

Northeast Oregon

Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan

Report for:

Baker County

1995 Third Street, Baker City OR, 97814

Grant County

201 South Humbolt Street, Canyon City OR, 27820

Union County

1106 K Avenue, La Grande OR, 97850

Wallowa County

101 South River Street, Enterprise OR, 97828

City of Baker City

PO Box 650, 1655 First Street, Baker City OR, 97814

City of Halfway

P.O. Box 738, Halfway OR, 97834

City of John Day

450 East Main Street, John Day OR, 97845

City of La Grande

P.O. Box 670, La Grande OR, 97850

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November 2007



Special Thanks & Acknowledgements

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Regional Stakeholders:

The following municipalities and organizations completed stakeholder interviews for the Northeast Oregon Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation planning process:

American Red Cross, La Grande
Baker City Planning Department
Baker County Consolidated 9-1-1 Dispatch Center
Baker County Emergency Management
Bureau of Land Management
City of Cove
City of Enterprise
City of Greenhorn
City of Halfway
City of Island City
City of John Day
City of La Grande
City of Richland
City of Sumpter
City of Union
Community Connection of Baker County
Community Connections Senior Center, La Grande
Eastern Oregon Head Start

Eastern Oregon University
Elgin Rural Fire Department
Grande Ronde Hospital
Grant County Court
Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation
Northeast Oregon Economic Development District
Northeast Oregon Housing Authority
Oregon Department of Forestry
Union County Chamber of Commerce
Union County Emergency Services
Union County Planning Department
Wallowa County Emergency Services
Wallowa County Planning Department
Wallowa Resources
Wallowa Soil and Water Conservation District

This Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed through a regional partnership funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive Grant Program. The Northeast Oregon Region grant¹ was awarded to support the development of a multi-jurisdictional natural hazard mitigation plans for the region. The region's planning process utilized a four-phased planning process, plan templates and plan development support provided by the Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup at the University of Oregon.

¹ Grant: PDMC-PL-10-OR-2006-005 Award Number: EMS-2006-PC-0003

**Northeast Oregon
Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan**

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Executive Summary

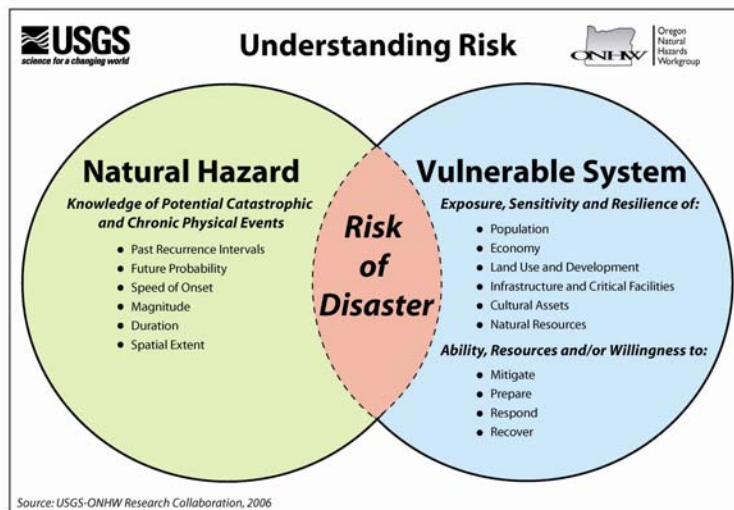
Northeast Oregon communities developed this Multi-Hazard Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan in an effort to reduce future loss of life and property resulting from natural disasters. It is impossible to predict exactly when these disasters will occur, or the extent to which they will affect the community. However, with careful planning and collaboration among public agencies, private sector organizations, and citizens within the community, it is possible to minimize the losses that can result from natural disasters.

