

Meeting Notes

2018 State Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
Update Kick-off & Annual Review
October 27, 2016

Welcome

Project Overview

Sarah Bowen went over the definition of hazard mitigation and importance of having a hazard mitigation plan (HMP). The PA HMP follows the following format:

- Section 1. Introduction
- Section 2. State Profile
- Section 3. Planning Process
- Section 4. Risk Assessment
- Section 5. Capability Assessment
- Section 6. Mitigation Strategy
- Section 7. Plan Maintenance
- Section 8. Plan Adoption

Ms. Bowen explained that priorities for the HMP update are outreach and climate change based on new State Mitigation Plan Review guidance that was released by FEMA in 2015.

Do we know how Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's (PHMC) vulnerability study is progressing now that Jeremy is gone?

They are onboarding a new person.

Ms. Bowen stated that when we are talking about historic preservation, one of the biggest businesses is tourism. Can we mitigate impacts for culture? The FEMA definition can be enhanced to include culture.

From a pure hazard mitigation rule, the simple thing to do is to move away from hazard. How do we balance why you chose to live somewhere with mitigation?

Because of environmental and historic ideas, a lot of the places were not incorporated.

PHMC can help talk about past risk and mitigation solutions for flood-proofing.

A list of seventeen priority strategies for risk reduction were provided and the following next steps were identified during the July 2016 Risk Reduction meeting:

1. Hold conference call 1-2 weeks after this meeting to review notes and determine action plan

2. Hold quarterly calls to review progress on priority strategies
3. Explore annual 2-day meeting to review prior year and plan year ahead before updates to State Hazard Mitigation Plan
4. Begin holding meetings and information sessions with legislators and determine strategy to increase attendance

Ms. Bowen asked if there were any additional priorities that should be added or discussed.

FEMA has created new prioritization system for communities based on the history of flooding, flood insurance participation, and how long it has been since FEMA analyzed the community's flood insurance program.

Risk Reduction Summary

Tom Hughes, PA State Hazard Mitigation Officer, introduced the risks for Pennsylvania. Mr. Hughes stated that Pennsylvania's number one threat is flooding.

Mari Radford of FEMA, spoke about FEMA's Risk Analysis. Ms. Radford explained that the Risk Analysis came from FEMA Region III's Floodplain Management & Insurance Branch. It can be used as a national tool to prioritize Community Assistance Visits (CAV). Risk analysis can describe a lot about rankings within the state. From this the following communities/types of communities were prioritized for risk reduction:

- Philadelphia
- Mid-size Communities
- Western PA Counties
- Low Income River Towns

Mr. Hughes explained that of the 110 communities in the NFIP, Pennsylvania collected contact information for them all and held a webinar about funding with 60 to 80 communities attending the webinar.

Dan Fitzpatrick, Pennsylvania NFIP Coordinator, noted that county support is important. Mr. Hughes said there are some counties doing everything they should be doing but there are others that have the capability to do more.

Annual Mitigation Progress & Evaluation

Ms. Bowen reviewed the 2013 PA HMP goals which are as follows:

1. Protect lives, property, environmental quality, and resources of the Commonwealth, including RL and SRL properties
2. Enhance consistent coordination, collaboration, and communications among stakeholders
3. Provide a framework for active hazard mitigation planning and implementation
4. Build legislative support and secure funding for mitigation efforts
5. Increase awareness, understanding, and preparedness across all sectors

Mr. Hughes stated that DEP is exploring the factors surrounding natural gas and bakken crude to gather information about how weather can affect pipelines and wells.

Mr. Hughes also discussed how climate change can impact different human-made and natural environments and stated that pipelines may have their own section, outside of the Environmental Hazards profile, in the 2018 update.

Ernie Szabo asked if the planning process could be framed for the attendees.

Ms. Bowen stated that it will be a 24 month process to respect time and allow for appropriate update. The next meeting will be held in February 2017 for the Risk Assessment. In April/May there will be a Plan Integration meeting. In August there will be a mitigation solutions meeting, approximately 6 months prior to the completion of the draft plan. In April 2018 there will be a Draft Plan Review Meeting.

Attendees then went to assigned break-out groups for the mitigation strategy review. Break-out groups were tasked with providing progress and other status reporting information for mitigation goals, objectives, and mitigation actions included in the 2013 PA HMP.

Break-out Groups

Group 1- Goal 1, Objective 1-7

Group 2-Goal 1, Objective 8-14 and Goal 2

Group 3- Goal 3, 4, and 5

Reports from Break-out Groups

A separate reporting document that captures more detailed notes from each of the three break-out groups is available upon request and will be included in the planning process documentation for the 2018 PA HMP update.

Group 1: Hope Winship provided the report-out for Group 1. Participants were able to identify “who to go to” for most actions. There were some actions that need to be qualified or clarified. Some actions that are no longer applicable. The majority of actions assigned to this group were flood related.

Group 2: Sarah Bowen provided the report-out for Group 2. Attendees determined areas where precise follow up is needed. The group noted that some actions had progress. For example, currently the last plan required more information about Marcellus shale and that has now been updated.

Repetitive Loss and Severe Repetitive Loss actions seemed overly bureaucratic and repetitive. There are areas for follow up with individuals, progress with training, statewide GIS board and potential presentation for hazard data.

