

Summary Minutes
Nevada Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee
18 November 2004

The Nevada Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee (NHMPC) met from 9:30 a.m. to 12:52 p.m. on Thursday, November 18, 2004 at the University of Nevada, Reno. These minutes and related documents, including a list of members of the Board of Directors, charges and membership of subcommittees, and the Bylaws are posted on the Web site for the Committee (<http://www.nbmng.unr.edu/nhmpc/nhmpc.htm>).

Attendees included:

Elizabeth Ashby, Nevada Division of Emergency Management
Shiela Clements, CEM
Press Clewe* Washoe County Resident
Bob Cullins, Environmental Health and Safety, University of Nevada, Reno
Rick Diebold*, Las Vegas Fire Department
Gale Fraser*, Clark County Regional Flood Control District
Terri Garside, Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology
Ron Hess, Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology
Ben Hutchins*, City of Sparks
Ron Lynn*, Building Official, Department of Development Services, Building Division
Robert McCord, FEMA Region IX
Elwood Miller, Nevada Fire Safe Council
Jim O'Brien*, Clark County Office of Emergency Management
Jon Price*, Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, who also held the proxy for Frank Taylor*, NDOT
Jim Reagan*, Sierra Pacific Power Company, who also held the proxy for Marge Gunn Nutmann*,
Lincoln County Emergency Management
Jeanne Ruefer*, Washoe County Department of Water Resources, who also held the proxy for Kim
Groenewold*, Division of Water Resources

*indicates member of the Board of Directors
A quorum of directors (the necessary 7) was present.

Board members unable to attend or send a proxy included:
Bob Ashworth*, Nevada Division of Forestry

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the August 5, 2004 meeting were approved.

Division of Emergency Management (DEM) Update

Elizabeth Ashby reported that the Ad Hoc Mitigation Plan Subcommittee met numerous times to work on the revisions to the updated State Mitigation Plan (Plan) and have submitted the Plan to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which was approved by FEMA in October. The Plan is posted on the NHMPC Web site.

Elizabeth reported that there are no counties or jurisdictions in Nevada with approved Plans, but several are in various stages of preparation.

Here is the status on those currently working on their plans:

- Sparks and Washoe Counties have their plans at FEMA for review.

- Douglas and Clark Counties have recently submitted their plans to DEM and they will be submitted to FEMA this week.
- Lincoln and Nye Counties have hired a contractor to help them prepare their plans.
- The City of Reno's plan is at DEM. DEM is waiting for some missing information before the plan is forwarded to FEMA for their initial review.
- The City of Las Vegas' plan is at FEMA for their initial review.
- Carson City is working on their plan and hopes to have it to DEM by the end of December.
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The NHMPC and DEM encourage other incorporated cities and Churchill, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey, and White Pine Counties to prepare plans, so that they can become eligible for federal funds for hazard mitigation.

Robert McCord mentioned that it's important for communities that receive comments from FEMA on their plans to keep focused and make any revision quickly so that their plans can be approved by the May 2005, when FEMA expects to announce awards for Pre-Disaster Mitigation project funding.

Jon Price mentioned that the unoccupied school in Ely may be an excellent mitigation project, but others questioned whether it would be eligible or meet benefit-cost criteria if indeed it is unoccupied.

Elizabeth Ashby reported that DEM plans to hold a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) Workshop in January 2005 in Clark County. Please contact Elizabeth at DEM for details (775-687-4240).

Robert McCord mentioned that they are updating the Benefit Cost Analysis Toolkit with information to make it easier to use. The revised Toolkit will be a great help because the current version requires patches in order to make the Seismic Module's information accurate.

Elizabeth Ashby, Terri Garside, and Jeanne Ruefer have taken the BCA class sponsored by FEMA.

Ron Lynn reported that the State of Utah announced at the Nevada Earthquake Safety Council Meeting held on November 17th that they have submitted mitigation plans for all their counties and quite a few of their cities.

It was mentioned that devising a checklist of items needed for the BCA for each of the modules would be very useful.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Project Subcommittee (Kim Groenewald, Chair)

No Report

Proposal Review Subcommittee (Ron Lynn, Chair)

Ron reported that the Subcommittee did not meet but after the August meeting did invite Robert McCord from FEMA Region IX to attend this meeting to address questions regarding the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant process.

Outreach Subcommittee (Rick Diebold, Chair)

Rick Diebold reported that the Subcommittee did not meet. The Subcommittee did request at the last meeting that a letter be sent to Nevada communities regarding the PDM opportunity.

Jon Price reported that now that the PDM proposal request has been released he has composed a letter and sent it to Elizabeth Ashby for review and then for distribution. Elizabeth reported that the letter was sent to emergency coordinators and some state agencies.

