

Delta County's Hazard Mitigation Plan 2018 Update

By Ethan Mobley, Dynamic Planning + Science

Delta County staff and key stakeholders have been working over the last year to develop an update to the hazard mitigation plan that was created in 2008. The goal of the planning effort is to revisit natural hazard information and update to account for changes in population and occurrences of natural disaster in the planning area. This effort is two-fold; first, it assists in reduction of repetitive damages to community infrastructure, and secondly, the county will maintain eligibility for grants under Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance program.

SIDEBAR with Stakeholders: Delta County, Delta County Emergency Management, Delta County Ambulance District, Delta County School District, Delta County Memorial Hospital, Delta County Health/ EPR, Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, City of Delta, Delta Police Department, Town of Cedaredge, Cedaredge Police/ FD, Town of Hotchkiss, Town of Paonia, Town of Crawford, Town of Orchard City, Delta County FPD, Paonia FPD, Cedaredge FPD, Hotchkiss FPD, Crawford FPD, NOAA, Delta County Search and Rescue, West Region Wildfire Council, North Fork Ambulance, Vision Charter Academy, American Red Cross, Kinder Morgan, DMEA.]





The county's hazard mitigation plan 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 will 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 Delta County.

Starting in November of 2017, county staff hired consultant Dynamic Planning + Science to initiate the planning effort by mapping hazards across the region and worked 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 2008.

The planning effort includes analysis of natural hazards within unincorporated county areas and the incorporated areas of Delta, Cedaredge, Hotchkiss, Paonia, Crawford, and Orchard City. In addition, the planning effort is assisting each fire protection district within the county to understand wildfire vulnerabilities for the communities they protect.

Based on the outcomes of the new vulnerability assessment, the county has revisited mitigation strategies and created new mitigation actions to reduce community vulnerabilities. Mitigation actions

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.

The County finalized the plan this week and is asking the public to review newly developed plan based upon stakeholder inputs received through a survey administered earlier this year. The survey was used to establish public perceptions on local hazards and mitigation strategies for plan development. Don't worry the survey is still open!!!! Anyone who completes the survey by **November 30th** will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a variety of donated prizes. The results of this short survey will help the County and participating jurisdictions prioritize mitigation actions during the next five years and assist County and City officials to establish incentives for mitigation of hazards near your home.

To review the draft plan or take the survey, please visit <http://mitigatehazards.com/delta-county/delta-county-hmp-draft-documents/>. Survey responders will be entered to win a grand prize of a \$300 Stihl power tool voucher redeemable at local STIHL Dealers. Power tools are a great way to reduce vegetation around homes for wildfire mitigation and reduce the unwieldy branches that cause damage to property or utility outages during severe storms.

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