

Hancock Annex

Introduction

This appendix, when used with the Regional (multi-jurisdictional) PDM Plan, is an All-Hazard Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for the Town of Hancock.

Mitigation is any sustained action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards and their effects. Previous FEMA, State and Regional Project Impact efforts demonstrate the fact that it is less expensive to prevent disasters than to repeatedly repair damage after a disaster has struck. This plan recognizes that communities have opportunities to identify mitigation strategies. Hazards cannot be eliminated, but it is possible to determine what the hazards are, where the hazards are most severe and identify local actions that can be taken to reduce the severity of the hazard.

Hazard Mitigations strategies and measures **avert** the hazard by redirecting its impact by means of a structure or land treatment, **adapt** to the hazard by modifying structures or standards or **avoid** the hazard through improved public education, relocating/removing buildings in the flood zone, or ensuring development is disaster resistant. Measures and strategies could include projects such as:

- Flood-proofing structures
- Tying down propane/fuel tanks in flood-prone areas
- Elevating furnaces and water heaters
- Identifying & modifying high traffic accident locations and routes
- Ensuring adequate water supply
- Identifying & upgrading undersized culverts
- Proactive land use planning for floodplains and other flood-prone areas
- Proper road maintenance and construction
- Ensuring critical facilities are safely located
- Buyout & relocation of structures in harms way
- Establish & enforce appropriate building codes
- Public information and education

Purpose

The purpose of this Pre-disaster Mitigation Plan is to assist Hancock in identifying all hazards facing the town and list strategies to begin reducing risks from known hazards.

Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional PDM Plan Hazard Mitigation Goals

- To reduce the loss of life and injury resulting from all hazards.
- To lessen financial losses and property damage incurred by municipalities, businesses and private citizens due to disasters.

These overarching goals can be further refined as follows:

- The impacts of hazards should be first avoided, then reduced where they cannot be reasonably avoided. For flooding and riverine erosion, this can best be achieved by precluding development from hazard areas, and where development exists through property buyouts or flood protection sympathetic to the natural and human resources of the area.
- The connections between land use, development siting, drainage systems, building standards, and road design and maintenance and the effects of disasters on the Region should be recognized and incorporated into policy so that there is no adverse impact (increased hazard) from development.
- Mitigation actions should be part of larger, systematic efforts at disaster reduction based on the highest threats. Flooding should be addressed on a watershed scale. Structural fire and technological hazards should be lessened through statewide safety education and code compliance.

Hancock Town Plan (adopted 8/19/03) – Objectives/Goals that support Hazard Mitigation

- To maintain a transportation system that is safe, efficient and complements the other goals and policies of this Plan (page 28).
- To provide pedestrians with safe areas to travel within the Hancock village (page 28).
- It is the goal of the town to encourage “clean” businesses to locate within Hancock, provided that they do not adversely affect community health, quality of life or the rural character of the town (page 35).
- To ensure no net loss of flood storage capacity in order to minimize the loss of life and property, disruption of commerce, and demand for extraordinary public services and expenditures which result from flood damage (page 41).
- To consider surface water and groundwater impacts and effects related to proposed or existing uses of land (page 43).

Community Background

The Town of Hancock, consisting of approximately 24,696 acres, is situated on the eastern slopes of the Green Mountains. The village of Hancock is located at the junction of Routes 125 and 100. In 2000, the population of Hancock was 382, making it one of the smallest populations in the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Region. Because 80% of the land in Hancock is part of the Green Mountain National Forest, it is unlikely that

Hancock will see a boom in population in the near future, as there is a finite amount of developable land.

According to the U.S. Census Reports, there were 170 year-round housing units and 44 seasonal housing units in Hancock in 2000, totaling 214. In 1990, there were 201 units. The overall increase during this period (1990 – 200) was 6%. The overall increase for the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Region during this period was 6%. Currently, there are 214 residential buildings in Hancock. Thirty four percent of these buildings were built prior to 1939.

Most of the Town lays within the service area of Central Vermont Public Service (CVPS) that supplies electrical power to those sections of town. A small portion of Hancock is fed by Rochester Electric Light and Power Company.

Fire protection services are provided by the Hancock Fire Department (HFD), an all-volunteer department, which provides twenty-four hour coverage for the Town and surrounding areas. Neighboring communities' fire departments are called on in large fires requiring outside resources. Although the Fire Department is not part of any formal mutual aid district, it does participate in informal agreements with the towns of Rochester and Granville.

Fire equipment and vehicles are housed in a four-bay fire station located on Route 100 south of the village center. The building is over 65 years old. Although it is in reasonably good condition, it lacks some important elements that are essential to fire protection services. There is no source of backup power in the building, but the department does own a 6500KW portable generator. There are no on-site restrooms, no space for meetings and no place to create a command center in the event of a major hazard event. These deficiencies should be fixed over time, perhaps with the construction of a new fire station.

The Town of Hancock does not have or need a full time police force and none is contemplated in the next five years. A single constable is employed to handle any minor law enforcement issues in town. Additionally, the town pays \$3,000 annually for the Addison County Sheriff's department to make regular patrols of the town. Residents may also call the Vermont State Police for assistance. Vermont State Police Troop "D" is located off Route 107 immediately south of the Bethel/Royalton Town Line in Royalton.

Medical emergencies are handled well by the private, non-profit Valley Rescue Squad, Inc. located in Hancock. They have one ambulance and a rescue truck with extraction equipment that are fairly new. The closest hospital is Gifford Medical Center, located in Randolph. Medivac services are available by the DHART helicopter.

