be able to evacuate? Local utility companies may assist by furnishing information/surveys in their utility bills to their customers. What options do citizens have for their pets or livestock should they need to evacuate?

Worksheets 6, 7, 8 & 9: Capability Assessment

- What resources are available?
- What are our limitations?
- Regulatory/Administrative/Technical/Fiscal

What's in place now? What do we need? Do you have a warning system? Looking at growth & development, is it effective? Efficient?

Capability Assessment:

- Measures each jurisdiction's competency and ability to implement hazard mitigation activities
- Identifies existing gaps, conflicts, weaknesses in local programs, plans and policies (mitigation opportunities that grants may address)
- Identifies mitigation measures already in place (FEMA requires a blanket statement that evaluates, acquires or mitigates a floodplain strategy)
- Identifies mitigation opportunities (i.e. Fire grant debris clean up/maintenance, NOAA radio/Reverse 911, etc.)

Plan, Policy Program or Ordinance in place? Does it need improvement? Who responds? Each locality is asked to complete "R-RRC All Hazard Mitigation Plan Revision Team worksheets 4-9*". If the locality is listed separately in the grant, then each locality must be represented. The representative may be a citizen, it is not required that the representative be a staff person.

Capability Indicators

- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participation
- Community Rating System (CRS) participation
- Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS)
- Fire-wise Community

STAGE TWO—Are we there yet?

- Mitigation Goals and Objectives
- Development of Mitigation Strategies

Risk & Capability Assessment = Foundation for Identification of Mitigation Actions

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

- Review your locality's current goals (on line at www.rrregion.org/mitigation.html) and determine relevance (list may need to be edited as some goals may be unattainable and we will be required to be accountable for them to FEMA)
- Determine progress in terms of existing mitigation strategies
- Develop new strategies that reflect updated risk and capability assessments

The next meeting is **tentatively** scheduled for Tuesday, June 15, 2010 at 10:00am at the Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission. Each locality is asked to determine who would be the best participant from their staff to address the issues in the next stage (staff familiar with ordinances, codes, compliances, etc.). Please forward their contact information to Deirdre Clark prior to the next meeting.

NEXT ALL-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN REVISION MEETING: **Tentatively scheduled for June 15, 2010 @ RRRC**

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* All referenced documents may be accessed at <http://www.rrregion.org/mitigation.html>.