

## Randolph 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 Randolph.

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

## **Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Hazard Mitigation Goals**

- 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.

## **Randolph Town Plan (adopted 12/21/04) – Objectives/Goals that support Hazard Mitigation**

- 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 22).
- To conserve Randolph's floodplains and floodplain forests, through regulatory and non-regulatory methods, for their beneficial natural functions (page 22).
- To evaluate the town's physical infrastructure and the various entities in town which provide services (page 48).
- To maintain or improve service to the town in an efficient and cost-effective manner as Randolph grows into the future (page 48).
- To provide quality service from all three fire departments in terms of both qualified and adequately trained personnel and adequate equipment (page 52).
- To maximize the potential of existing transportation facilities and to provide efficient, safe, and diverse transportation options for Randolph residents and businesses; (page 69).

## **Community Background**

Randolph, which covers approximately 31,000 acres of hilly country in the center of the state, is dominated by an expanse of high ground in the center. Valleys run north south on either side, with the ground rising again on the town's east and west borders. Numerous small streams collect water from yards, fields and forest before joining the town's three largest streams, Ayers Brook and the Second and Third Branches of the White River.

In 1990, there were a total of 1,830 housing units in Randolph. Only 84 units (5 percent) were used on a seasonal basis. Thirty-two percent of Randolph's occupied housing units are occupied on a rental basis reflecting the town's relatively high level of urbanization, in comparison to Orange County as a whole. Almost half of Randolph's housing stock was constructed prior to 1944. Since then, the most significant period of growth in the town's housing stock occurred in the 1970's, when a full 20 percent of the total housing stock was created. Randolph is expected to grow due to its location on Interstate 89.

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

Fire protection is provided by three volunteer districts, headquartered in Randolph Village, Randolph Center, and East Randolph. Braintree receives coverage under contract with the Town. A Fire Advisory Committee made up of a chair a liaison appointed by the Selectboard, a chief, and one member-at-large from each department, approves expenditures and handles town-wide issues.

There is a high degree of cooperation among the three departments, as well as departments of surrounding towns. Within Randolph, two of the three departments automatically respond to any structure fire. The non-involved department moves to Randolph Center in case another fire is reported.

A perennial concern is access to properties on the other side of the river should the Route 12 bridge become impassable. In this event, Randolph fire equipment would be unable to reach the central business district and the Beanville Road industrial area as well as other residential and commercial properties south and west of the river. Other concerns include the replacement of aging vehicles. The financing of equipment continues to be a problem, annual depreciation rates are not considered adequate.

Medical rescue service in Randolph is provided by White River Valley Ambulance, Inc., (WRVA) a non-profit corporation whose headquarters is on Route 12 south of the Village. The service responds to medical emergencies, accidents, and other calls for assistance, performs search and rescue operations, stands by for structure fires, sports events and other public gatherings, and transports patients unable to travel by car. They have three ambulances 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.

The boundaries of the Randolph Police District are the same as those that once enclosed the Village Compact. Outside the District, police coverage is provided by the Vermont State Police operating out of the Royalton/Bethel barracks. The State Police also serves as backup for the Village Force as does the Orange County Sheriff's Department. There is a high degree of cooperation among the three forces. The jail is located at the County Seat in Chelsea.

The Village Police Department consists of a Chief and five full-time officers. Police headquarters is on Salisbury Street. The facility is in need of major upgrades in design and general maintenance.

## Community Hazards Inventory and Risk Assessment

In Randolph, 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 – Flash Flood, HAZMAT, Hurricane/Tropical Storm, Winter Storm/Ice Storm, and Structural Fire. Hazards to which the town is vulnerable (probable and damaging) include Flash Flood, Fire, HAZMAT, and Winter Storm/Ice Storm. Therefore, the mitigation measures in this Plan focus on these four 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 26 residences and 7 commercial and industrial 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 \$6,418,532. This is about 2% of the grand list. Risks also occur outside of mapped areas. Roads and some residences in Randolph next to steep small streams could be damaged, such as West Street and Howard Hill were in July 2007.

Recent flooding that had led to federal disaster declarations for Orange 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 Randolph in areas that would be vulnerable to flooding. There are no repetitive loss properties in Randolph on FEMA’s NFIP list. Areas subject to flooding are shown on the NFIP map of Randolph.

### Fire (Risk = Med-High/High)

Poor access to fires, limited water supply for firefighting outside the Village area, and distances of homes from Fire Stations are a few of the challenges that leave Randolph vulnerable to the impacts of structure fires. Randolph has a traditional “downtown” block of adjacent commercial buildings and has had bad downtown fires historically. Many of these buildings do not contain an extended fire suppression system, though small sections of the downtown have sprinkler systems. In the event of a major fire in one building, it is likely that the whole block would be threatened.

