

# Plan Development Process

## The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

In the past, federal legislation has provided funding for disaster relief, recovery, and hazard mitigation planning. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 is the latest legislation to improve this planning process and was put into motion on October 10, 2000, when the President of the United States signed the Act (Public Law 106-390). The new legislation reinforces the importance of mitigation planning and emphasizes planning for disasters before they occur.

Mitigate: to cause to become less harsh or hostile; to make less severe or painful.

Planning: the act or process of making or carrying out plans; the establishment of goals, policies, and procedures for a social or economic unit.

Hazard Mitigation (as defined by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000): any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards.

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 is intended to facilitate cooperation between state and local authorities, prompting them to work together. It encourages and rewards local and state pre-disaster planning and promotes sustainability as a strategy for disaster resistance.

To implement the new Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requirements, The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prepared an Interim Final Rule, published in the Federal Registry on February 26, 2002, at 44 CFR Parts 201 and 206, which establishes planning and funding criteria for state and local governments.

The primary purpose of hazard mitigation is to identify community policies, actions, and tools for implementation over the long term that will result in a reduction in risk and potential for future losses community-wide. This is accomplished by using a systematic process of learning about the hazards that can affect the community, setting clear goals, identifying appropriate actions, following through with an effective mitigation strategy, and keeping the plan current.

### Local Involvement:

Almost all of the jurisdictions and Indian Tribes included in the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** contributed to the development of the plan through the dedication of staff time to oversee the development of the plan, assist in writing the plan, and/or compile jurisdiction-specific information contained in the plan.

## Key contributors in this process were:

City of Anacortes:	Ed Frank, Building Official
City of Burlington:	Margaret Fleek, Planning Director and C.R.S. Coordinator
Town of Concrete:	Rich Philips, Fire Chief
Town of Hamilton:	Margaret Fleek, Town Planner
Town of La Conner:	John Doyle, City Planner and C.R.S. Coordinator
Town of Lyman:	Eileen Warchow, Town Clerk
City of Mount Vernon:	Erv Lindal, Fire Chief
City of Mount Vernon:	Roxanne Michael, Director, Community and Economic Development
City of Mount Vernon:	Joe Natola, Building Official
City of Sedro-Woolley:	Ardell McCombs, Building Official
Skagit County:	Bill Dowe, Building Official
Skagit County:	Tim Devries, Plans Examiner
Skagit County:	Kirk Johnson, Senior Planner
Skagit County:	Delores McLeod, Public Works Administrative Assistant/C.R.S. Coordinator
Skagit County:	Karla Strand, Emergency Management Administrative Assistant/Coordinator
Skagit County:	Mark Watkinson, Emergency Management Coordinator
Swinomish Tribe:	Jeffrey A. Hegedus, Environmental Engineer, Office of Planning and Community Development
Upper Skagit Tribe:	Joe Hemmerich, Public Works Director
Upper Skagit Tribe:	Tom McLeod, Public Works Facilities Maintenance Supervisor

Due to the lack of paid staff, the Town of Concrete and the Town of Lyman were not able to participate in planning meetings as frequently as many of the other jurisdictions. However, representatives from each of these towns attended the series of five (5) public meetings to provide input into the plan development process. In addition, Skagit County and each of the municipalities were involved in the plan development process through regular plan development progress reports provided to each of the mayors as well as the Board of Skagit County Commissioners via regularly scheduled Skagit Emergency Management Council meetings. In addition, each of these jurisdictions as well as each of the participating Indian Tribes participated in reviewing and commenting on the final draft of the plan.

The **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** is the result of a grass-roots effort on the part of local Indian Tribes, jurisdictions, special purpose districts, agencies, and citizen involvement – this is not a consultant-written plan. The writing and organizing of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** was performed by Skagit County Department of Emergency Management staff with a great deal of assistance provided by members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee.

***It is important to note that the development of this plan has been beneficial to the citizens of Skagit County if just for the fact that such a large number of various entities have come together to accomplish a common goal. Without the overwhelming cooperation on the part of all of the participating entities that contributed information and/or their own version of “sweat equity” toward the finished product, this multi-jurisdictional plan could not have been written.***

In an effort to augment staff and accelerate the planning process, Summit GIS assisted the municipalities in compiling municipal-specific information and assessing each municipality's vulnerability regarding the specific natural hazards that could affect them.

