



# MEETING NOTES

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|---|---|-------------|------------------|
| <b>Meeting</b>  | State of West Virginia 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update<br>State Mitigation Capabilities & Local Planning Coordination Assessment Webinar |             |                  |
| <b>Date</b>   | November 16, 2022   | <b>Time</b> | 1:30 pm- 2:30 pm |
| <b>Location</b>   | Microsoft Teams   |             |                  |
| <b>Attendees</b>  | Lonnie Bryson, Section Chief, West Virginia (WV) Emergency Management Division (EMD)  |             |                  |
|   | Brent Burger, WV EMD  |             |                  |
|   | Jeff Cunningham, Training / SAR Officer, WV EMD   |             |                  |
|   | Lora Lipscomb, Public Information Officer, WV EMD   |             |                  |
|   | Roy McCallister, Threat Preparedness/Response Officer, WV Department of Agriculture   |             |                  |
|   | Tim Priddy, Director, WV Center for Threat Preparedness   |             |                  |
|   | Sherry Risk, Community Development Block Grant Program Manager, WV Department of Economic Development                                       |             |                  |
|   | Bob Martin, Director, West Virginia State Resiliency Office (SRO)   |             |                  |
|   | Ed Martin, Deputy Director, West Virginia SRO   |             |                  |
|   | Eric Hopkins, Lead GIS Specialist, West Virginia University GIS Technical Center  |             |                  |
|   | John Tuggle, Executive Director, Region 4 Planning & Development Council (PDC)  |             |                  |
|   | Joel Davis, Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council (Region 5)   |             |                  |
|   | Randy Lilly, Director, Berkeley County Emergency Management Agency (EMA)  |             |                  |
|   | Jeffrey Luck, Brooke County EMA   |             |                  |
|   | Ray Perry, Floodplain Administrator, Logan County; Chair, West Virginia Floodplain Management Association                                   |             |                  |
|   | Steve Byus, Director, City of Madison Emergency Management (OEM)  |             |                  |
|   | Keith Gunnoe, Mercer County OEM   |             |                  |
|   | Richard Miller, Director, Monroe County OEM   |             |                  |
|   | Michael O'Brien, Director, Pocahontas County 911 and Emergency Management   |             |                  |
|   | Kevin Stitzinger, Pocahontas County   |             |                  |
| Rob Daman, Deputy Director, Randolph County OEM                                   |   |             |                  |
| Casey Garnett, West Virginia Hazard Mitigation Community Planner, FEMA Region III |   |             |                  |
| JaLeesa Tate, Tetra Tech, Planner   |   |             |                  |
| Emily Vassallo, Tetra Tech, Planner   |   |             |                  |

## Discussion Points

This section summarizes each discussion point addressed during the State Planning Team Capabilities Assessment Webinar.

## Welcome and Introductions

J. Tate thanked everyone for attending the capabilities meeting, introduced herself, and explained Tetra Tech's role in the Hazard Mitigation Plan update process. A brief introduction by Lonnie Bryson with



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West Virginia Emergency Management Division emphasized how important stakeholder participation is to produce a better plan.

## Agenda

J. Tate gave a general overview of the agenda of topics to be covered during the meeting. The meeting was held to gain information on training and technical assistance, regulatory issues, staffing, outreach, funding, and challenges.

## Training and Technical Assistance

Training and technical assistance looks at what resources the State has to provide mitigation planning, risk assessment, and implementation technical assistance, along with grants management.

The can request specific hazard mitigation planning training from the FEMA Region 3 office. The curriculum is predeveloped but can be tailored to fit local needs that may be more specific to a particular area. These trainings can be requested and offered virtually and in person, depending on a region's abilities.

L. Bryson stated that the planning team can have a discussion with Tim Keaton, the State NFIP Coordinator, to discuss NFIP-related capabilities such as joining the CRS Program to reduce flood insurance premiums. L. Bryson also stated that the WV National Guard's Critical Infrastructure Protection Mission Assurance division that can conduct CI/KR reviews across the State.

