

SECTION 8: COMMUNITY CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

What follows is a description of the organizational, technical and political capacity of the Bear River Region to implement hazard mitigation strategies and goals. A plan will do nothing to improve hazard mitigation efforts in the region without sufficient implementation capacity and capability; particularly local level capacity (town, city and county government). The purpose of this section is to identify where capacity to implement this plan is lacking for jurisdictions in the region.

assistance is often limited by staffing capacity and funding. As funding allows, some communities are able to contract for professional services from private consultants.

Only Logan City, Brigham City, and Utah State University have staff that is, for the most part, dedicated full-time to emergency management related tasks. While Box Elder, Cache and Rich Counties have emergency managers, all of these individuals have other responsibilities in addition to core emergency management functions.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONAL AND TECHNICAL CAPABILITY

Only a handful of communities in the Bear River region have full time professional staff of any kind. In many cases a limited tax base means that hiring full-time professional staff in the smaller cities and towns is financially unobtainable. Often these smaller communities rely on local volunteers or elected and appointed officials to perform many of the tasks normally handled by professional staff.

POLICY AND PROGRAM CAPABILITY

Most jurisdictions in the Bear River Region have an adopted General Plan as required by state code. Although many communities have recently updated their General Plan, some are very outdated and have not been revised in years. Generally speaking, if these plans address natural hazards at all, most often flooding and geological hazards are addressed generally. However, there are several communities in the region currently making efforts to improve the natural hazard aspects of their plan.

Table 108: State and Regional Hazard Mitigation Resources

State and Regional Hazard Mitigation Resources - Bear River Region	
Agency/Group	Description
Utah Division of Emergency Services and Homeland Security	Training, technical assistance and funding.
Utah League of Cities and Towns	Training, technical assistance and planning assistance
Utah Chapter American Planning Association	Local land use planning resource.
Utah Geological Survey	Technical assistance, plan review
Bear River Association of Governments	Technical assistance, plan review, GIS, and Community Development Block Grants.
Bear River Health Department	Emergency preparedness and response. Homeland security planning.
Cache Chapter of the American Red Cross	Training, emergency preparedness and response.
Utah Association of Conservation Districts	Technical assistance and planning assistance.
Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands	Technical assistance and funding resources. Community Wildfire Protection Plan writing assistance.

It's not uncommon to have volunteer city council members or planning commissioners assigned the task of emergency management, grant writing, or long range planning. Professional staff at BRAG and each of the three counties help provide some technical and planning assistance to these smaller communities. This regional

All of the thirty-nine municipalities have an adopted zoning ordinance as well as each county in the region. Again, these ordinances are often outdated and are not consistent with the jurisdiction's General Plan.

Table 109: Local Community Capability

Local Level Hazard Mitigation Capability - Bear River Region		
Jurisdiction	Professional Staffing (e.g. Emergency Manager, City Manager, Engineer, Planner)	Technical Capacity (In House)
BOX ELDER COUNTY	County Emergency Management Coordinator (has other duties part-time), County Planners, Public Works, Building Inspector	GIS capability and staffing
Bear River City	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Brigham City	Full time EM, CED Director, ED Director, Planner, Public Works	GIS capability and staffing
Corinne City	Part-time City Manager	None
Deweyville Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Elwood Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Fielding Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Garland City	Part-time Emergency Manager	None
Honeyville City	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Howell Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Mantua Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Perry City	Full-time City Administrator	None
Plymouth Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Portage Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Snowville Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Tremonton City	City Manager, City Engineer, part-time Emergency Preparedness Coordinator	CAD capability
Willard City	Planner	Some GIS capability
CACHE COUNTY	County Emergency Manager, County CED Director, Planners, Public Works, Building Inspector	GIS capability and staffing
Amalga Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Clarkston Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Cornish Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Hyde Park City	Volunteer Emergency Manager	Some GIS capability
Hyrum City	Zoning Administrator/City Manager, City Engineer, Emergency Manager (p/t?)	Some GIS capability
Lewiston City	Volunteer/contracted consultant	Some GIS capability
Logan City	Emergency Manager, CED Director, Planner(s), City Engineers, & Public Works.	GIS capability with customized application to Emergency Management.
Mendon City	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Millville City	Volunteer Planner	limited
Newton Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Nibley City	City Manager, Public Works, and Planner	None
North Logan City	City Manager, Engineer, Public Works, and Planner	GIS capability and staffing
Paradise Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Providence City	City Administrator and Public Works	None
Richmond City	Part-time City Manager	None
River Heights City	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Smithfield City	City Manager and Public Works	Some GIS capability
Trenton Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Wellsville City	City Manager	None
RICH COUNTY	Countywide Planner (Bear Lake Regional Commission), Part-time Emergency Manager, Building Inspector	GIS capability
Garden City	Volunteer/contracted consultant	GIS capability
Laketown	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Randolph City	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None
Woodruff Town	Volunteer/contracted consultant	None

