

Pomfret 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 Pomfret.

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 Pomfret in identifying all hazards facing the town and list strategies to begin reducing risks from known hazards.

Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional 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.

Pomfret Town Plan (adopted 11/21/07) – Objectives/Goals that support Hazard Mitigation

- Ensure that the rate of development does not exceed the ability of existing and planned town services and facilities to support it (page 22).
- Protect and preserve Pomfret's natural and historic resources, rural character, and scenic beauty for the health, safety, and enjoyment of current and future generations (page 33).
- Maintain Pomfret's roads in a manner that promotes public safety, is consistent with land use goals, does not degrade the environment, and efficiently moves people, goods, and services (page 44).
- Provide Town services and facilities that meet the established needs of residents in a cost effective manner (page 55).

Community Background

The Town of Pomfret, consisting of approximately 26,000 acres, is located in the foothills of the Green Mountains. Dominated by hilly wooded topography, headwaters drain into the White and Ottawaquechee Rivers. Residents are primarily scattered along Pomfret and Stage Roads. The Appalachian Trail runs through the middle of town. In 2000, the population of Pomfret was 979.

Based on the U.S. Census data, in 2000 there were approximately 535 housing units in Pomfret, a 9.2% increase in the total number of units over the prior ten year period, or an average rate of housing growth of 4.5 units per year during the 1990's. The average rate

of increase of new housing stock in Windsor County during the 1990's was less than Pomfret's, increasing by about 5.9%.

The Town lies within the service area of Central Vermont Public Service (CVPS), which supplies electrical power to all sections of town.

Pomfret currently has two volunteer fire departments, the Pomfret Fire Department based in North Pomfret and the Teago Fire Department in South Pomfret. Pomfret's fire protection is enhanced through mutual aid agreements with neighboring towns. A long-range plan for fire protection was accepted at the 1995 Town Meeting and will continue to be implemented and supported by municipal funds annually, as well as donations and grants.

The Pomfret FAST Squad is a group of volunteers with either First Responder or Emergency Medical Training who respond to medical emergencies in the Town. They are dispatched at the same time an ambulance is called but arrive sooner and administer first aid and stabilize the patient until the ambulance arrives. Their equipment is purchased with donated funds.

Ambulance service in Pomfret is provided by the Town of Woodstock which has two ambulances and full-time dispatch service. The Town pays an annual assessment to have this service available, and the patients are charged for actual usage. Unpaid bills are charged to the Town.

The Selectboard can appoint First and Second Town Constables. The Town Constable handles violations of the dog ordinance and assists in other emergencies. If the citizens want a higher level of protection, options include hiring a sheriff to be available certain hours, having the Town Constable trained, certified and officially on call for emergencies, or sharing an "outpost" trooper with a neighboring town. For several years, the Town has hired a Windsor County Sheriff to patrol roads to enforce speed limits.

Pomfret residents depend on the Vermont State Police in Bethel for police protection. The State Police outpost there covers twenty-two towns, sometimes with only one or two officers available to respond to emergencies. Often no officers are on the road between 2:30 and 7 a.m., although they are "on call" during those hours.

Community Hazards Inventory and Risk Assessment

In Pomfret, the interviews and hazards analysis indicate that the following hazards are listed as probable (frequent to unusual) – Flash Flood, HAZMAT (Transportation Accidents), Structural Fire, Landslides, and Winter Storm/Ice Storm. In terms of potential severity of damage, the following hazards are rated as having the potential to produce serious to locally catastrophic damage – Flash Flood, HAZMAT, Hurricane/Tropical Storm, Winter Storm, Drought, Landslides, Wildfire/Forest Fire and Structural fire. Hazards to which the town is vulnerable (probable and damaging) include Flash Flood, HAZMAT, Fire, Landslides, and Winter Storms. Therefore, the mitigation measures in this Plan focus on these five 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 37 residences and 6 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 \$10,752,975. This is about 5% of the grand list. Many small streams are not mapped though and have flash flood potential. Also, the existing FIRM for Pomfret is very poor quality and so probably does not show hazard areas accurately. There are no repetitive loss properties in Pomfret. Bunker Hill Road was washed out by a flash flood in 1985, damaging or destroying culverts, a trailer home, and propane tanks.

Recent flooding that had led to federal disaster declarations for Windsor County occurred from June 17, 1998 to July 13, 1998 (DR 1228 VT), Sept. 16 through Sept. 21, 1999 (DR 1307 VT), July 14, 2000 through July 18, 2000 (DR 1336 VT), July 21, 2003, through August 18, 2003 (DR 1488 VT), April 15-21, 2007 (DR 1698 VT), July 9-11, 2007 (DR 1715 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 Pomfret in areas that would be vulnerable to flooding. There are no repetitive loss properties in Pomfret on FEMA's NFIP list. Areas subject to flooding are shown on the NFIP map of Pomfret.