## Regulatory

Regulatory capabilities include laws, policies, building codes, floodplain management ordinances, and plans that contribute to hazard mitigation. Earlier discussions focused on the State building code and fire code. Regulatory capabilities also incorporate how the State promotes and encourages NFIP compliance and CRS Program participation.

West Virginia State University has an environmental department with specific tool-trained engineers. Partnering with them at the State and local levels would be beneficial because state and local entities could be provided training on how to read engineering plans. Using their expertise, the State would also be able to gain an engineering perspective on some of the proposed projects. Cross departmental coordination in a multidisciplinary approach is beneficial in reducing vulnerabilities because hazard mitigation is not a one size fits all approach.

L. Bryson reiterated that collaborating with other departments, such as the WV National Guard, would be beneficial in identifying and prioritizing critical infrastructure in the State. State and federal agencies can work together to identify critical infrastructure, and the WV National Guard can then assess the infrastructure's vulnerability

Attendees identified disclosure of floodplain status, the vulnerability of the well ahead of a home purchase, and recognizing the challenges and limitations of code enforcement as important issues.

Enforcement of plans and regulations is challenging if the jurisdiction does not have the staffing available to carry it out.



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## Staffing

Staff with expertise in mitigation planning, data collection, funding, project management, and grants management are needed to implement a mitigation program.

The Resiliency Office recently cross trained with the West Virginia State Police on critical infrastructure, and additional training is coming in December on the electrical grid. SRO collaborates with WV EMD as much as possible.

The mitigation team in WV EMD hosts an annual risk reduction consultation with a goal of identifying the State's priorities. L. Bryson stated that State agencies struggle to clarify what program has ownership of critical infrastructure protection.

E. Martin suggested that having a unified message of hazard mitigation would be beneficial.

C. Garnett pointed out that the State has been focusing on developing partnerships, such as the flood tool developed by the WVU GIS Technical Center and the regional councils.

## Outreach

EMD has an annual plan for public outreach based on what time of year it is and what storms typically occur at that time. EMD uses Twitter, Facebook, and other methods of mass communication.

SRO currently has a website, but it is not usable. SRO's goal is to use the website as a hub where people can go and have a direct link to the information they are looking for, such as county websites, WV DEP or EMD.

The Flood Tool includes information on improving CRS Program rating, elevation certificates, and mitigation buyout property locations. Continuing to offer presentations at fairs and conferences regarding the Flood Tool and other community programs is a possible outreach method.

The SRO conducted the Flood Symposium this spring, the focus was to gather experts from around the State to evaluate the 2004 Flood Protection Plan.

The West Virginia Silver Jackets would be able to aid with outreach. L. Lipscomb stated that the Silver Jackets would tailor materials to the community for sharing at fairs or similar events.

## Funding

The WV Silver Jackets are working on a document that would highlight funding opportunities for hazard mitigation funds in the State. L. Bryson described the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant and Pipeline Emergency Response Grant (PERG). In 2022, West Virginia received about \$250,000 in PERG grants. The State has also applied for and will continue to look into and apply for federal funding streams such as BRIC, FMA, HMGP, and CDBG (and its subgrants). NRCS also has potential funding programs for dam rehabilitation.

## Challenges

There is a lack of funding at the local level for local jurisdictions to be able to supply the non-federal match for mitigation grants. The State does not have the funding to supply the non-federal match on



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local jurisdictions' behalf. Local officials may want to implement hazard mitigation projects but not know where to start.

Communities may also not have available staff to perform monitoring, inspection, or maintenance of larger mitigation projects.

Most communities only have their ARPA funds available to serve as matching funds, but have already committed those funds to other projects.

E. Martin stated that many projects could use federal funds from multiple programs, but the restrictions on duplication of benefits and intermingling federal funds pose a barrier to implementation.