Group 3: Taryn Murray provided the report-out for Group 3. The group highlighted specific actions most applicable to the group participants. They were able to identify measures of success and talked a lot about utilities and the power companies having pre-defined staging areas/critical facilities. PHMC discussed additional measures of success as well as progress. The group identified areas with no progress, not having appropriate point of contact for action, such as the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Szabo stated that working to create “disaster resistant” universities was the first step but we want to update the next step for action.

Hazard Review & Update

Taryn Murray went over the list of natural and human-made hazards profiled in the 2013 PA HMP.

Next, she reviewed the PA Standard List of Hazards and asked attendees to comment on whether or not all hazards listed were relevant such as avalanche, volcano, disorientation, etc. Several irrelevant hazards will be removed from the PA Standard List of Hazards during the 2018 Standard Operating Guide (SOG) update.

Mr. Szabo said that PEMA published an SOG so that counties can profile hazards consistently. The SOG provides information about “How to write a plan” but does not dictate what is in the plan.

Ms. Murray then asked if any of the relevant hazards should be presented in a different way? For example, the current Environmental Hazards profile includes all of the following:

- Hazardous Materials Release
- Coal Mining
- Conventional Oil and Gas Well Incidents
- Marcellus Shale and Other Shale Formation Oil and Gas Well Incidents
- Gas and Liquid Pipeline Incidents

Comments:

- Mass food/animal contamination: If crops are flooded or damaged, they are considered contaminated and cannot be used at all.
- DEP met with FEMA a couple of months ago about Levees.
- Disorientation has been profiled at the county level but it is not a statewide issue, it is more of an issue for Department of Human Services.
- Mr. Hughes stated there needs to be a reason why PA does not profile particular hazards in the HMP.
- Does the profile for criminal activity pertain to drug use?
 - There are multiple agencies working on this. Maybe direct this to another plan.
- Large storm surges from a drowning perspective.

Are there other hazards that should be considered for inclusion in the 2018 HMP update?

There were no hazards that were not profiled in the last plan that need to be added to the upcoming plan. During the 2018 update some existing profiles will be broken out and more focused.

Ms. Murray noted that the transmission pipeline issue is a popular topic and asked if there are statewide issues in profiling transmission pipelines?

- Transmission pipelines may be profiled as its own hazard:
 - Issues with gathering lines a couple times a year. There are pipeline task force meetings. Recommendation that DEP treats them as a hazard regardless of if it is a pipeline, truck, tank, etc. The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) falls under US DOT.

- When examining pipelines, maybe PA can identify the gaps in regulation.
 - PA can address additional requirements that the State feels are valuable
 - Examine how individual counties are tackling pipelines. Mirror their profiling techniques.

Ms. Murray addressed the group and asked about the “unconventional well” hazard. There were no thoughts or comments on profiling unconventional wells.

Ms. Murray began to discuss the types of terrorism for the plan.

- Cyber-terrorism is now a separate action; a specific action to cause damage over the internet, economic, utilities, etc.
- Derek Ruhl stated that agricultural terrorism is a real threat. There have been instances of food contamination. Enhanced relationship between law enforcement and agriculture are needed; could be food contamination but it can also be biological terrorism. The current profile only includes unintentional contamination.

Building off of agricultural terrorism, Ms. Murray asked the group if they wanted to discuss animal disease.

- Mr. Ruhl noted that avian flu is a threat. An outbreak can affect jobs and local economies.
- Developing definitions of emerging health vs pandemic vs biological and food issues.

Ms. Murray asked if there were any other hazards that needed to be addressed.

She noted that a profile for invasive species had been added to the HMP.

- Ms. Radford discussed the role of climate change in increasing invasive species.
- Mr. Ruhl said that Department of Agriculture deals with invasive species and they have some information to share as does DCNR.

Mr. Szabo asked if climate change would be worked into existing hazard profiles or if it could be broken out into its own profile.

- FEMA would like to see it addressed for each of the hazard profiles.

The group asked about looking into future design for nuclear plants and treatment areas for changing hazards due to climate change.

- Matt McCullough, FEMA, explained that this is the exact point that FEMA is trying to make with future probabilities assuming a changed climate. At a minimum, FEMA is asking for the narrative for each hazard as it applies to infrastructure and profiles. FEMA is trying to create standards to help protect and mitigate these issues.
 - PA has already done this by having a working group identify what needs to be changed.
 - Mr. McCullough explained that the PA can use and leverage existing studies and save money.

The group wanted to know how to discuss climate change when the amounts aren't changing it is just the magnitude, for example, more rainfall in shorter periods of times.

2018 State Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

- Ms. Bowen stated that some of the ways is outreach and data gathering, using the state climate change plan, integrating actions from existing plans.
- Mr. Hughes said that PEMA can also survey other state agencies about their climate change programs.

Next Steps and Conclude

- Webinar and Individual meeting outreach to come.
- Distribute the excel version of mitigation actions with updates.
- Tom Hughes will do additional follow up on actions with NFIP communities in PA.
- PEMA will be advertising follow up webinars and spotlight of coverage of what we talked about today.
- PEMA will do more outreach to elected officials, potentially at PSATS.
- PEMA will continue to work with “disaster resistant” universities and update the next step for action.
- DCNR has state geologist: follow up on expansive soils.

The timeline below was provided to the group.

| Date | Event |
|-----------------------|---|
| February 2017 | Risk Assessment Meeting |
| May 2017 | Plan Integration & Capability Update Meeting |
| August 2017 | Mitigation Strategy Meeting |
| Small meetings | Individual follow-up, meetings, and requests to review draft sections |
| April 2017 | Draft Plan Review Meeting |

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