

Public feedback needed on Kern Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Stakeholders throughout Kern County have been working over the last year to develop an update to the Kern Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan that was last updated in 2014. The goal of the planning effort is to revisit natural hazard information to account for changes in population and occurrences of natural disaster in the planning area. This effort is twofold: First, it assists in reduction of repetitive damages to community infrastructure, and second, the County will maintain eligibility for grants under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance program. A public draft of the Plan is now available for review on <http://mitigatehazards.com/county-of-kern/public-draft-hmp/>.

The Kern Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) provides a formal explanation of prevalent hazards within the County and how hazards may affect communities differently. Most importantly, the mitigation strategy presented in the Plan responds to the known vulnerabilities within each community and provides prescriptions or actions to achieve the greatest reduction of natural hazard risk. The end result of this planning effort could result in saved lives, reduced injuries, reduced property damage, and protection for the environment in the event of a natural hazard within the County.

“This plan will assist the County to receive grant funding for fuel reduction projects or flood control infrastructure and other mitigation measures to reduce damages from natural hazards,” said Ethan Mobley, Owner of Dynamic Planning + Science, the consultant hired by Kern County.

Starting in March of 2019, County staff hired consultant Dynamic Planning + Science to initiate the planning effort by mapping hazards across the region and working to identify people, critical facilities, and property values within each hazard area. This step was the first in a series of tasks to understand the vulnerabilities within the County and update the planning efforts conducted in 2014.



Photo 1. Mojave Air and Space Port Deputy Fire Chief Brandon Welton digs into MASP's hazard vulnerabilities at one of the jurisdictional workshops.

The planning effort includes analysis of natural hazards within unincorporated County areas and dozens of participating jurisdictions, including municipalities and many special districts, school districts, and water and wastewater districts.

Based on the outcomes of the new vulnerability assessment, participating jurisdictions revisited mitigation strategies and developed new mitigation action proposals to reduce community vulnerabilities. Mitigation action proposals range from increased public education and awareness efforts to actual structural projects to reduce impacts of hazards. Structural projects could range from flood control infrastructure and bridge replacements to utility upgrades intended to lessen the impacts of natural hazard events.

Many participating jurisdictions are still evaluating hazard risks and will unveil their annexes to the MJHMP at a later date.

Along with the MJHMP umbrella plan, Volume 1, the following jurisdictions have completed draft annexes that are also available for public review:

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| ▪ City of Tehachapi | ▪ Stallion Springs CSD | ▪ Tehachapi Unified School District |
| ▪ City of Wasco | ▪ Tehachapi Valley Recreation and Park District | ▪ Arvin-Edison Water Storage District |
| ▪ East Niles Community Services District (CSD) | ▪ Kern High School District | ▪ Kern County Water Agency |
| ▪ Mojave Air and Space Port | ▪ Lost Hills Union School District | |

The County and participating jurisdictions are accepting comments on the draft Kern Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan itself through Friday, September 11th.

To view and comment on the draft plan, please visit <http://mitigatehazards.com/county-of-kern/public-draft-hmp/>. The draft plan will also be available for curbside pickup at several Kern County branch libraries.



Photo 2. Attendees from around the County at jurisdictional workshop #4

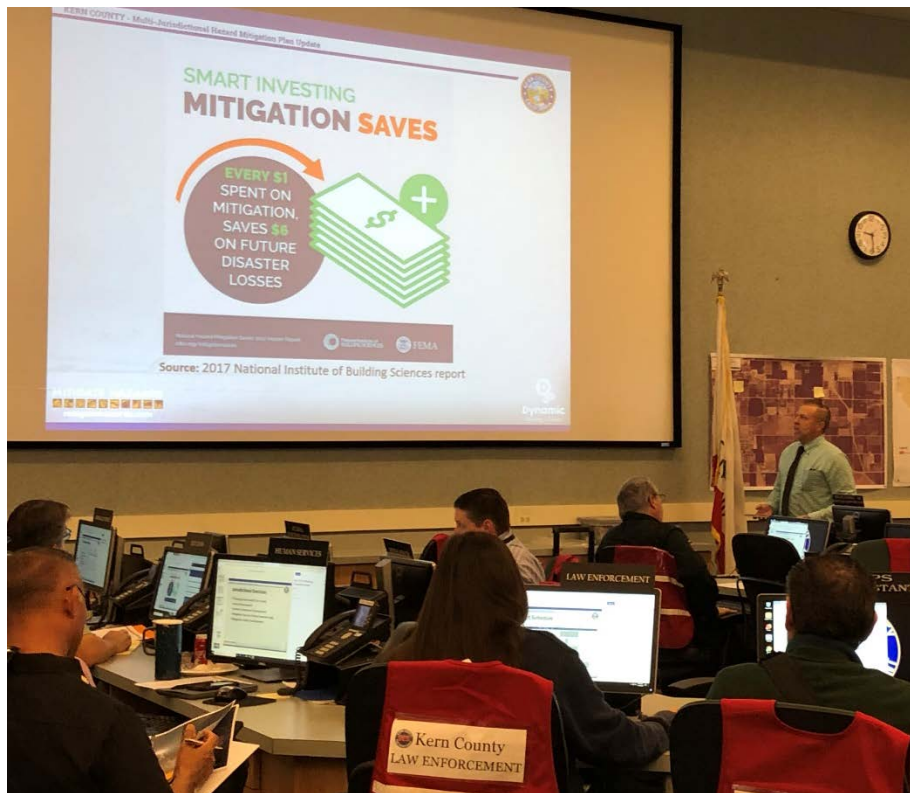


Photo 3. Participants in jurisdictional workshop #4 learn about the benefits of hazard mitigation