Natural hazard mitigation is defined as a method of permanently reducing or alleviating the losses of life, property, and injuries resulting from natural hazards through long and short-term strategies. Example strategies include policy changes, such as updated ordinances; projects, such as seismic retrofits to critical facilities; and education and outreach to targeted audiences, such as Spanish speaking residents or the elderly. Natural hazard mitigation is the responsibility of individuals, private businesses and industries, state and local governments, and the federal government.

Why Develop this Mitigation Plan?

This multi-jurisdictional natural hazard mitigation plan is intended to assist Northeast Oregon communities in reducing the risk from natural hazards by identifying resources, information, and strategies for risk reduction. It will also help guide and coordinate mitigation activities throughout the community. The figure below is utilized throughout the plan to illustrate the concept of risk reduction.

Figure i.1 Understanding Risk



Source: Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup, 2006

A natural hazard mitigation plan can assist communities in understanding their risk to natural hazards. When a community can identify and understand the relationship between the natural hazards it faces, its vulnerable systems, and its existing capacity, it becomes better equipped to identify and implement actions aimed at reducing the community's overall risk to natural hazards.

Who Participated in Developing the Plan?

In Fall 2005, the Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup (ONHW) at the University of Oregon's Community Service Center partnered with the Northeast Oregon Region (Baker, Grant, Union and Wallowa Counties) to develop a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Grant proposal. Each county joined the Partnership for Disaster Resistance and Resilience (*The Partnership*) by signing (through their County Commissions) a Memorandum of Understanding for this project. FEMA awarded the Northeast Oregon Region grant to support the development of the multi-jurisdictional natural hazard mitigation plans for the four counties in the region. ONHW and the communities were awarded the grant in the Fall of 2005 and local planning efforts in this region began in the Fall of 2006.

The Northeast Oregon Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan is the result of a collaborative effort between citizens, public agencies, non-profit organizations, the private sector and regional organizations. Four project steering committees guided the process of developing the plan. The steering committees were comprised of representatives from the following organizations.

Baker County

- Baker County 9-1-1 Dispatch Center
- Baker County Emergency Management
- Baker County Emergency Management / Fire Authority
- Baker County Planning Department
- Baker County Roads Department
- Baker County Sheriff's Office
- Oregon State University Extension Service
- United States Forest Service

Grant County

- City of John Day
- City of Mt. Vernon
- City of Prairie City
- Grant County Court
- Grant County Emergency Management
- Grant County Emergency Medical Services
- Grant County Regional Airport
- Grant County Sheriff's Department

Union County

- Eastern Oregon University
- La Grande Rural Fire Protection District
- Oregon Department of Transportation
- Union County Emergency Services
- Union County Planning Department

Wallowa County

- Wallowa County Commission
- Wallowa County Emergency Management
- Wallowa County Planning Department
- Wallowa County Public Works

All cities within Region 7 Counties were invited to participate. The cities of Baker City, Halfway, John Day, and La Grande formed workgroups to complete City Addendums. The following organizations were represented within the cities' workgroups:

Baker City

- Baker County Emergency Management
- Baker City Planning Department
- Baker City Public Works
- Baker City Administrator

City of Halfway

- Baker County Emergency Management
- City of Halfway Public Works
- City of Halfway Mayor

City of John Day

- City of John Day Administrator

City of La Grande

- City of La Grande Planning Department
- City of La Grande Police Department
- City of La Grande Public Works
- City of La Grande Finance Department
- City of La Grande Parks Department
- City of La Grande Fire Department

Persons within the following organizations were designated as the regional plan's co-conveners: Union County Emergency Services, Baker County Emergency Management, Baker County Planning Department, Wallowa County Planning Department, Grant County Court, and the City of John Day. Each of these organizations will take the lead in implementing, maintaining and updating the plan. Public participation played a key role in the development of goals and action items. Public involvement was achieved through the interviewing of stakeholders in northeast Oregon.

What is the Plan's Mission?

The mission of the Northeast Oregon Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan is to create a disaster resilient Northeast Oregon.