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

Based on available VT Tier II data, there are 19 sites in town that have sufficient types and/or quantities of hazardous materials to require reporting. In addition, the New

England Central Railroad runs through the village of Randolph. At any given time, there can be hazardous materials aboard the train. Additionally, Randolph's village is located at the junction of Route 12, 12A and 66; and the Town is bisected by I-89. These roads (particularly I-89) see a heavy amount of truck traffic. There are 1,063 residences and 175 commercial & industrial buildings within 1,000 feet of a potential HAZMAT spill on the railroad, Routes 12, 12A, 66 and I-89, and these Tier II facilities. In the event that 5% of these structures were involved in a HAZMAT incident, the estimated damage would be \$11,417,458.

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. The Fire Department has participated in HAZMAT training in the past.

Winter Storm (Risk = Med-High/High)

These hazards have no specific damage estimate as their effect could occur anywhere in town.

### **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**

The Town of Randolph is an NFIP participant. Randolph's initial Flood Hazard Boundary Map was identified on 6/28/74. The Town's initial Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) was dated 7/16/91. The Town's FIRM has not been updated – the current effective map date is 7/16/91.

The Randolph Zoning Administrator serves as the NFIP Administrator. Randolph is located in Orange 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 Randolph. 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. Because of a concentrated student population, Vermont Technical College is an area of local concern. Although the Randolph Center Fire Department has recently acquired an aerial ladder truck capable of reaching the taller buildings on campus, a hazard event at the school could easily overload Randolph's emergency services.
2. Randolph Village contains numerous adjacent commercial buildings. These buildings do not contain an extended fire suppression system. In the event of a major fire in one building, it is likely that others nearby would be threatened.
3. The area of Interstate 89 that runs through Randolph is served by local fire and rescue squads in the event of major accident or HAZMAT event. There is limited access to the length of the interstate. The level of truck traffic along this highway increases the likelihood of a HAZMAT event.
4. A bridge separates the Randolph Village Fire Department from the main body of the Village. In the event of a severe flood, this bridge could wash out, causing the Village to be cut off from its own fire suppression equipment and firefighters, as well as from electrical, telephone (including Emergency Response lines), and possibly sewer and water service. Bethel and Royalton could provide limited fire service for this area.
5. Erosion and culverts on Howard Hill Road.

**Implementation Schedule for Prioritized Mitigation Projects**

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

<b>MITIGATION ACTION</b>	<b>WHO (LEADERSHIP)</b>	<b>WHEN (TIMEFRAME)</b>	<b>HOW (FUNDING/ SUPPORT)</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH EXISTING PROGRAMS</b>
<u>ALL HAZARDS</u> 1. Ensure that RRP is current	Selectboard	Yearly	With TRORC assistance	
2. Re-write and update existing Emergency Operations Plan	Emergency Management Director and Coordinator	Yearly	With TRORC assistance	
3. Conduct table top drills for Emergency Response Plan and EOC activation. Provide Selectboard with ICS for executives training	Emergency Management Director and Coordinator	Ongoing	Local resources	
<u>FLOOD</u> 4. Continue planned road maintenance program that addresses culvert survey and upgrade and ditching.	Road Foreman and Selectboard	2009 and ongoing	Local resources	
5. Revise flood hazard regulations.	Selectboard	2009	With TRORC assistance	
6. Improve flood and fluvial erosion Hazard Identification and Mapping.	Selectboard	2010	FMA, PDM-C with TRORC and state assistance	
7. Identify frequently flooded roads and bridges.	Road Foreman	2009	Local resources	
8. Replace lower culvert on Howard Hill Road.	Road Foreman	2012	HMGP or PDM-C, local resources	
<u>FIRE</u> 9. Develop additional dry hydrant sites in locations that need additional support.	Fire Department	Ongoing	Local resources, George Aiken RC&D	
10. Maintain Town wide fire protection plan.	Fire Department	Ongoing	Local resources	
11. Continue to support “Sound Advice” smoke detector program	Fire Department	Ongoing	Local resources	
12. Consider installation of fire sprinkler systems in the closely spaced historic downtown structures.	Fire Department with Town Manager	2010	Local resources	
<u>HAZMAT</u> 13. Develop emergency access points to the railroad corridor in locations where access is presently difficult in the event of a derailment.	Emergency Management Director and Coordinator	2010	With state transportation agency assistance	
14. Ensure that all emergency response and management personnel continue to receive HAZMAT awareness training as a minimum.	Fire Chiefs and Emergency Management Coordinator	Ongoing	Local resources	
<u>WINTER STORM</u> 15. Educate citizens on preparedness for winter travel and extended power outages.	Emergency Management Director and Coordinator	Ongoing	Local resources	