

XII. ADMINISTRATION

Updating and Revising the Local Mitigation Strategy

The Local Mitigation Strategy will be reviewed annually, or as circumstances dictate, by the Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group.

In the 1999 Levy County LMS, each of the municipalities looked at which community programs would be directly affected by the LMS and mitigation projects. Below are the listing of those programs, plans and policies. Again, the 2004 Working Group reviewed the strategies and protocols and determined they remain relatively the same. Upon closer examination if there is a specific new program or ordinance that is implemented during the 2009-2010 LMS sessions or in the upcoming quarterly review meetings this list will be changed.

Existing Municipal Policies, Ordinances, Programs That Affect Mitigation

Program / Ordinance

Comprehensive Plan
Land Development Regulations
Floodplain Ordinance
Building Code
Utilities Code
Water and Sewer Services Ordinance
Florida Building Code

The above plans exist within the current framework of Levy County Government. These plans all include elements of emergency management and further the goal of protection and mitigation.

Future Planned Updates And Plans To Include The LMS

Project Ready (Health Department)
CEMP (Will Adopt The LMS Risk Assessment)
Flood Mitigation Plan (NFIP)
Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan

These above listed plans will incorporate the Local Mitigation Plan into their text. In cases, they will adopt the risk assessment for foundation of plan writing or as annex. The county departments will continue to coordinate and integrate plan writing to further the protection through mitigation. Participating Community Rating System communities have used the 2005 Local Mitigation Strategy for qualifying CRS credit.

The main focus of the LMS is for grant writing. By nominating projects, grants can be applied for, that reflect the needs of the community. Because emergency management affects the well-being of the all of the residents of the community, incorporating the projects identified in the LMS into other program areas is very important. Each of the programs or ordinances, as they come up for review will incorporate

information from the LMS. The comprehensive plan goes through the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) process in a five year cycle. The updates should include, in the capital improvements element, references to the projects nominated in the LMS. By incorporating the LMS into these plans, not only will they have fulfilled their requirements to include mitigation into their plans such as the comprehensive plan, they will also reinforce the support of the LMS. This and all other above mentioned plans are written with the goal of threat and vulnerability reduction. Those who draft these other plans and documents must consider the LMS as the working group has considered their documents in the current efforts. This creates cohesion between projects and not redundancy. Building, utility and water codes should be written with emergency management policies as their basis. Storms have a lasting effect on infrastructure. Each jurisdiction can glean from the LMS where the areas of greatest concerns are. In so doing, this document creates an interdisciplinary approach to plans and grant writing.

The appropriate membership of the committee to include County, agency, municipal and private business representatives will review the Strategy; amend their responsibilities under the Strategy; update the Hazard Identification / Vulnerability Assessment and Mitigation Initiatives by modifying procedures, maintaining current data and/or adding new projects and deleting completed projects.

Proposed amendments to the Local Mitigation Strategy that are approved by the Working Group shall be submitted to the Levy County Emergency Management Director for presentation to the Levy County Board of County Commissioners for public comment and final adoption.

Nominating and Ranking Projects and Initiatives

The first step toward developing the required single, prioritized list of mitigation initiatives is to establish and educate the Working Group. The initial core Working Group members were the County and municipal representatives as appointed by their respective jurisdictions. At their first formal meeting the Working Group initiated more participation from the private sector, as directed in the “Guidebook,” by inviting the local Chambers of Commerce to participate in the LMS process. Various local religious institutions and aid services have participated. Though they have not provided projects, their input was received and has helped craft the final work product. Once formed, the Working Group adopted a representative membership for voting on issues brought before the group. The current Working Group roster is included at the end of Chapter II.

Education of the group is and will remain an ongoing process. The Working Group found that the most useful information for the LMS process pertained to mitigation grants and the competitive grant process. Also of great interest were the maps generated for structural damage and storm surge. The most valuable information given by the Working Group were examples of the effects of previous flooding or storm events. These were used as a measure of vulnerability.

Before projects were submitted, a system for evaluating and ranking the projects had to be set into place. The adoption of criteria to rank mitigation projects featured lengthy discussion through the course of several Working Group meetings. The adopted “Project Ranking Worksheet” is included as Appendix “B.” Once a matrix for scoring projects was agreed upon by the Working Group, projects could be nominated for scoring in the prioritization process.

