



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 12/9/2025

File #: 25-1194

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Sheriff

Agenda Section: Departmental

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Adoption and Approval of the Humboldt County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan 2025 Update

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the Resolution stating that Humboldt County adopted a Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2025 in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and that the Hazard Mitigation Plan was incorporated by reference into the Humboldt County General Plan Safety Element (Attachment 1); and
2. Direct the Clerk of the board to transmit a copy of the resolution to the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services to be included in the final Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approval of the plan; and
3. Authorize staff to make non-policy related changes to the plan if requested per FEMA plan approval review; and
4. Authorize staff to apply for the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMPG) to secure funds to implement projects identified in the Humboldt Operational Area Hazard Mitigation Plan; and
5. Receive presentation.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan.

Area of Focus: Safe & Healthy Communities

Strategic Plan Category: 9999 - Core Services/Other

DISCUSSION:

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) notified Humboldt County that the county must adopt a resolution proving that the county is in full compliance with the requirements of Assembly Bill 2140. AB 2140 is a 2006 state law relating to Local Hazard Mitigation Plans and General Plan Safety Elements. AB 2140 states that in order for the county to receive funds from the California Disaster Assistance Act for eligible projects in excess of 75 percent of total state eligible costs the county must have a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) approved by Cal OES and the LHMP must be incorporated by reference into the Safety Element of the General Plan.

In October 2017, the Board of Supervisors adopted the General Plan Update, which included Safety Element Policy S-P35, Hazard Mitigation Plan, and incorporating by reference the Humboldt Operational Area Hazard Mitigation Plan into the Safety Element. In 2020, the Board of Supervisors adopted the last LHMP update, which was approved by Cal OES and FEMA in 2020.

An update to the LHMP was initiated in 2023. A coalition of Humboldt County cities, special districts, and other entities began a

planning process to update the Humboldt County Operation Area Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is designed to prepare for and lessen the impacts of specified natural hazards. Responding to federal mandates in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 200 (Public Law 106-390), the partnership was formed to pool resources and to create a uniform hazard mitigation strategy that can be consistently applied to the defined planning area and used to ensure eligibility for specified grant funding success.

This effort represents the third comprehensive update to the prior hazard mitigation plan. The planning area for the plan was defined as the Humboldt County Operational Area. The result of the organization effort will be a FEMA and Cal OES approved multi-jurisdictional, multi-hazard mitigation plan.

Mitigation planning is the systematic process of learning about the hazards that can affect the community, setting clear goals, identifying appropriate actions and following through with an effective mitigation strategy. Mitigation encourages long-term reduction of hazard vulnerability and can reduce the enormous cost of disasters to property owners and all levels of government. Mitigation can also protect critical community facilities, reduce exposure to liability, and minimize post-disaster community disruption.

The hazard identification and profiling in the hazard mitigation plan addresses the following hazards of concern within the planning area:

1. Dam failure
2. Drought
3. Earthquake
4. Extreme Temperature (Hot and Cold)
5. Flooding
6. Landslide
7. Tsunami
8. Wind
9. Winter Weather
10. Wildfire

All participating local jurisdictions have been responsible for assisting in the development of the hazard and vulnerability assessments and the mitigation action strategies for their respective jurisdictions and organizations. The plan presents the information in a unified framework to ensure a comprehensive plan covering the entire Humboldt County Operational Area. Each jurisdiction has been responsible for the review and approval of their individual sections of the plan. Additionally, the plan has been aligned with the goals, objectives and priorities of the state's multi-hazard mitigation plan.

An 8-member steering committee composed of representative stakeholders was formed early in the planning process to guide the development of the plan. In addition, 16 stakeholders from local, state, tribal, and non-profit entities provided a key information during the planning process to ensure a diverse range of perspectives who are directly affected by the impacts of hazard events. Furthermore, the public was invited to participate in the planning through the steering committee meetings, digital public survey, and were invited to review and comment on the draft plan.

