



# **7.0** PLAN MAINTENANCE

## SECTION 7 PLAN MAINTENANCE

44 CFR 201.4 (c)(5): A Plan Maintenance Process that includes:

- (i) An established method and schedule for monitoring, evaluating and updating the plan.
- (ii) A system for monitoring implementation of mitigation measures and project closeouts.
- (iii) A system for reviewing progress on achieving goals as well as activities and projects identified in the Mitigation Strategies.

The plan maintenance provides a framework for gauging progress and adjusting to new conditions, such as new policies, federal requirements and new initiatives.

According to FEMA guidance, the plan update should include:

- An analysis of whether the previously approved plan's method and schedule for monitoring, evaluating and updating the plan worked, and what elements or processes, if any were changed; and
- The method and schedule to be used over the next three years to monitor, evaluate and update the plan.

As such, a formal process is required to ensure that the State Plan will remain an active and relevant document. This section, Plan Maintenance, includes a schedule for monitoring and evaluating the State Plan as well as revising it every three years. This section also describes how those who assisted in this process will receive public input.

For the State HMP update, changes to this section are based on an evaluation of the operational feedback regarding the effectiveness of the plan maintenance strategy.

### 7.1 REVIEW OF 2014 PLAN MAINTENANCE PROGRAM - SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

In updating the plan maintenance procedures for the 2019 Plan update, a review of progress on the 2014 Plan implementation, maintenance, and update program was conducted. Since the last Plan Update, the State of New Jersey has experienced three federal disaster declarations, as listed in Table 7-1. Please refer to Section 5 (Risk Assessment) for additional details on each disaster declaration.

**Table 7-1 Federal, State and FEMA Disaster Declarations Since the 2014 Plan**

Disaster Number	Incident Period	Disaster Type
DR-4231	6/23/2015	Severe Storm
DR-4264	1/22/2016	Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm
DR-4368	3/6/2018 to 3/7/2018	Severe Winter Storm and Snowstorm

Source: FEMA 2018

Note: Disaster numbers are assigned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for each federally declared disaster.

Despite many challenges confronting the State during the past several years, significant progress was made in implementing and maintaining the previous Plan, including:

- Dedicating funding for all New Jersey Counties to develop or update multi-jurisdictional mitigation plans
- Supporting county plan development outreach, both administratively and technically

- Administering a robust mitigation grant funding program
- Building administrative capabilities through increased staffing levels of NJOEM Mitigation Unit

It is important to note that during this evaluation process, it was also noted that staffing levels may not have been at the proper capacity with which to fully implement this section as outlined in the previous Plan. Corrective measures are being implemented that includes further augmentation of mitigation staff within NJOEM. This will ultimately support an enhanced level of plan maintenance as well as the ability to accommodate further changes in the state-wide administration of mitigation in the wake of Superstorm Sandy. Again, updates to this section were developed through review and direct input and review by the SHMT. Further, this section has been reorganized to improve clarity. New State legislation affecting hazard mitigation has been moved to Section 6, Mitigation Strategy, under State Capabilities.

## 7.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE PLAN

### 7.2.1 MONITORING

As discussed in Section 2, the Plan update has been developed primarily through representatives from New Jersey's State Departments, independent State Agencies, regional MPOs and other interested partners, known as State HMP participants. To oversee the regular review and maintenance of the State (HMP). NJOEM's Mitigation Unit Manager in conjunction with the State Hazard Mitigation Officer, will provide guidance and coordination to establish bi-annual (twice a year) meetings to support implementation of, and discuss amendments to the established plan as needed. In addition to the bi-annual meetings, the NJOEM Mitigation Unit in conjunction with the State Hazard Mitigation Officer may request to meet following disaster events, to assure that procedures and resources are appropriate for plan maintenance and implementation.

The meeting schedule was modified from the prior quarterly schedule to allow members to address the needs of the current recovery work without overwhelming the members of the planning process and allowing ample time for members to reach out to their agencies and organizations for information and feedback.

The proposed plan implementation, maintenance, and update process shall include the following:

State HMP participants will meet at bi-yearly and at other times determined by the Chair or Deputy Chair if required. At these meetings, the goals, objectives, and action items listed in the plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. Plan participants in attendance shall be responsible for communicating any desired or necessary changes to the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management and other stakeholders. The following activities will be conducted at the bi-annual meetings:

- Tracking progress on relevant mitigation activities
- Review existing action items to determine appropriateness of funding;
- Identify issues that may not have been identified when the plan was developed
- Prioritize potential mitigation projects using the methodology described in the plan; an
- Assist in development of funding proposals for priority action items.