Risk Assessment Subcommittee, Ron Hess, Chair

The Subcommittee has not met but did arrange a four-day HAZUS workshop in August which was attended by 21 people.

Ron Hess has run HAZUS for White Pine, Lincoln, Nye, and Clark Counties, as well as for some historical earthquakes.

A Nevada HAZUS Users Group has been started. There is concern with the inventory data contained in the current version of HAZUS. An example is that the out-of-the-box software shows Washoe County with three fire stations when there are actually more than thirty. Ron Hess is working with the Nevada Geographic Names Board to import their database into the HAZUS database to improve the HAZUS software. Ron reported that he sits in on monthly conference calls with the National HAZUS Users Group. Jim Reagan mentioned that some utility information is missing from the HAZUS software's inventory information. Ron reported that all the data layers need to be updated. Ron said that tourist data is greatly lacking for Nevada, which is a big concern because of the large number of tourists visiting Nevada.

Gayle Fraser reported that they used the Clark County Assessor's information to run HAZUS for a flood model. With the updated information, the run appeared good. The area that they ran covered approximately 80 square miles.

Elizabeth Ashby thanked Ron Hess for the HAZUS runs he made and other GIS help for the revisions to the State Mitigation Plan.

Nevada Earthquake Safety Council (NESC), Ron Lynn, Chair

Ron Lynn gave a review of what was reported from attendees at the Western States Seismic Policy Council (WSSPC) meeting. Ron reported that seven policies were adopted at the WSSPC meeting.

At the November 17th NESC meeting, talks were held on whether earthquake predictions are reliable, the damage costs of historic earthquakes, and local Hazard Maps.

The 2003 NESC Annual Report was adopted. Below is a partial list of accomplishments for 2003, for a complete list, please see the NESC Web site (www.nbmjg.unr.edu/nesc).

- 2003 Earthquake Awareness Week was held on February 23-29, 2003 and successfully provided school earthquake drills and a poster contest;
- Beat the Quake – steps to earthquake safety, will be the educational and marketing theme for upcoming years;
- Council members are participating in a Utah Preliminary Fault Parameters Working Group to find consensus on fault hazards in the state, which is a model that can be brought to Nevada;
- There are new efforts in improving the information from the loss-estimating program, HAZUS, which will assist in planning;
- Assembly Bill 57, the Earthquake Safety Bill, was passed and signed by the Governor on June 9, 2003;
- The Policy Committee also developed draft Policy Recommendations for Mitigation of Nonstructural Hazards in Classrooms and also in Critical Facilities.

The NESC Policy Committee has submitted policy recommendations to DEM and Assemblyman Bernie Anderson on Emergency Earthquake Research Funds, and un-reinforced masonry buildings.

The Council voted to approve four mitigation projects that will receive Awards in Excellence.

Jeffrey Lusk with FEMA Region IX discussed the current Drop, Cover, and Hold, and other suggested procedures which are designed to prevent debris falling on or injuring occupants during an earthquake. FEMA's official recommendation is the Drop, Cover, and Hold technique above all others.

The Council passed a resolution on the 50th anniversary of the 1954 Fallon earthquake.

Jon Price discussed the Science magazine article on a swarm of very deep (20 miles) earthquakes from August 2003 through February 2004 at the north end of Lake Tahoe. It is believed that a volcanic dike injected magma into the area and caused Slide Mountain to move to the north east approximately 10 mm over a period of 7 months. The earthquake activity and the moving mountain have stopped. The Web site where the article can be found is on Geoffrey Blewitt's Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Staff Web site (www.nbmgs.unr.edu/staff/geoff.htm).

Mitigation Needs

Jon Price reported that, at times, there are FEMA funds through the Nevada Division of Emergency Management to cover special projects. Funds received from the Emergency Management Program Grant must be matched 50:50 (Federal to non-Federal funds).

Jim Reagan reported that the estimated cost of producing an all-hazard calendar will be approximately \$18,000 dollars for printing and an additional \$7,000 for distribution. It was decided that there isn't enough time to get funding and have the calendar produced before the start of 2005. Robert McCord suggested that we should consider linking the costs of an all-hazards calendar with another project.

Robert McCord mentioned that multiple communities can work together to devise their mitigation plans. Once they have a plan complete, they can modify that plan and individualize it to meet the needs of the other communities. Each community needs its own plan if they would like to apply for PDM grant funds.

Rick Diebold requested a list of prior disasters for each of the counties from DEM. This list will assist the counties in preparing their mitigation plans and, once approved, their grant proposals.