What are the Plan Goals?

The plan goals describe the overall direction that Northeast Oregon agencies, organizations, and citizens can take toward mitigating risk from natural hazards.

- Protect Human Welfare, Property, and Natural Resources

- Develop mitigation actions to lessen the impact from natural disasters on people, infrastructure and property, and the natural resources of Northeast Oregon.
- Safeguard Economy
 - Develop mitigation actions to lessen the economic impacts from natural disasters on the region’s economic development and local businesses.
- Increase Education, Outreach, and Awareness
 - Promote education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of hazards and risk-reduction practices.
- Strengthen Organizational and Community Capacity
 - Sustain and build upon community partnerships, resources, and collective knowledge to implement mitigation actions.

How are the Action Items Organized?

The action items are organized within an action matrix (located at the end of this Summary), which lists all the multi-hazard and hazard-specific action items included in the mitigation plan. Data collection, research, and stakeholder interviews resulted in the development of these action items. The Action Item Matrix identifies linkages between the plan goals and actions. Additionally, it lists the action, coordinating organization, timeline, and plan goals addressed by the action.

- **Coordinating Organization:** The coordinating organization is the public agency with regulatory responsibility to address natural hazards, find appropriate funding, or oversee activity implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- **Internal Partners:** Internal partner organizations are departments within the community that may be able to assist in the implementation of action items by providing relevant resources to the coordinating organization.
- **External Partners:** External Partner organizations can assist the community in implementing the action items in various functions and may include local, regional, state, or federal agencies, as well as local and regional public and private sector organizations.

The internal and external partner organizations listed in the mitigation plan are potential partners recommended by the project steering committee, but who were not necessarily contacted during the development of the plan. Partner organizations should be contacted by the coordinating organization to establish commitment of time and/or resources for action items.

- **Timeline:** Action items include both short-term and long-term activities. Each action item includes an estimate of the timeline for implementation. *Short-term action items (ST)* are activities which city agencies are capable of implementing with existing resources and authorities within one to two years. *Long-term action items (LT)* may require new or additional resources or authorities, and may take between one and five years to implement.
- **Plan Goals Addressed:** The plan goals addressed by each action item are identified as a means for monitoring and evaluating how well the mitigation plan is achieving its goals following the implementation.

How will the plan be implemented?

The plan maintenance section of this document details the formal process that will ensure that the Northeast Oregon Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan remains an active and relevant document. The plan maintenance process includes a schedule for monitoring and evaluating the Plan annually and producing a plan revision every five years. This section describes how the community will integrate public participation throughout the plan maintenance process. Finally, this section intends to incorporate the mitigation strategies outlined in this Plan into existing planning mechanisms such as the Comprehensive Plan, Capital Improvement Plans, and Building Codes outlined in the Development Code.

Plan Adoption

The following organizations will be responsible for adopting the Northeast Oregon Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan, and for providing the support necessary to ensure plan implementation: Union County Emergency Services, Baker County Emergency Management, Baker County Planning Department, Wallowa County Planning Department, Grant County Court, and the City of John Day. After the Plan is locally reviewed and deemed complete, the Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup at the University of Oregon will be responsible for submitting it to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer at Oregon Emergency Management. Oregon Emergency Management will then submit the Plan to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA – Region X) for review. This review will address the federal criteria outlined in FEMA Interim Final Rule 44 CFR Part 201. Upon acceptance by FEMA the County will adopt the plan via resolution. At that point the County will gain eligibility for the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance program funds.

The success of a regional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan's goals and actions depends upon the maintenance of competent steering committees. Furthermore, the incorporation of mitigation actions into existing county plans and policies can strengthen and support the Plan. It is hereby directed that the responsible persons and organizations will implement and maintain the concepts in this Plan. Thorough understanding and consistent use of this Plan will result in the implementation of appropriate mitigation activities and the reduction of risk from future natural hazard events.