## Next Steps and Questions

Tetra Tech and the State will distribute a set of stakeholder surveys for the following groups:

- State departments
- Emergency managers
- Local floodplain administrators
- Academia
- Other stakeholders

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.



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|                                       |  |             |                   |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------|-------------------|
| <b>Meeting</b>                        | State of West Virginia 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update<br>State Mitigation Capabilities & Local Planning Coordination Webinar |             |                   |
| <b>Date</b>                           | November 17, 2022  | <b>Time</b> | 9:00 – 10:23 a.m. |
| <b>Location</b>                       | Microsoft Teams  |             |                   |
| <b>Attendees</b>                      | Nuvia Villamizar, GIS Manager, WV EMD  |             |                   |
|                                       | Roy McCallister, Threat Preparedness & Response Officer, WV Department of Agriculture and Emergency Preparedness                 |             |                   |
|                                       | Timothy Priddy, Director, WV Center for Threat Preparedness  |             |                   |
|                                       | Bob Martin, State Resiliency Officer, WV State Resiliency Office (SRO)   |             |                   |
|                                       | Ed Martin, Deputy Director, WV SRO   |             |                   |
|                                       | Holly Quentrill, Administrative Assistant, WV SRO  |             |                   |
|                                       | Eric Hopkins, Lead GIS Specialist, West Virginia University GIS Technical Center   |             |                   |
|                                       | George Eidel, Director of Emergency Management and Floodplain Management, Doddridge County                                       |             |                   |
|                                       | Stephen Allen, Director, Jefferson County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management                               |             |                   |
|                                       | Dick Myers, Deputy Director, Jefferson County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management                               |             |                   |
|                                       | Francis Holton, Deputy Director, Lincoln County Office of Emergency Services   |             |                   |
|                                       | Ray Perry, Floodplain Administrator and Building Code Official, Logan County   |             |                   |
|                                       | Steve Byus, Director of Emergency Management, City of Madison  |             |                   |
|                                       | Unidentified individual, Ohio County EMA   |             |                   |
|                                       | Steve Wykoff, Director, Upshur County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management                                   |             |                   |
|                                       | Casey Garnett, West Virginia Hazard Mitigation Community Planner, FEMA Region III  |             |                   |
|                                       | Jamie Baker, Project Assistant, Region 4 Planning and Development Council  |             |                   |
|                                       | Betsy Morris, Planner, Region 4 Planning and Development   |             |                   |
|                                       | Carla Dent, Planner, Region 8 Planning & Development Council   |             |                   |
|                                       | M. Fortney   |             |                   |
| Alan Miles                            |  |             |                   |
| John Slater                           |  |             |                   |
| Christina Groves, Planner, Tetra Tech |  |             |                   |
| Emily Vassallo, Planner, Tetra Tech   |  |             |                   |

## Discussion Points

This section summarizes each discussion point addressed during the State Planning Team Capabilities Assessment Webinar.



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## Welcome and Introductions

Christina Groves thanked everyone for attending and introduced herself. Attendees then introduced themselves. C. Groves briefly discussed the purpose and agenda of the meeting.

## Training and Technical Assistance

In the past there have been grant management training sessions offered to State employees through different divisions. Recently, no postings or information on similar training sessions have been distributed. Attendees identified the following training topics as being needed in the State:

- Benefit-cost analysis
- Where to find necessary information and data sources
- CRS Program
- Dams

Attendees agreed that training opportunities are increasing.

C. Groves described CRS points available for HMPs.

C. Garnett identified the following success stories for training in the State:

- Modular trainings for planning teams, for each part of the planning process
- Plan Implementation and Grant Development Workshop, offered in a hybrid format, was the largest training session offered in Region III.