ACTION ITEM

Elizabeth Ashby will provide a list of prior disasters that have affected Nevada counties to the Committee for use in assisting the counties with preparing their hazard plans.

ACTION ITEM

Jon Price will meet with Jerry Buck with the Cooperative Extension to discuss opportunities for the rural communities to take advantage of the PDM grant program.

ACTION ITEM

Jon and Elizabeth will write a letter together, for Frank Siracusa's signature, to be distributed to county commissioners and other county planning officials regarding the PDM grant opportunities.

Items discussed that would be good for applying for possible funding:

- All-hazards Calendar (\$25,000)

- Public Service Announcements on storm waters in Washoe and Clark Counties (\$50,000 split between the counties)
- Statewide Public Service Announcements on floods (\$5,000)
- Getting better data to be imported into the HAZUS program

ACTION ITEM

Ron Hess will work with Elizabeth Ashby on preparing a proposal for getting funding to update the Nevada data to be imported into the HAZUS software.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Update

In response to voiced frustration with the FEMA grant proposal process, Robert McCord said that the only way to get funding is to learn the FEMA process and become familiar with the process. He stated that once someone is familiar with the process, it really isn't as difficult as it appears.

Rick Diebold mentioned that it's difficult knowing what FEMA requires. He said that it appears easier to submit a proposal and, when FEMA responds with their comments, make the revisions so you know just what FEMA wants because they detail what's missing in a cover letter. Elizabeth Ashby said that, in defense of FEMA, FEMA does provide guidelines for proposal submission to make the process easier.

Robert McCord said that he is more than happy to help answer any questions and review projects and make comments.

Robert McCord reported that most of last year's projects were rejected because of problems with the Benefit Cost Analysis. Either the projects did not appear to be cost-effective or supporting documentation was missing.

Jon Price said it would be very helpful for us to see the projects that were awarded last year as examples of what projects FEMA considers good for funding.

Elizabeth Ashby reported that last year's rejected proposals were returned to the proposing entities. She recommends that those agencies should consider revising their proposals by incorporating FEMA's recommendations and resubmitting their proposals for this year's funding.

This year, there are \$255 million in funds available for the PDM grant program. The competition will probably be less than last time, when approved plans were not necessary, because not that many states have their mitigation plans approved.

Jon Price said it would be really helpful if we could get someone from Nevada on the proposal review committee so they could report back to Nevada with insight on what makes a good proposal.

Ad Hoc Flood Awareness in Northern Nevada

Jeanne Reuffer reported that she received Clark County's Flood Awareness Campaign information from Betty Hollister at the Clark County Regional Flood Control District. Jeanne said that the Washoe County's Public Awareness group reviewed the video that was run in Clark County and they have given their blessing on running the video in Washoe County. The public service announcement video should be running on Syncat. The cost of modifying Clark County's video to Washoe County was \$475.

She has not had an opportunity to check into the impact on flood insurance rates.

Presentation

A presentation was given on the Nevada Fire Safe Council by Elwood Miller, Executive Coordinator. The Nevada Fire Safe Council's (NFSC) goal is to make Nevada communities fire safe and to reduce loss of life and property. The NFSC is a private, independent, nonprofit, tax-exempt, membership organization.

Old Business

Action items from the August 5, 2004 meeting were reviewed.

ACTION ITEM

Jeanne Ruefer will check with the Flood Insurance Program, and report back to the Committee, to see if there has been an upsurge of new flood insurance policies since the Clark County Campaign began

Announcements of Future Meetings

- Thursday, 17 February, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Las Vegas, the day after the Nevada Earthquake Safety Council meeting)
- Thursday, 5 May, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Reno, the day after the Nevada Earthquake Safety Council meeting)
- Thursday, 4 August, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Las Vegas, the day after the Nevada Earthquake Safety Council meeting)
- Thursday, 10 November, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Reno, the day after the Nevada Earthquake Safety Council meeting)

Public Comment Period

No comments from the public were made.

Meeting adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

Review of action items:

Elizabeth Ashby will provide a list of prior disasters that have affected Nevada counties to the Committee for use in assisting the counties with preparing their hazard plans.

Jon Price will meet with Jerry Buck with the Cooperative Extension to discuss opportunities for the rural communities to take advantage of the PDM grant program.

Jon and Elizabeth will write a letter together, for Frank Siracusa's signature, to be distributed to county commissioners and other county planning officials regarding the PDM grant opportunities.

Ron Hess will work with Elizabeth Ashby on preparing a proposal for getting funding to update the Nevada data to be imported into the HAZUS software.

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Respectfully submitted by Terri Garside, 23 November 2004
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