It was agreed that each jurisdiction would first list and prioritize its own projects using its own criteria. However, it was recommended that the adopted LMS Working Group criteria be used. Second, each jurisdiction would nominate its top three projects for formal ranking. To nominate a project the “Project Nomination Worksheet” is used to provide information about the proposed project in regards to each of the ranking criteria. The Project Nomination Worksheet is included as Appendix “A.”

The ranking process is begun by distributing the Project Nomination Sheet and the Project Ranking Worksheet for one project to each voting member. Each voting member fills in the appropriate score for each of the ranking criteria. This process takes place for each project that is nominated. After all the projects are ranked the total score from each voting member is then averaged to form the projects score.

After the projects were scored and ranked the Working Group created priority groups for implementation. The final list of prioritized mitigation projects is included in Chapter XI (Hazard Mitigation Projects and Initiatives.)

One of the important aspects to the LMS is the end product, which is a listing of projects a jurisdiction wishes to get funded. The projects get funded through a variety of grants and opportunities. To receive many of the mitigation grants a requirement includes being on the LMS list but also establishing a “benefit” and “cost” analysis of the project that the jurisdiction wishes to complete. Although a Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) was not completed for this Plan, both costs and benefits were considered in the nomination and prioritization of projects. For example, the Levy County LMS Project Nomination Worksheet (Appendix A) requires documentation of project costs (item #15). In the Levy County LMS Project Ranking Worksheet (Appendix B), costs are considered in the life expectancy of the project (10th item), in which lower scores are assessed to projects that meet the needs of the community for shorter periods of time, and therefore may need to be updated more frequently, costing more resources over a period of time. Benefits of a project are considered in the reduction of vulnerability (fifth item on Appendix A and Appendix B). In the prioritization of projects, higher scores were assigned to projects that eliminate or reduce risk of repetitive loss than projects that had no impact on repetitive loss. Other criteria for ranking projects have inferred costs (such as, time needed to implement, or if unfair to a social group) and benefits (such as, if politically /socially acceptable, or if other community goals are achieved) as outlined in FEMA 386-5, Using Benefit Cost Review in Mitigation Planning.

The Benefit-Cost Analysis can be completed with software provided by FEMA. The program considers what future damages and losses are possible and the benefits are the reduction in expected damages. The cost is the amount needed to implement an action that will support a greater benefit. Normally it is not too hard to figure out the cost – particularly if a new structure is being designed. The benefits are harder because the severity of a storm and the probability may be opposite. For example a hurricane’s probability is low – but the severity is high. Some benefits to include in the analysis are damage to buildings, damage to business operations, and displacement of inhabitants, rental loss, and nonprofit function loss.

There is a lot of confusion about the benefits of mitigation. Obviously there are higher benefits for mitigation to a building that is in the 10-year floodplain versus one that is in the 500-year floodplain. Yet a low-occupancy building, receiving funding in a 10-year floodplain is also not as beneficial. Therefore the majority of the projects gain the most benefit points by suggesting mitigation for critical facilities such as hospitals, fire stations, assisted living facilities, and schools. Cost effective is a big key to having

a project funded. Each project then is scored against itself - there can be no comparison because each project has a myriad of possibilities.

Adoption and Implementation of the Local Mitigation Strategy

The Florida Department of Community Affairs / Division of Emergency Management has contracted with each County in the state to develop this Local Mitigation Strategy. This is an all-county document as is the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). It is expected that the administration and update of future editions of this LMS will fall under the responsibility of the Levy County Emergency Management Department. In light of this expectation, the Working Group has directed that the local process to adopt the LMS be the same as the local process to adopt the CEMP.

Implementation of the LMS will be done by each of the local governments in Levy County or by other entities that may identify funding for projects listed in this LMS or future updates of the LMS. As with all plans, studies and strategy documents the final goal is implementation. The timing of implementation a factor that is dependent on funding mechanisms and a timeline for implementation cannot be established. However, it is clear that those initiatives with life-safety implications or initiatives that will eliminate losses should be implemented first. The methods for implementation are important, but stand as a secondary goal. It is the intent of this Strategy to keep all windows of funding opportunity open and open them further if possible. With this goal, the Local Mitigation Strategy plan will incorporate county planning department along with all participating agencies adopted ordinances, regulations, procedures or existing programs in order to promote hazard mitigation efforts. These would include Comprehensive Plans, Land Development Regulations, Floodplain Ordinances, Building Codes, Utilities Codes, Water and Sewer Service Ordinances and the Florida Building Code.