In order to better involve the public in the planning process, the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee advertised and conducted a total of five (5) public meetings held in conjunction with the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee including citizens and stakeholders to provide the various jurisdictions, special purpose districts, and Indian Tribes with the opportunity to fully participate in the plan development process and just as importantly, to solicit information and comments from the citizens of Skagit County and better involve them in the plan development process.

<b>Public Meeting Process</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Attendees</b>	<b>Purpose of Meeting</b>
March 12, 2003	7:00 P.M.	Burlington	45	Assess the Hazard
April 9, 2003	7:00 P.M.	Burlington	51	Assess the Problem
May 14, 2003	7:00 P.M.	Burlington	43	Set Goals
June 11, 2003	7:00 P.M.	Burlington	29	Review Possible Activities
July 9, 2003	7:00 P.M.	Burlington	26	Draft an Action Plan

**Important dates and elements in the plan development process:**

**May 17, 2002:**

The Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee is formed and begins meeting on a semi-monthly basis for the purposes of seeking and receiving a Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant to help fund the development of a multi-jurisdictional natural hazards mitigation plan.

The Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee continued to meet on a semi-monthly basis through December, 2002 and meeting monthly thereafter through September, 2003 for the purpose of overseeing the plan development process to insure project goals and timelines are met and to assist in gathering information for inclusion into the plan.

**June 5, 2002:**

Marty Best, Washington State Hazard Mitigation Officer and other members of the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division presented an overview of the requirements of a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan as outlined in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 to members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee and various local elected and appointed officials.

**July 9, 2002:**

Skagit County Dike District #12 signs a resolution to participate with the City of Burlington to pursue the establishment of an Interlocal Agreement to cooperatively develop and adopt a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**July 9, 2002:**

Skagit County Dike District #12 signs a resolution to participate with Skagit County to pursue the establishment of an Interlocal Agreement to cooperatively develop and adopt a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**June 10, 2002:**

Board of Skagit County Commissioners sign a resolution to pursue the establishment of an Interlocal Agreement to cooperatively develop and adopt a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**June 13, 2002:**

Burlington City Council votes to participate in the application process to apply for and receive a hazard mitigation planning grant to develop a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**October 28, 2002:**

Board of Skagit County Commissioners Chairman Don Munks signs a Memorandum of Agreement with the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division regarding Mitigation 20/20 Software.

**November 20, 2002:**

Three members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee attend Mitigation 20/20 Software Workshop at Camp Murray, Washington.

**December 10, 2002:**

Hamilton Town Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

Lyman Town Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**December 12, 2002:**

Burlington City Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**December 16, 2002:**

Board of Skagit County Commissioners signs a resolution to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**December 27, 2002:**

Skagit County Dike District #12 awarded \$100,000 Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant.

**January 6, 2003:**

Anacortes City Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**January 8, 2003:**

Mount Vernon City Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**January 8, 2003:**

Sedro-Woolley City Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**January 13, 2003:**

Concrete Town Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**January 14, 2003:**

La Conner Town Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**January 22, 2003:**

First meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters.

**February 3, 2003:**

Information regarding the development of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** was presented to the Skagit County Flood Control Committee. This presentation involved a lengthy discussion regarding the purpose of the plan and the importance of receiving suggestions for mitigation strategies and/or projects from the Flood Control Committee for inclusion in this plan.

**February 12, 2003:**

The Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee met with Adrian Mintz, owner of Summit GIS, to explore the possibilities of utilizing information regarding natural hazards and critical facilities gathered by Mr. Mintz as part of his doctoral thesis. It was the consensus of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee that almost all of the information gathered by Mr. Mintz was already available through existing documents developed by Skagit County GIS and the Skagit County Department of Emergency Management.

**February 26, 2003:**

Second meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters.

**March 3, 2003:**

Representatives from various Skagit County government departments met to determine who will be responsible for gathering vulnerability information and statistics at the county level.

Additional information regarding the development of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** was presented to the Skagit County Flood Control Committee. It was stressed at this meeting that all dike districts will need to be involved in the plan-development process and will further need to adopt the plan in order to be eligible for future hazard mitigation funds.

**March 4, 2003:**

Swinomish Indian Senate votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

Information regarding the development of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** was presented to the Skagit County Fire Chiefs Association. It was stressed at this meeting that all fire districts will need to be involved in the plan-development process and will further need to adopt the plan in order to be eligible for future hazard mitigation funds.