C. Garnett stated that FEMA Region III is always looking for new ideas for training sessions.

SRO has attempted to conduct a quarterly informational seminar or forum through the WV Municipal League for municipalities, as preparedness and resilience should start at the community level. SRO received no interest from municipalities. The original idea of the seminar was to provide technical assistance and training at a community level and move up to the county level and regions before encompassing State entities as well. There is a need to train all entities of the State in how to go about contacting the Emergency Operations Center and reporting any and all types of hazards.

SRO also has piloted a program where representatives from various State agencies will come into communities and look at the biggest problems prevalent in that community, and then provide them with a step-by-step process on how to address these issues. This would include information related to relevant grants, potential equipment that may be needed, or reaching out to neighboring communities. SRO intends to pilot the program in 2023.

## Regulatory

S. Allen stated that most counties do not have zoning. Berkeley County is discussing limited zoning. In some areas, the only flat, developable land may be areas that water has flattened the land (e.g., in floodplains).



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E. Martin stated that the SRO has discussed requiring the local floodplain administrator to review development applications before the utilities can be turned on. C. Groves described her experience in a county that required a floodplain permit.

G. Eidel stated that the lack of building codes is an issue. People are able to build wherever they want to, and most of the time, if a structure is built in the floodplain, no one will know until after everything has already been completed. D. Myers pointed out a lack of enforcement is also a large issue. It is difficult and tedious to inspect floodplains regularly. The county will tell residents that they must follow the building code and will hand out permits, but no one is there for the enforcement process in making sure they are following the rules and regulations.

There used to be a voluntary partnership between the utility companies and the floodplain managers which helped to prevent development in a flood hazard area. The partnership ended because it was no longer cost effective. SRO would like to promote a law that enforces the concept of needing permission from the floodplain manager to turn on utilities. This concept would add assurance that structures are meeting minimum standards.

## Staffing

Staff at the local level often has too much on their plate and are expected to do more than what they were hired to do. Some have to operate as a floodplain manager, code enforcement official, and grant coordinator all at one time. Being able to get everything that needs to be done in a timely manner is a struggle. Many communities and counties would benefit from education in order for people to properly carry out tasks outside of their expertise. The State could train local officials on the many roles that staff are being asked to fill. A mutual aid agreement in funding and sharing staff may be a good thing for neighboring jurisdictions to look into.

In West Virginia, floodplain managers are required to have six hours of training every year, however, the issue is that no one is tracking the education to make sure it is being done. The tracking and training should be managed at local levels so that scheduling can be more easily addressed. The State used to have training regulations of 24-40 hours of training to handle funding that was funneled down to the county levels, but that also stopped being tracked, and training stopped being a requirement.

## Outreach

G. Eidel state that there is a need for social media training because some communities and jurisdictions want to create a website with useful information on it, but no one knows how to get started and what should be included in social media posts or on a website. All communities that do have a website have very different content and styles because they had to learn it on their own. Some communities cannot afford to start a website because they do not have spare funding to do that.

S. Byus stated that WV EMD and NWS are effective in disseminating messages, but other agencies should be involved.

SRO intends to design their website to be a hub of information that is useful to everyone in the State so that people may access information faster. Information must be written in a concise and clear manner so that anyone has the ability to understand it.



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Jefferson County is a good example of an information hub and can be used by all jurisdictions in the State. The site contains floodplain information, links to the flood mapping tool, and information on emergency management and the hazard mitigation plan. They county also has their public information officer look through their social media daily and post any relevant information. Monthly, newsletters are sent out to anyone that has signed up, including residents and local governments, so that everyone is on the same page.

## Funding

Several staff members have left WV EMD, so a lot of experience with funding that was there is no longer there. FEMA has been trying a new method of reaching out to the regional councils and working with them to share grant information. Email lists have been used to reach out to people regarding grants, but it seems like they are not being read by people which brings up the question of what the best method of grant outreach might be.

## Challenges

Having people to administer grants at the local level is an issue. There is also an issue that many localities do not understand that in-kind services can be used as a part of their local match for grants.