Public Participation

With the availability of the internet, newspapers, public announcements and members of the Steering Committee that are involved in many different groups, there is a plethora of public interactions to promote the LMS. The public involvement that has the highest participation includes citizen groups such as the American Red Cross and a variety of church organizations. These persons are allowed to participate in all aspects of the Working Group meetings. Obviously the voting members of the steering committee (working group) are the decision makers for furthering the project lists and amendments to the LMS, based on the recommendations of the Working Group. During the 2010 LMS process, public participation was represented by the interested citizen members of the working group. No feedback was provided or logged directly by any citizen on part of public participation to the working group during the review process and the plans availability in emergency management and regional planning council offices. Working Group members representing the communities within the County spoke for their jurisdictions and their citizens through the process during meetings of the LMS working group. Otherwise, no direct input was offered by the general public.

The availability of the plan for public comment will be located in the Chamber of Commerce as well as on-line at the WRPC website in PDF format with a link to the Levy County website before final adoption. The contact for public participation will be the planners revising the LMS based out of the WRPC as well as the director of Emergency Management for Levy County. The contact information will include both

telephone as well as the email address for both of the agencies. This will allow the public to reach an agency they feel most comfortable with in discussing the LMS.

As with this, in future updates, meetings will be publically noticed. Meetings for both the five year plan update and the annual plan review will be noticed at the county court house and on the county Emergency management website, www.levydisaster.com and are open to public. The adoption of the plan will include each of the municipalities and the county. At each of these meetings there is again a request and opportunity for public participation. Levy County and the participating municipalities are responsible for the advertisement of these meetings.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Revision

The following are tasks and monitoring activities that should be accomplished prior to or in the early part of the LMS update and revision process. The working group chairman is responsible for the monitoring, evaluating and updating of this plan. These tasks represent examples of recommended actions and should be reviewed for their applicability by the Levy County Emergency Management Director (prior to the update process) or the Working Group (as a part of the update process).

The plan will be monitored on a yearly basis in the following ways. The working group at the direction of the Chairman will decide the extent of updates needed for the yearly update based on the findings. If the working group finds sufficient changes during the monitoring process, they may choose to update the plan to a greater degree than what is required under the yearly update requirements. At minimum, the working group shall perform the yearly update to the working group roster, the projects list and submit to the state notice of current activities. This evaluation and update of this plan shall take place on an annual basis and within the five year cycle shall meet all then current FEMA crosswalk requirements. The five year update process will begin approximately at the end of the third year or first quarter of the fourth year in the cycle. This fifth year will require a more comprehensive plan review, meeting schedule and working group participation. These updates will be performed by the host agency, Levy County Emergency Management or by their designee.

- Ongoing information systems - GIS databases that have been created for the LMS should be reviewed and updated with each formal revision of the Strategy.
- Monitoring implementation process - Projects that have been implemented need to be taken off the List of Mitigation Initiatives. Members of the Working Group should also attend workshops and stay abreast of current grant funding opportunities.
- Obstacles/problems in implementation - Some listed projects may be considered as poor candidates for grant funding and may need to be revised to be fundable. Criteria should be developed in the future to assess which projects need to be revised.
- Ability to update baseline data - The GIS update to the LMS could be made the responsibility of one or several County departments with GIS capability.
- Monitoring of hazards - The development of local information regarding the effects of hazards (such as the flooded roads database) should be an ongoing process. The Emergency

Management Department should monitor the effects of hazards and actions taken and keep a record of such. This information should be added to the next update of the LMS.

- Evaluation of success/failure - A method to formally evaluate the LMS should be identified by the DCA/Division of Emergency Management. The LMS will be a success to the citizens of Levy County if it can be used by local governments as a grant writing tool and can identify ways to reduce the impact of disasters.
- Updatable, objective achievement measures - Indicators for the evaluation of the performance of the LMS have not been developed at this time and their value remains questionable.
- Citizen participation in the LMS process - Questionnaires that have been distributed can be sent out again or recreated to provide additional information. It is recommended that future updates of the LMS receive media exposure through press releases to encourage public participation.

Each year the plan will be evaluated by the Chairman and the working group by the first meeting of the calendar year. The main question that should be raised, is whether or not the plan still reflects the character of the jurisdictions? The second question, have there been any rules or regulations that have been adopted in the year, that would alter the effectiveness of the LMS document? Finally the third question, are there any changes in the administrative process or participation?