**March 12, 2003:**

First meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Extended Planning Committee including citizens and stakeholders and public meeting held at 7:00 P.M. at the Burlington City Council Chambers. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the various natural hazards that potentially affect Skagit County; 45 persons attended this meeting.

**March 13, 2003:**

Members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee met with representatives of the City of Sedro-Woolley and Adrian Mintz of Summit GIS to discuss the gathering of jurisdictional-specific information for the City of Sedro-Woolley as well as other participating jurisdictions.

Contract signed between Skagit County Dike District #12 and Summit GIS for the purpose of utilizing Summit GIS staff to assist various participating jurisdictions in gathering jurisdictional-specific information for inclusion into the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan**.

**March 20, 2003:**

Members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee presented a plan development status report to the Skagit Emergency Management Council.

The Upper Skagit Tribal Council votes to participate in the development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

**March 26, 2003:**

Third meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters.

**April 9, 2003:**

Second meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Extended Planning Committee including citizens and stakeholders and public meeting held at 7:00 P.M. at the Burlington City Council Chambers. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the possible problems that could result from the various hazards that potentially affect Skagit County; 51 persons attended including Mr. John Ufford, Planning Program Coordinator, Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division.

**April 23, 2003:**

Fourth meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters.

**May 5, 2003:**

Interlocal Cooperative Agreement executed by Skagit County Dike District 12, the City of Burlington, and Skagit County to coordinate efforts to develop and adopt a hazard mitigation plan to meet the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

**May 8, 2003:**

Thomas J. Sheahan, Skagit County Department of Emergency Management Director presented a plan development status report to the Skagit Emergency Management Council.

**May 14, 2003:**

A special meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters directly after the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee meeting. The purpose of this special meeting was to clarify and emphasize the need for all jurisdictions to complete the vulnerability and mitigation portions of the plan development process in a timely manner and address jurisdictional concerns.

Third meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Extended Planning Committee including citizens and stakeholders and public meeting held at 7:00 P.M. at the Burlington City Council Chambers. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss possible mitigation strategies and establish mitigation goals for Skagit County; 43 persons attended this meeting.

**May 28, 2003:**

Fifth meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters.

Mr. John Ufford, Planning Program Coordinator, Hazard Mitigation Section, Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division accompanied three members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee and representatives from the Skagit County Sheriff's Office and the Skagit County Fire Marshal's Office on an aerial tour of Skagit County. The purpose of this tour was to observe and gain information regarding the Skagit River and its floodplain as well as the Sauk River and Baker River watersheds. In addition, observations were made of the Lower Baker Dam and the Upper Baker Dam owned and operated by Puget Sound Energy.

**June 10, 2003:**

Final Draft of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** sent to a local printer for copying.

Notice of Application for Environmental Review and request for comments was filed with the Washington State Department of Ecology. NOTE: No comments were received.

**June 11, 2003:**

Fourth meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Extended Planning Committee including citizens and stakeholders and public meeting held at 7:00 P.M. at the Burlington City Council Chambers. The purpose of this meeting was to review possible mitigation activities; 29 persons attended this meeting.

**June 16, 2003:**

Final draft of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** distributed for review and comment.

**June 25, 2003:**

A special meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters followed immediately by the sixth meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee.

**June 30, 2003:**

Final draft of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** was hand carried and delivered to the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division, Camp Murray, Washington for their initial review and comment. When the state has completed their review, the plan will be forwarded to FEMA Region X for a courtesy initial review by FEMA staff.

**July 1, 2003:**

Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance was issued in regards to the Application for Environmental Review that was filed with the Washington State Department of Ecology on June 10, 2003.

**July 7, 2003:**

Mitigated Determination of Nonsignificance was issued in regards to the Application for Environmental Review that was published in the Skagit Valley Herald thus triggering a 14-day appeal period. NOTE: No appeals were filed.

**July 9, 2003:**

Fifth and final meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Extended Planning Committee including citizens and stakeholders and public meeting held at 7:00 P.M. at the Burlington City Council Chambers. The purpose of this meeting was to draft an action plan. Because the final draft of the plan was distributed for public review and comment on June 16, 2003, this meeting focused on a quick review of the plan elements. In addition, a discussion was held regarding the multi-jurisdictional/multi-hazard mitigation goals and action items containing in the plan as well as the mitigation measures proposed by each of the participating entities; 26 persons attended this meeting.

**July 18, 2003:**

Final draft comment period closes.