Upon approval of the 2025 update to the LHMP, the General Plan must be amended to incorporate the updated LHMP into the Safety Element and the certified resolution of adoption must be submitted to Cal OES as proof of AB 2140 compliance. Staff recommend that your Board adopt the attached resolution as proof of compliance with the requirements of AB 2140. This resolution enumerates the actions taken by the county in the past to fully comply with AB 2140.

As of November 2025, Cal OES reviewed and approved the LHMP (Attachments 2 and 3). In addition, FEMA has approved pending adoption for the County of Humboldt, City of Rio Dell, and the McKinleyville Community Service District. FEMA will issue formal approval of the LHMP upon receipt of the adoption documentation. Once approved by your Board, all other participating jurisdictions must adopt the plan within five calendar years of the approval date.

Staff recommends your Board to adopt the plan pending FEMA approval. Since FEMA has only recently received the full plan for review, it will take time for FEMA to review the plan. Any contents related to the County of Humboldt may require revisions by FEMA to meet the plan approval requirements. Changes to the current plan occurring after adoption will not require the County of

Humboldt to re-adopt any further iterations of the plan. Changes such as typos, formatting, or other modifications that do not significantly alter the meaning or determination of the plan after Board approval can be made by staff without a separate adoption resolution. Subsequent plan updates following the approval period for this plan will require separate adoption resolutions.

Once the hazard mitigation plan is adopted by all of the jurisdictional partners and approved by FEMA, the partnership will collectively and individually become eligible to apply for hazard mitigation project funding from both the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

The LHMP is considered a living document such that, as awareness of additional hazards develops and new strategies and projects are conceived to offset or prevent losses due to natural disasters, the hazard mitigation plan will be evaluated and revised on a continual 5-year time frame.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program #4301-047-022P, FIPS #023-00000 - Humboldt County, Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Adopting the resolution allows for continuing eligibility for state and federal disaster mitigation and recovery funding. Adoption of the Humboldt Operational Area Hazard Mitigation Plan 2025 Update and subsequent FEMA approval may have a net positive financial impact on the county and other planning partnership members because only those jurisdictions with approved plans are eligible to apply for specific types of FEMA grants. The current budget does not include dedicated funding to administer the Hazard Mitigation Plan or coordinate implementation. Development of grant applications for implementation projects will likely be funded through the Sheriff's budget units.

STAFFING IMPACT:

There is no additional staffing impact associated with approving the resolution.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Arcata Fire District, Big Lagoon Community Services District, City of Arcata, City of Blue Lake, City of Eureka, City of Ferndale, City of Fortuna, City of Rio Dell, City of Trinidad, Fieldbrook Glendale Community Services District, Fortuna Fire Protection District, Humboldt Bay Fire, Humboldt Bar Harbor, Recreation and Conservation, Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District, Humboldt Community Service District, Manila Community Services District, McKinleyville Community Services District, Peninsula Community Services District, Redway Community Services District, Rio Dell Volunteer Fire District, Resort Improvement District No. 1, Shelter Cove, Southern Humboldt Community Healthcare District, Westhaven Community Services District, Willow Creek Community Services District, Willow Creek Fire Protection District, and Humboldt County Public Works, Humboldt County Building and Planning, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria Tribal Government, Petrolia Fire, Patrick Creek Community Services District, Yurok Tribe Office of Emergency Services, Friends of the Dunes, Briceland Community Services District, and CAL FIRE.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may elect not to approve the resolution; however this is not recommended as it resulting in the loss of grant funding opportunities and county strategic emergency preparedness planning.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 - Resolution

Attachment 2 - Hazard Mitigation Plan Volume 1

Attachment 3 - Hazard Mitigation Plan Volume 2

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: Dec. 10, 2013, March 5, 2019, Feb. 25, 2020

File No.: 16-0715, 19-229, 20-149