Community Hazards Inventory and Risk Assessment

In Hancock, the interviews and hazards analysis indicate that the following hazards are listed as probable (frequent to unusual) – Flash Flood, HAZMAT (Transportation

Accidents), Winter Storm/Ice Storm and Structural Fire. In terms of potential severity of damage, the following hazards are rated as having the potential to produce serious to locally catastrophic damage – Tornado, Flash Flood, HAZMAT, Hurricane/Tropical Storm, Earthquake, Drought, Wildfire/Forest Fire and structural fire. Hazards to which the town is vulnerable (probable and damaging) include Flash Flood, Fire, and HAZMAT. Therefore, the mitigation measures in this Plan focus on these three hazards.

Flash Flood (Risk = Med-High/High)

Based on the results of overlaying the FIRM flood maps with the location of the E911 points, there are 15 residences and 5 commercial businesses in the town that are vulnerable to potential flooding. The estimated loss for damage to these properties from the 100 year flood, assuming average residential and commercial values (derived from 2008 Annual Report by the Vermont Department of Taxes, Division of Property Valuation and Review) would be \$2,481,440. This is about 13.7% of the grand list.

Recent flooding that had led to federal disaster declarations for Addison County occurred from June 17, 1998 to July 13, 1998 (DR 1228 VT), July 14, 2000 through July 18, 2000 (DR 1336 VT), August 12, 2004, through September 12, 2004 (DR 1559VT), June 14, 2008 through June 17, 2008 (DR 1778 VT), and July 21 through August 12, 2008 (DR 1790 VT). This list does not include flood events that were not federally declared.

No development projects are planned in Hancock in areas that would be vulnerable to flooding. There are no repetitive loss properties in Hancock on FEMA's NFIP list.

Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) - Transportation Accidents (Risk = Med-High/High)

There are three sites in town that has sufficient types and/or quantities of hazardous materials to require reporting. With Hancock's village located at the junction of Routes 125 and 100, it sees a fair amount of truck traffic by Vermont standards. There are 156 residential and 20 commercial buildings within 1000ft of a potential HAZMAT spill on Routes 125 and 100. In the event that 5% of these structures were involved in a HAZMAT incident, the estimated damage would be \$798,947. It should also be noted that the State of Vermont currently has one fully trained HAZMAT response team, with vehicles located in Essex Junction, Brandon, and Windsor. The HAZMAT crew chief is available within minutes of a call for the team but on-scene response would be a matter of hours. In the event of a serious accident in town, there would be little time for evacuation and response would be difficult.

Fire (Risk = Med-High/High)

Poor access to fires, limited water supply for firefighting outside the Village area, and distances of homes from the Fire Station are a few of the challenges that leave Hancock vulnerable to the impacts of structure fires. Because the town is primarily forested, wildfires are possible during late spring, late summer, and early fall. The forests contain

potential fuel for a serious conflagration. Some recreational and retirement homes with single access roads and no fire-fighting water supply are in jeopardy.

Existing Hazard Mitigation Measures in the Community

Ongoing efforts to mitigate hazards in the community include:

1. ditch and culvert maintenance.
2. administration of flood hazard regulations

National Flood Insurance Program

Hancock's initial Flood Hazard Boundary Map was identified on 9/20/74. The Town's initial Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) was dated 9/27/85. The Town's FIRM has been updated, and the current effective map date is 8/19/91.

The Hancock Administrative Officer serves as the NFIP Administrator. Hancock is located in Addison County and has not completed an update of its flood hazard regulations. Aside from the Town's NFIP program, there are no additional erosion control or flood management regulations that apply in Hancock. There are no plans to enroll the community in the CRS program.

Based on the regional and local hazard assessment and analysis, this Annex identifies actions related to continued compliance with the NFIP. These actions are prioritized, along with the other actions developed in this Annex, using the method described on Page 21 of the Regional PDM Plan. The actions are included in the Implementation Schedule for Prioritized Mitigation Projects, which follows.

Implementation Schedule for Prioritized Mitigation Projects

Tasks currently under way, recently completed under consideration – in order of priority:

MITIGATION ACTION	WHO (LEADERSHIP)	WHEN (TIMEFRAME)	HOW (FUNDING/ SUPPORT)	IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH EXISTING PROGRAMS
<u>ALL HAZARDS</u> 1. Ensure that RRP is current	Selectboard	Yearly	With TRORC assistance	
<u>FLOOD</u> 2. Continue the planned road maintenance program and update existing culvert inventory. Upgrade culverts and ditching.	Highway Department	Ongoing	Local resources	
3. Revise flood hazard regulations	Selectboard	2009	Local resources, TRORC assistance	
4. upsize culvert on Taylor Brook Road (TH #21)	Highway Department	2010	PDM-c or HMGP funding	
<u>FIRE</u> 5. Continue checking Fire Extinguishers in Town buildings.	Fire Department	Annually	Local resources	
6. Obtain training and equipment appropriate that will allow the fire department to fight wildfires safely.	Fire Department	2009	Funded by Fire Service Training Academy	
7. Develop additional dry hydrant sites in rural locations.	Fire Department	Ongoing	Local resources	
8. Consider installing smoke detectors in town office.	Fire Department	2008	Local resources	
<u>HAZMAT</u> 9. Pursue HAZMAT training for Fire Department	Fire Department	2009	Funded by Fire Service Training Academy	