E. Martin stated that culturally, the State operates under a reactive mentality and collectively needs to change the culture and push towards a proactive mentality where it comes to preparedness, response, and recovery.

## Next Steps and Questions

C. Groves urged attendees to complete the information-surveys that they will be invited to complete depending on their role(s). She encouraged attendees to reach out to Gabe Reed (the State Hazard Mitigation Officer) or Tony Subbio (Tetra Tech's project manager) with any questions or concerns. With no further questions, C. Groves concluded the meeting at 10:23 a.m.



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## State of West Virginia 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

State Mitigation Capabilities  
& Local Planning Coordination  
November 2022








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Welcome!

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### Agenda

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TRAINING AND  
TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE
-   
REGULATORY
-   
STAFFING
-   
OUTREACH
-   
FUNDING
-   
CHALLENGES
-   
NEXT STEPS  
AND  
QUESTIONS

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**Tt TETRA TECH**

## Training and Technical Assistance

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### Training

- Mitigation Planning
- Risk Assessment
- Mitigation Implementation
- Grants Management
- *What trainings are offered by the state and how does a local entity request training?*
- *What trainings have been requested but not yet offered?*

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### Technical Assistance

- Risk Assessment Data
- Planning Meetings Support
- Plan Approval Support Guidance/Assistance
- *What other mitigation related trainings are available from other state agencies or departments?*

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### Regulatory

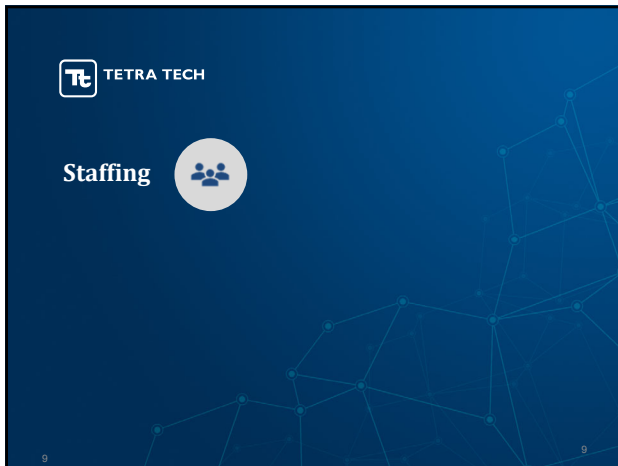
- Land Use Laws
- Building Codes and Enforcement
- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Coordination
- Others
- *What laws or regulations need to be developed to reduce vulnerability?*
- *What challenges to effective enforcement exist?*



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### Staffing

- Mitigation Planning
- Risk Assessment
- Mitigation Implementation
- Grants Management
- *What trainings are offered by the state and how does a local entity request training?*
- *What trainings have been requested but not yet offered?*



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### Outreach

- Websites
- Social Media
- Printed Materials
- *What trainings are offered by the state to support local efforts for outreach and how does a local entity request training?*
- *What projects and/or materials the state could offer to support outreach at the local level?*



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## Funding

- Federal, state, and/or private
  - Grant Availability
  - Grant Applications
  - Managing Mitigation Funds
- *How does the state educate local communities regarding the topics listed above?*



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## Challenges

- Capacity Issues
- Integration Issues
- Coordination Issues
- Challenges Developing Mitigation Actions
- Lack of Data
- *What barriers facing the development of local hazard mitigation plans?*
- *What are actions that can address some of the barriers?*



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## Next Steps

- Stakeholder surveys
  - Local FPAs - [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVHMP\\_FPA](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVHMP_FPA)
  - Other Stakeholders - [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVHMP\\_Others](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVHMP_Others)
  - Academia - [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVHMP\\_Academic](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVHMP_Academic)
  - County Emergency Mgt. - [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVHMP\\_CountyEM](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVHMP_CountyEM)
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**Questions**



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