A check list approach is the best methodology for making sure all of the topics have been covered:

YEARLY REVIEW OF THE LMS DOCUMENT		
	Reviewed	Completed Change
CHARACTERIZATION CHANGES		
Population change of each jurisdiction		
Economic change / added businesses		
Annexations of properties		
Update the critical facilities list		
Update the sensitive facilities list		
Identify developments of regional impacts (DRI)		
Land Use map changes		
Updated Repetitive Loss Structure list		
RULES / REGULATION CHANGES		
EAR based amendments		
Land Development Regulations		
State Legislation		
ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES		

Roster analysis		
Chair Person		
Grant Cycle dates		
Update Project Lists		
Update Minutes		

Due to the nature of the comprehensive plan the LMS plan will be updated and implemented on a faster basis than the local comprehensive plan. The projects listed in the LMS are projects that the communities need in a timely manner. Many projects will be completed on a time scale not related to the comprehensive plan’s updates.

When the time arrives for an update to the comprehensive plan the LMS plan will be observed for trends in capital improvement initiatives. The projects nominated that have not been completed can be included in a general fashion in order to guide the capital improvements element of the comprehensive plan.

The schedule for each community in Levy County to complete their evaluation and appraisal of the comprehensive plan is established in statute. During the review, each government should review the LMS document to ensure support for it is written into its comprehensive plan.

Also, the comprehensive plan reviews issues such as impact fee and future land use. Reviewing the LMS plan will provide the planners of Levy County with a tool that takes the public, private, government and specifically emergency management and looks at what their emergency management concerns are.

When making Changes in the Land Development Code (LDC) staff should refer and review the LMS. At times, changes in the development codes could alleviate persistent problems, creating less vulnerability to future structures.

Another plan that should look to the LMS to learn about problem areas and needed projects includes The Water Resource Studies to evaluate the current condition of the water supply and look at key flooding issues.

The underlying goal of the LMS in regards to local jurisdictions will be to educate and inform the departments on the types of projects considered for implementation through mitigation funding.

In review the LMS Chair (Levy County Emergency Management) is responsible for carrying out the following method and schedule for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the plan.

Monitoring

The LMS Chair (Levy County Emergency Management) is responsible for monitoring any changes throughout the county and making sure that the information gets properly entered into the plan on a annual basis. This process includes the following schedule and method:

- The LMS Chair will schedule four Working Group Meetings each year (recommended to take place) in the months of March, June, September, and December. Each of these meetings will be scheduled usually six months in advance in the Levy County Emergency Management Emergency Operations Center unless otherwise noticed. These meetings will allow the LMS

Chair to monitor advancements or changes in mitigation projects being implemented by Task Force members. At every meeting the LMS Chair is going to ask for updates on current projects being implemented and suggestions for new projects. Any meeting announcement by agencies and organizations about project changes, problems, and advancements will be itemized by the LMS Chair in the project priority list and included in the summary of the meeting. This allows the project advancements and changes to be noted on paper on a quarterly basis every year.

- All LMS Task Force members will usually be given the meeting date and time around 6 months in advance, a reminder at the previous LMS Task Force meeting 3 months in advance, and an email reminder as well as a U.S. Postal mail packet sent three weeks in advance for those without email access.
- Two weeks prior to the meeting, the LMS Chair will ask for a public notice announcement to be posted in the local courthouse and on the Levy County Emergency management website; www.LevyDisaster.com, at least 10 days in advance of the LMS meeting.
- The LMS Chair will call each agency that is working on a LMS project usually two to five weeks before LMS Task Force meetings to monitor progress, hear concerns, give assistance, and answer questions regarding the mitigation projects.
- If any agency or organization that is implementing a project can't attend the LMS Task Force meeting, the LMS Chair will request an overview of their project update so that the Chair can present the information at the meeting.
- All mitigation project changes and advancements will be provided by the LMS Chair to all LMS Working Group members approximately three weeks before each of the four Task Force meetings. The notice may be provided by mailing, email or during the Working Group meeting should they not be available in advance. This information may include supplemental information about grant programs, etc. as has been done in the past.
- If need be, the LMS Chair will schedule meetings and site visits with the agencies and organizations requesting certain assistance with a mitigation project.
- Yearly, the LMS Chair will look for new ways of incorporating the community into the LMS process.
- Yearly, the LMS Chair will ask the LMS Working Group to review parts of the LMS document that may need to be updated.
- Also, the LMS Chair will prepare an annual report that captures the highlights of the previously mentioned quarterly meetings and the LMS developments.

