

Frequently Asked Questions Samish Indian Nation Hazard Mitigation Plan

Question: What is the Disaster mitigation Act of 2000?

Answer: The federal Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000 (Public Law 106-390), commonly known as the 2000 Stafford Act amendments, was approved by Congress on October 10, 2000. This act required state and local governments to develop hazard mitigation plans as a condition for federal grant assistance. Among other things, this legislation reinforces the importance of pre-disaster infrastructure mitigation planning to reduce disaster losses nationwide. DMA 2000 is aimed primarily at the control and streamlining of the administration of federal disaster relief and programs to promote mitigation activities. Prior to 2000, federal legislation provided funding for disaster relief, recovery, and some hazard mitigation planning. The DMA improves upon the planning process by emphasizing the importance of communities planning for disasters before they occur. Under the DMA requirement, any local government wishing to pursue funding available under the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs must have an approved hazard mitigation plan in order to be eligible to apply for these funds.

Question: What is a Hazard Mitigation Plan?

Answer: A Hazard Mitigation Plan is prepared by local governments in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390). These plans act as a keyway to federal funding afforded under the Robert T. Stafford Act. These plans meet statutory requirements that include:

- Organizing resources
- Assessing Risk
- Engaging the public
- Identifying Goals and Objectives
- Identifying actions

Question: What is meant by "mitigation"?

Answer: Hazard mitigation is any sustained action taken to permanently eliminate or reduce long-term risks to human life and property from natural hazards. Sustained action means an action that is long term in its impact. This is an essential component of emergency management, along with preparedness, response and recovery. Disasters can have significant impacts on communities. They can destroy or damage life, property and infrastructure, local economies, and the environment.

Question: Who is involved?

Answer: The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 has stated that any "local government" can be involved if they elect to do so. They identify "local government" as:

Any Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, or Alaska Native village or organization; any county, municipality, city, town, public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether the council of governments is incorporated as a

nonprofit corporation under State law), regional or interstate government entity, or agency, or instrumentality of a local government; and any rural community, unincorporated town or village, or other public entity

Question: What is the Planning Team?

Answer: A Planning Team is made up of selected stakeholder representatives from within the planning area that will oversee this plan update process. The Planning Team will meet throughout this process and provide information and guidance for this project. The team will determine the goals and objectives for the plan, the public involvement strategy, and review the risk assessment. This Planning Team makeup for this project include the following:

- Tribal Government and Tribal Members
- State and/or Local Emergency Management Planning Partners
- Business interests
- Other stakeholders as identified throughout the process

Question: What hazards does it address?

Answer: The 2021 Updated Tribal Hazard Mitigation plan will review and address similar natural hazards of concern as those that are being addressed in the Samish Indian Nation's 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan. The hazards which have been identified for this edition include:

- Drought
- Earthquake
- Flood
- Landslide
- Severe Weather
- Tsunami
- Volcano
- Wildfire

Question: Will Climate Change be addressed in the Mitigation Plan?

Answer: Yes, but climate change will not be viewed as a stand-alone hazard in this plan. There will be detailed discussion of the potential impact of climate change on all hazards of concern.

Question: Where are the hazards in my area?

Answer: By law, this planning effort must map the extent and location of all hazards of concern utilizing the best available data and science. This planning effort previously identified the natural hazards that have the potential to impact the planning area. Updated maps are currently being produced as part of this planning process. As these maps become available, they will be presented to the public via various mediums.

Question: How does having a mitigation plan affect me?

Answer: As a Tribal Member or citizen within a participating jurisdiction, you will be able to reap the benefits of the risk reduction actions identified by the Tribe. Sometimes these can be a direct impact to your property in the form of reduced insurance premiums and reduced risk if you live in a high hazard area. Most of the time, these benefits are secondary. By reducing risk exposure, your tribal government does not have to expend as many resources on preparedness, response or recovery from the impacts of natural hazards.

Question: How will it affect my community?

Answer: By participating in this planning effort and adopting the updated plan, the Tribe will be eligible to pursue funding under many of the FEMA hazard mitigation grant programs. These programs provide millions of dollars worth of grant funding annually for risk reduction measures identified in these plans.

Question: Why should I get involved?

Answer: The law specifies that this be an “open public process” where the public is given the opportunity to provide comment on all phases of the plan’s development. For purposes of a Tribal plan, the Tribe has the option of defining what it constitutes as ‘public’. As a Tribal Member or citizen of the Tribe, you have the potential to be most severely impacted as a result of natural hazards. When these events occur, homes are damaged, functionality of critical facilities is interrupted, services are interrupted, and the economy is impacted; all having a direct impact on the planning area and the Tribal Members. The principal goal of this plan is to reduce risk. It is not possible to identify and implement risk reduction strategies without the support of the property and business owners targeted by these strategies. Therefore, there must be public support for these initiatives in order for there to be any successful implementation of the recommendations of this plan.

Question: What can I do to support this process?

Answer: Participate! When you see a notice for a public meeting, make an attempt to attend. If you receive notice of the mitigation plan survey or have access to a computer to take the survey on-line, please complete it. Review the Tribe’s website periodically to obtain an update on the process. And most importantly, spread the word! Tell your friends, family, and neighbors about this process. This plan is very important to the health and welfare of the members of the Samish Nation. If you don’t understand something, or want to provide input, contact David Strich, Emergency Management Specialist, who is serving as Project Manager for the Tribe for this plan update, or Beverly O’Dea, Consultant for more information.

Question: When will the plan be finished? And... will it be available to the public?

Answer: It is anticipated that this plan update process will take approximately seven (7) months to complete up to submittal to FEMA for their review and approval. The target timeframe for this submittal is January 2021, or sooner! This schedule is contingent upon many factors that can



impact schedule and timeline. The timeline for submittal will be continuously updated throughout the process as planning milestones are completed

Question: How can I get a copy of the Multi-Hazard Mitigation plan once it is finished?

Answer: Once the draft plan is assembled and is considered to be ready for public review and comment, it will be posted to the Hazard Mitigation Plan website. There will be announcements on the Tribe's website and on Facebook, as well as at various public forums. The plan will be available for review and comment for 15 days. We welcome your input!

Question: Who can I contact for questions?

Answer: David Strich, Project Manager
Samish Indian Nation Emergency Management Specialist
(360) 208-7590

Or:

Bev O'Dea, Consultant
Bridgeview Consulting, LLC
(253) 301-1330