Most zoning ordinances do not address natural hazards even if they are mentioned in the General Plan. A few communities have a “sensitive area” or “hazard area” overlay zone, but they are very basic, often mentioning a brief requirement for geotechnical reports or other studies. All

communities issue building permits and enforce local building codes. This service is usually contracted for with the county.

Many of the smaller communities lack emergency response plans.

JURISDICTIONAL CAPABILITY TO EXPAND POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Each jurisdiction in the Bear River Region is authorized by state law to regulate land use activities and plan for future growth in their respective community. By law, cities, towns, and counties are required to address land use, transportation, and affordable housing in their community General Plan. Especially in recent years, communities have been much more proactive with updating their plans to include more detail and more fully comply with state codes and ordinances, and to protect them from liability should a natural hazard event occur.

However, many of the smaller cities and towns do not have adequate funding, staffing, or financial resources to update their local General Plan every 3-5 years per state and other recommendations. In fact, some communities have not updated their General Plans since they were created in the late 1970's and early 1980's. These smaller jurisdictions often do not have the resources to expand on or improve existing policies and programs as professionally, extensively, or as timely, as the larger jurisdictions do. There are some resources which can help, although they are limited. BRAG, the counties, and the state are all existing resources, but each has limited funding, staffing, or resources to provide assistance.

Those communities that have full-time staff are much more likely to have adequate capacity to apply for funding or update the General Plan and other plans/documents in house (See Table 109).

Authority

Federal: Public Law 93-288 as amended, established the basis for federal hazard mitigation activity in 1974. A section of this Act requires the identification, evaluation, and mitigation of hazards as a prerequisite for state receipt of future disaster assistance outlays. Since 1974, many additional programs, regulations, and laws have expanded on the original legislation to establish hazard mitigation as a priority at all levels of government. When PL 93-288 was amended by the Stafford Act, several additional provisions were also added that provide for the

availability of significant mitigation measures in the aftermath of a Presidentially declared disaster. Civil Preparedness Guide 1-3, Chapter 6- Hazard Mitigation Assistance Programs places emphasis on hazard mitigation planning directed toward hazards with a high impact and threat potential.

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 was signed into Law on October 30, 2000. Section 322 defines mitigation planning requirements for state, local, and tribal governments. Under Section 322 States are eligible for an increase in the Federal share of hazard mitigation (HMGP), if they submit for approval a mitigation plan, which is a summary of local and/or regional mitigation plans, that identifies natural hazards, risks, vulnerabilities, and describes actions to mitigate the hazards, risks and vulnerabilities in that plan.

State: The State of Utah derives its authority under the Emergency Management Act of 1981 (Utah Code 53-2, 63-5) as well as the Governor's Emergency Operations Directive and Executive Order of the Governor 11.

Associations of Governments: The Associations of Governments have been duly constituted under the authority of Title XI, Chapter 13, Utah Code Annotated, 1953, as amended (The Inter-local Cooperation Act) and pursuant to Section 3 of the Executive Order of the Governor of the State of Utah, dated May 27, 1970, with the authority to conduct planning studies and to provide services to its constituent jurisdictions.

Local: Utah Code, Title 17, Chapter 27 is the County Land Use Development and Management Act that grants authority to counties. Utah Code, Title 10 Chapter 9 grants similar authority to municipalities.