

SECTION 10

PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

44 CFR Requirement

44 CFR Part 201.6(c)(4)(i):

The plan shall include a plan maintenance process that includes a section describing the method and schedule of monitoring, evaluating and updating the mitigation plan within a five-year cycle.

44 CFR Part 201.6(c)(4)(ii):

The plan maintenance process shall include a process by which local governments incorporate the requirements of the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans, when appropriate.

This section discusses how the Southeastern NC Region Mitigation Strategy and Mitigation Action Plan will be implemented and how the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan will be evaluated and enhanced over time. This section also discusses how the public will continue to be involved in a sustained hazard mitigation planning process. It consists of the following four subsections:

- ◆ 10.1 Implementation and Integration
- ◆ 10.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Enhancement
- ◆ 10.3 Continued Public Involvement
- ◆ 10.4 Evaluation of Monitoring, Evaluation and Update Process

10.1 IMPLEMENTATION AND INTEGRATION

Each agency, department or other partner participating under the Southeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is responsible for implementing specific mitigation actions as prescribed in the Mitigation Action Plan. Every proposed action listed in the Mitigation Action Plan is assigned to a specific “lead” agency or department in order to assign responsibility and accountability and increase the likelihood of subsequent implementation.

In addition to the assignment of a local lead department or agency, an implementation time period or a specific implementation date has been assigned in order to assess whether actions are being implemented in a timely fashion. In most cases, the counties in the Southeastern NC Region will seek outside funding sources to implement mitigation projects in both the pre-disaster and post-disaster environments. When applicable, potential funding sources have been identified for proposed actions listed in the Mitigation Action Plan.

SECTION 10: PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

The participating jurisdictions will integrate this Hazard Mitigation Plan into relevant City and County government decision-making processes or mechanisms, where feasible. This includes integrating the requirements of the Hazard Mitigation Plan into other local planning documents, processes or mechanisms, such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans, when appropriate. The members of the Southeastern NC Regional Mitigation Planning Committee will remain charged with ensuring that the goals and mitigation actions of new and updated local planning documents for their agencies or departments are consistent, or do not conflict with, the goals and actions of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and will not contribute to increased hazard vulnerability in the Southeastern NC Region.

Since the initial plan was adopted in 2015 for Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender County, and since Onslow County last adopted their plan, each County and participating jurisdiction has worked to integrate the hazard mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms where applicable/feasible. Examples of how this integration has occurred have been documented in the Implementation Status discussion provided for each of the mitigation actions found in Section 9. Specific examples of how integration has occurred include:

- ◆ Integrating the mitigation plan into reviews and updates of floodplain management ordinances
- ◆ Integrating the mitigation plan into reviews and updates of County emergency operations plans
- ◆ Integrating the mitigation plan into review and updates of building codes
- ◆ Integrating the mitigation plan into the capital improvements plan through identification of mitigation actions that require local funding.

Opportunities to further integrate the requirements of this Plan into other local planning mechanisms shall continue to be identified through future meetings of the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee, individual county meetings, and the annual review process described herein. Although it is recognized that there are many possible benefits to integrating components of this Plan into other local planning mechanisms, the development and maintenance of this stand-alone Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is deemed by the Southeastern NC Regional Mitigation Planning Committee to be the most effective and appropriate method to implement local hazard mitigation actions at this time.

10.2 MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND ENHANCEMENT

Periodic revisions and updates of the Hazard Mitigation Plan are required to ensure that the goals of the Plan are kept current, taking into account potential changes in hazard vulnerability and mitigation priorities. In addition, revisions may be necessary to ensure that the Plan is in full compliance with applicable federal and state regulations. Periodic evaluation of the Plan will also ensure that specific mitigation actions are being reviewed and carried out according to the Mitigation Action Plan.

When determined necessary, the Southeastern NC Regional Mitigation Planning Committee shall meet in March of every year to evaluate and monitor the progress attained and to revise, where needed, the activities set forth in the Plan. The findings and recommendations of the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee shall be documented in the form of a report that can be shared with interested Community and County Council members. The Regional Mitigation Planning Committee will also meet following any disaster events warranting a reexamination of the mitigation actions being implemented or proposed for future implementation. This will ensure that the Plan is continuously updated to reflect changing conditions and needs within the Southeastern NC Region. For future updates of the plan, North Carolina Emergency Management's Hazard Mitigation Planning Section will help coordinate the reconvening of the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee for these reviews through coordination with each County's

SECTION 10: PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

Emergency Management Departments. Unless it is determined otherwise, the Emergency Management Director from Brunswick, New Hanover, Onslow and Pender Counties will maintain ultimate responsibility for their respective County's plan implementation and monitoring, evaluation and update.

Five (5) Year Plan Review

The Plan will be thoroughly reviewed by the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee every five years to determine whether there have been any significant changes in the Southeastern NC Region that may, in turn, necessitate changes in the types of mitigation actions proposed. In order to track progress and update the mitigation strategies identified in the plan, the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee anticipates they will revisit this plan on an annual basis and after a hazard event. New development in identified hazard areas, an increased exposure to hazards, an increase or decrease in capability to address hazards, and changes to federal or state legislation are examples of factors that may affect the necessary content of the Plan.

The plan review provides participating jurisdiction officials with an opportunity to evaluate those actions that have been successful and to explore the possibility of documenting potential losses avoided due to the implementation of specific mitigation measures. The plan review also provides the opportunity to address mitigation actions that may not have been successfully implemented as assigned. North Carolina Emergency Management's Hazard Mitigation Planning section will help coordinate the reconvening the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee and conducting the five-year review through coordination with each County's Emergency Management Departments.