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

Based on available VT Tier II data, there are 2 sites in town that have sufficient types and/or quantities of hazardous materials to require reporting. Vermont Route 12 crosses the south western corner of Pomfret. There are 34 residential and 7 commercial buildings within 1,000 feet of a potential HAZMAT spill. In the event that 5% of these structures were involved in a HAZMAT incident, the estimated damage would be \$520,572. There is an increased risk of fuel spills at private residences with steep driveways. Incidents like this have occurred in the past.

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 village areas, and distances of homes from the Fire Stations are a few of the challenges that leave Pomfret vulnerable to the impacts of structure fires. Wildfires are possible during late spring, late summer, and early fall. The forests contain potential fuel for a serious conflagration with

many wooded acres and difficult terrain. Some recreational and retirement homes with single access roads and no fire-fighting water supply are in jeopardy.

Landslides (Risk = Med-High/High)

Landslides can be caused by seismic events, manmade or natural changes to groundwater flow that cause liquefaction, removal of vegetation and manmade or natural undercutting of steep banks. There is no quality mapping available for slide potential at this time, but slides along Pomfret Road have occurred in the past.

Winter Storm (Risk = Med-High/High)

These hazards have no specific damage estimate as their effect could occur anywhere in town. Damages have included downed power lines, collapsed roofs, and even small avalanches that have closed one road.

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 and driveway access ordinance

National Flood Insurance Program

The Town of Pomfret is an NFIP participant. Pomfret's initial Flood Hazard Boundary Map was identified on 11/1/74. The Town's initial Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) was dated 9/18/85. The Town's FIRM has been updated, and the current effective map date is 9/28/07.

The Pomfret Zoning Administrator serves as the NFIP Administrator. Pomfret is located in Windsor County and completed an update of its flood hazard regulations in 2007. Beyond the Town's NFIP program, there are no additional erosion control or flood management regulations that apply in Pomfret. 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.

Areas of Local Concern

1. Several areas of town experience regular road washouts during severe rain events.
2. The cliff on Pomfret Road, near the Hartford town line is crumbling. Material from this cliff can fall on the road, creating a landslide hazard for vehicular traffic.

3. The bridge next to the Pomfret School (Bridge 7) is narrow and accumulates a dangerous amount of ice during spring thaw. Ice jams of this nature can cause flood damage to occur. This bridge should be replaced for this reason
4. The bridges near Teago General Store (Bridges 5 and 9) in South Pomfret are aging and may not allow proper flood flows, especially with ice jams.

Implementation Schedule for Prioritized Mitigation Projects

Tasks currently under way or 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	
2. Use PDM plan for Hazard Identification and Mapping.	Emergency Planning Coordinator	Ongoing	Local resources	
3. Rewrite the Town Emergency Operations Plan and establish better communications among emergency responders.	Emergency Planning Coordinator	2009	With TRORC assistance	
<u>FLOOD</u>				
4. Continue to analyze and mitigate the flooding damage that occurs during flooding in town.	Emergency Planning Coordinator	Ongoing	Local resources	
5. Continue the planned road maintenance program and update undersized culverts and ditching.	Highway Department	Ongoing	Local resources	
6. Work with FEMA to improve town flood maps	Selectboard	2010	FEMA and local resources	
7. Replace undersized small bridges and culverts, including Bridges 5, 7 and 9.	Highway Department	Yearly	HMGP, FMA and local resources	
<u>HAZMAT</u>				
8. Pursue operations-level HAZMAT training for Fire Department and FAST Squad	Fire Departments	2009	Funded by Fire Service Training Academy	
<u>FIRE</u>				
9. The volunteer fire departments should continue to enlist the help of non-firefighter volunteers to assist in community fire prevention and preparedness through education, inspections, fire pond inventories, etc.	Fire Departments	Ongoing	Local resources	
10. Revise land development regulations to ensure that all new development is accessible to emergency vehicles at all times of the year.	Planning Commission and Selectboard	2010	Local resources	
11. Complete a fire pond and hydrant inventory using GIS, and develop dry hydrants in areas that lack them at present.	Fire Departments	2010	With George D Aiken RC&D and TRORC assistance	
<u>LANDSLIDE</u>				
12. Stabilize potential landslides on Pomfret Road at the Hartford town line, and elsewhere.	Road Foreman and Selectboard	Ongoing	PDM-C, HMGP, state, and local resources	
<u>WINTER STORM</u>				
13. Continue to inventory trees and work with utilities to trim along power lines	Road Commissioner	Ongoing	Local resources	