Evaluating

The LMS Chair (Levy County Emergency Management) is responsible for evaluating any changes or situations that need to be taken into account for the LMS Working Group goals and for the LMS document to prosper. This process includes the following schedule and method:

- Every year during the summer months and after all natural disasters, the Chair will conduct an evaluation on the nature, magnitude, and/or type of risks that may have possibly changed within that timeframe for the county. This will be done by seeking new hazard and hazard vulnerability data, through speaking with experts, and by inquiring input from LMS Working Group members or any other relevant experts.
- At the end of every year, the LMS Chair will evaluate the attendance and participation of LMS members. If certain agencies or organizations attend one or less meetings in the past year, the

Chair will attempt to find the reasons why and try to accommodate them so their participation can increase. If needed, the Chair will seek alternate representative to the Working Group from agencies or organizations who have attend one or less meeting in the current yearly cycle. In a effort to reach out to the local business community, the LMS Chair will review Chamber of Commerce information as a source to obtain up-to-date details on new businesses and organizations that could potentially become part of the LMS Working Group.

- Every three years the LMS Chair will conduct a Working Group meeting to determine if the LMS goals and guiding principles are being met and if any of them should be changed or new ones added. This process will be determined entirely by the Working Group members.
- The LMS Chair will call each agency/organization that is working on a LMS project around two to five weeks before the LMS Working Group meetings to monitor progress, hear concerns, give assistance, and answer questions regarding the mitigation projects. Based on the comments, re-evaluation of project implementation will commence.

Updating

The LMS Chair (Levy County Emergency Management) is responsible for updating the plan within five years from the date of the last FEMA approval. This process includes the following chronological schedule and method:

- Every year within the 5-year update timeframe, the LMS Chair will make notes in the LMS of items that require changes based on the evaluation process.
- During both the second and third year of the 5-year timeframe, the LMS Chair will begin updating the actual document sections with the most recent data available. This will be done with the help and acknowledgement of the LMS Working Group members. After each of these document updates, the Chair will bring forth the changes to the LMS Working Group members for review.
- Based on the review input from the LMS Working Group, the Chair will make changes where required.
- During the end of the third year and the beginning of the fourth year, the LMS Chair will gather the new FEMA update element requirements so that the updated plan will act in accordance with federal regulations.
- The LMS Chair will then give a presentation about the 5-year update to the LMS Task Force members and describe how they can help and why they should participate.
- The LMS Chair will update all sections of the LMS with the most recent data and processes available.
- This updated document will then be presented to the LMS Working Group members for review.
- After making the revisions from the review, the LMS Chair will send the document to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer for initial review. This will be done approximately 7 months before the plan's expiration date.
- After this review, any changes will be completed with acknowledgment from the Working Group before it is sent to FEMA. This will be accomplished at least 5 months before the plan's expiration date.
- Upon FEMA approval, the county and all jurisdictions will adopt the LMS document within the following year.

Future Meetings

The meeting dates will be established at the end of each 5-year update cycle. For the 2009 and beyond updates the future meetings will be held on the last Friday of each month quarterly (January, April, July and October) or as availability of working group members permits. In the upcoming years the Steering Committee will be called together by Chairman Mark Johnson. If for some reason the Working Group establishes a new chair the responsibility will be transferred accordingly. The steps below indicated the protocol for these biannual meetings.

The meetings are to take place quarterly or biannually, whichever is more obtainable by working group members. This is to allow jurisdictions to initially look for changes in their projects and community profiles. The second meeting is for the nomination of new projects. Because it is important for projects to be included in the LMS document in order to receive funding, each year the ranked listing of projects should be updated.

The jurisdictions to include in the invitation – County departments, Planning, DOT, Natural Resources, Forestry, Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Emergency Management, and an Academic Representative.

At the meetings a copy of the LMS on CD should be available upon request. To get a better feel for the changes that have occurred, a yearly survey could be conducted at each of the first yearly meetings asking for changes in each of the areas and projects previously added to the document. Keeping up with yearly changes is very important in the struggle to get projects funded and create a safer County to live in.