During the five-year plan review process, the following questions will be considered as criteria for assessing the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Plan:

- ◆ Do the goals address current and expected conditions?
- ◆ Has the nature or magnitude of risks changed?
- ◆ Are the current resources appropriate for implementing the Plan?
- ◆ Are there implementation problems, such as technical, political, legal or coordination issues with other agencies?
- ◆ Have the outcomes occurred as expected?
- ◆ Did County departments participate in the plan implementation process as assigned?

Following the five-year review, any revisions deemed necessary will be summarized and implemented according to the reporting procedures and plan amendment process outlined herein. Upon completion of the review and update/amendment process, the Southeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan will be submitted to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer at the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCEM) for final review and approval in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Disaster Declaration

Following a disaster declaration, the Southeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan will be revised as necessary to reflect lessons learned, or to address specific issues and circumstances arising from the event. It will be the responsibility North Carolina Emergency Management's Hazard Mitigation Planning section to coordinate the reconvening of the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee, through coordination with each County's Emergency Management Department, and ensure the appropriate

SECTION 10: PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

stakeholders are invited to participate in the plan revision and update process following declared disaster events.

Reporting Procedures

The results of the five-year review will be summarized by the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee in a report that will include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Plan and any required or recommended changes or amendments. The report will also include an evaluation of implementation progress for each of the proposed mitigation actions, identifying reasons for delays or obstacles to their completion along with recommended strategies to overcome them.

Plan Amendment Process

Upon the initiation of the amendment process, representatives from Brunswick, New Hanover, Onslow and Pender counties will forward information on the proposed change(s) to all interested parties including, but not limited to, all directly affected County departments, residents, and businesses. Information will also be forwarded to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management. This information will be disseminated in order to seek input on the proposed amendment(s) for no less than a 45-day review and comment period.

At the end of the 45-day review and comment period, the proposed amendment(s) and all comments will be forwarded to the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee for final consideration. The Regional Mitigation Planning Committee will review the proposed amendment along with the comments received from other parties, and if acceptable, the committee will submit a recommendation for the approval and adoption of changes to the Plan.

In determining whether to recommend approval or denial of a Plan amendment request, the following factors will be considered by the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee:

- ◆ There are errors, inaccuracies or omissions made in the identification of issues or needs in the Plan
- ◆ New issues or needs have been identified which are not adequately addressed in the Plan
- ◆ There has been a change in information, data, or assumptions from those on which the Plan is based

Upon receiving the recommendation from the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee and prior to adoption of the Plan, the participating jurisdictions will hold a public hearing, if deemed necessary. The governing bodies of each participating jurisdiction will review the recommendation from the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee (including the factors listed above) and any oral or written comments received at the public hearing. Following that review, the governing bodies will take one of the following actions:

- ◆ Adopt the proposed amendments as presented
- ◆ Adopt the proposed amendments with modifications
- ◆ Refer the amendments request back to the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee for further revision, or
- ◆ Defer the amendment request back to the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee for further consideration and/or additional hearings

10.3 CONTINUED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

44 CFR Requirement

44 CFR Part 201.6(c)(4)(iii):

The plan maintenance process shall include a discussion on how the community will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process

Public participation is an integral component to the mitigation planning process and will continue to be essential as this Plan evolves over time. As described above, significant changes or amendments to the Plan shall require a public hearing prior to any adoption procedures.

Other efforts to involve the public in the maintenance, evaluation and revision process will be made as necessary. These efforts may include:

- ◆ Advertising meetings of the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee in local newspapers, public bulletin boards and/or County office buildings
- ◆ Designating willing and voluntary citizens and private sector representatives as official members of the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee
- ◆ Utilizing local media to update the public on any maintenance and/or periodic review activities taking place
- ◆ Utilizing the Brunswick, New Hanover, Onslow and Pender county websites to advertise any maintenance and/or periodic review activities taking place, and
- ◆ Keeping copies of the Plan in public libraries.

10.4 EVALUATION OF PREVIOUS MONITORING, EVALUATION AND UPDATE PROCESS

Over the past five years, the participating jurisdictions have been independently implementing, monitoring and evaluating their own mitigation action plans. Progress made in implementing actions has been documented in Section 9: Mitigation Action Plan where each action contains a narrative about the implementation status of the action as of 2021. That said, the participating jurisdictions did waiver slightly from the monitoring and evaluation process defined in the original version of the plan, but still made significant process in implementing their mitigation action plans. During the 2021 update of this plan, the Regional Mitigation Planning Committee determined that the procedures for the upcoming five-year monitoring and evaluation process will remain as defined above, with minor revisions as noted, and will be re-evaluated during the next plan update process.

The five-year comprehensive update process began as early as 2018 when North Carolina Emergency Management made the decision to set aside HMGP funding from Hurricane Matthew to fund the Southeastern NC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. To facilitate this effort, NCEM assigned the plan update to their pre-qualified hazard mitigation planning consultants ESP Associates. Representatives from ESP Associates first reached out to Brunswick, New Hanover, Onslow and Pender County representatives in July 2019 to initiate the plan update process. More details about the plan update process are provided in Section 2, Planning Process.

For the next update of this plan, NCEM's Hazard Mitigation Planning section will continue take the lead on organizing and initiating the 5-year update of the plan.