**July 21, 2003:**

Members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Steering Committee and the Skagit Natural Hazards Planning Committee met with Ms. Sharon Loper, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Division, FEMA Region 10; Ms. Tammi Clark, Planning Program Coordinator, Hazard Mitigation Section, Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division; and Mr. John Ufford, Planning Program Coordinator, Hazard Mitigation Section, Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss those portions of the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** that require modification to meet state and FEMA plan requirements and for the steering committee and planning committee to receive specific direction as to what changes and/or additions need to be made to the plan to obtain state and federal approval.

**July 22, 2003:**

Skagit County Department of Emergency Management staff conducted a work session with the Skagit County Board of Commissioners to advise the board members regarding the progress of the plan and answer any questions the board members may have regarding the plan and the plan-adoption process. This meeting was advertised in the local media as part of the weekly commissioner's agenda. Ms. Carol Ehlers, one of the citizens that has been very involved in the public meeting process associated with this plan, as well as several staff members from the Skagit County Public Works Department also attended and provided input as part of this work session.

**July 23, 2003:**

Seventh meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters.

**August 4, 2003:**

Skagit County Emergency Management staff participated in the first of two public meetings held at the La Conner Middle School regarding the inclusion of the La Conner School District in the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan**. NOTE: No members of the public attended this meeting.

**August 5, 2003:**

Skagit County Department of Emergency Management staff attended a work session with the Sedro-Woolley City Council to advise the city council members regarding the progress of the plan and answer any questions the council members may have regarding the plan and the plan-adoption process.

**August 11, 2003:**

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for Skagit County. Resolution Number: R20030274

Skagit County Emergency Management staff participated in the second of two public meetings held at the La Conner Middle School regarding the inclusion of the La Conner School District in the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan**. NOTE: No members of the public attended this meeting.

**August 12, 2003:**

The Skagit County Dike District #12 Commissioners signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for Skagit County Dike District #12. Resolution Number: 8-12-03-2

**August 13, 2003:**

The Upper Skagit Tribal Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe. Resolution Number: 2003-53

**August 19, 2003:**

The Lyman Town Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the Town of Lyman. Resolution Number: 2003-3

**August 20, 2003:**

The City of Mount Vernon Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the City of Mount Vernon. Resolution Number: 638

**August 25, 2003:**

Skagit County Department of Emergency Management staff attended a work session with the Anacortes City Council to advise the city council members regarding the progress of the plan and answer any questions the council members may have regarding the plan and the plan-adoption process.

**August 27, 2003:**

Eighth meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters.

**August 28, 2003:**

The Burlington City Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the City of Burlington. Resolution Number: 13-2003

**September 2, 2003:**

The Anacortes City Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the City of Anacortes. Resolution Number: 1646

**September 3, 2003:**

The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. Resolution Number: 2003-09-213

**September 8, 2003:**

The Concrete Town Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the Town of Concrete. Resolution Number: 2003-11

**September 9, 2003:**

The Hamilton Town Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the Town of Hamilton. Resolution Number: 07-2003

**September 9, 2003:**

The La Conner Town Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the Town of La Conner. Resolution Number: 337

**September 10, 2003:**

The Sedro-Woolley City Council signed a resolution formally adopting the **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** as the official natural hazards mitigation plan for the City of Sedro-Woolley. Resolution Number: 681-03

**September 11, 2003:**

Two members of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Steering Committee were interviewed on a local radio station and provided information regarding the plan and the plan development process as well as various locations within the county where the plan will be available for public review.

**September 18, 2003:**

The **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** was promulgated by signature of the Board of County Commissioners; Skagit County Dike District #12; Chairperson of the Swinomish Indian Senate; Chairperson of the Upper Skagit Tribal Council; and the mayors of Anacortes, Burlington, Concrete, Hamilton, La Conner, Lyman, Mount Vernon, and Sedro-Woolley.

**September 24, 2003:**

Ninth meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee was held at Skagit County Dike District #12 Headquarters. NOTE: This meeting served as the final meeting of the Skagit Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee as part of the plan development process.

**September 29, 2003:**

One copy of the promulgated **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** was mailed via certified mail to Ms. Linda Ryan, ISO/CRS Specialist employed by Insurance Services Office Incorporated, a contract agency for the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System.

**September 30, 2003:**

Three (3) copies of the promulgated **Skagit County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** were hand carried and delivered to the Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division, Camp Murray, Washington. NOTE: One of these copies will be forwarded to Region 10 FEMA by Washington State Military Department, Emergency Management Division staff.