The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management will be responsible for updating the plan on a three-year cycle. A memorandum, describing needed changes and progress on implementation, will be provided annually to NJOEM and State HMP participants. The 2011 approved State of New Jersey Standard Mitigation Plan dated dealt with monitoring, evaluating, and updating the plan in section 7. This section called for review in three ways:

- Annual review of mitigation actions and identified projects,
- Review after each major disaster to determine the need for Plan refocus, and
- Review every three years before resubmission to FEMA for approval.

Since the 2014 plan, the State has made an effort to make the updated plan a living document that will be constantly reviewed and utilized to track projects, the new plan will be evaluated at each bi-annual meeting. This change will provide an opportunity for effective utilization of the Plan and will involve stakeholders from State agencies with responsibility for mitigation actions and projects.

### 7.2.2 EVALUATION

In addition to the bi-annual reviews, each participating state department, independent agency, regional MPO and other partners who are interested will perform a more comprehensive review during the second year of the Plan's lifespan or as deemed necessary by NJOEM and the SHMP planning participants. The coordinating organizations responsible for the various action items will report of the status of their projects, the success of various implementation processes, difficulties encountered, and success of coordination efforts. They will then evaluate the content of the plan using the following questions:

- Are these programs effective?
- Has there been any changes in development that affect our mitigation priorities?
- Are our goals, objective, and action items relevant, given any changes in our respective department and/or section?
- Are our goals, objectives, and action items relevant given any changes to State or Federal regulations and/or policies?
- Is there any new data that would affect the risk assessment or any other pertinent portion of the State Plan?
- Have there been any declared events that affected or caused our respective department or section to delete or revise current actions and priorities?

Additionally, the evaluation and inclusion of local hazard mitigation plans' risk assessments as they are being updated will be added to the State Plan as well. Another part of the overall evaluation piece is using the local hazard mitigation plans to assess the capabilities of the locals. This information will be included in the State Mitigation Plan as the local plans are updated. Both activities are consistent with Sections 3 and 5.1.

### 7.2.3 TRACKING PROGRESS ON STATE-LEVEL MITIGATION ACTIVITIES

Tracking progress on state-level mitigation activities shall be accomplished through, quarterly reporting when funded through NJOEM and agency-specific survey forms maintained by the NJOEM Mitigation Unit. The survey forms used in the preparation of this plan update may be used for this purpose, as updated and amended by NJOEM and other plan participants during the first six months of plan implementation. These shall be forwarded annually several months before a bi-annual meeting to those who participated in the planning process for their input and update. The summary of agency progress shall be reviewed at the bi-annual plan maintenance meeting and documented for the plan update. At this meeting, coordinated by the NJOEM Mitigation Unit, the planning participants shall address problems and issues to help support mitigation strategy implementation. This will serve to identify modifications and additions to the State-level mitigation strategy.

### 7.2.4 TECHNICAL PLAN UPDATES

The ongoing technical plan update process shall be maintained, supported and enhanced by dedicated resources through the NJOEM Mitigation Unit. A database (spreadsheet or otherwise) system shall be developed, leveraging off existing tools as available, that will support the aggregation and archiving of municipal, county, and local events and loss data as it becomes available in the post-disaster recovery period. The format of this data collection shall be designed and made available to support local mitigation planning and grant application (benefit-cost) activities and shall serve as a basis for the regular update of the State risk assessment. The development of this system is a new mitigation action for NJOEM (see Section 6, Mitigation Strategy, new NJOEM mitigation actions).

Further, the State shall use the technical plan update process to incorporate the results, findings, and technical information developed in ongoing and future hazard research efforts.

#### 7.2.5 DOCUMENTING AND SUPPORTING LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING

Local (multi- and single-jurisdiction) mitigation plan development funded by one of the programs administered through the NJOEM is tracked from initiation. A jurisdiction that receives a planning grant award is required to submit regular progress reports on the status of their planning process in accordance with the schedule contained in their grant agreement (typically quarterly). NJOEM will maintain a close association with the jurisdiction. A final plan review will be made by NJOEM to ensure all requirements of the program have been met before forwarding the updated county and local plan to FEMA Region II for final review and approval.

During the period of performance of the 2014 Plan, the NJOEM Mitigation Unit supplemented its ranks with a dedicated Mitigation Unit Lead and a contracted staff mitigation planner to address local plan reviews and to manage local plan coordination. The new Plan update process includes improved risk assessment data and information for directly supporting the local planning processes. Furthermore, the NJOEM Mitigation Unit will integrate county and local risk assessments into the State's risk assessment as the county and local plans are submitted for NJOEM and FEMA review.

#### 7.2.6 DOCUMENTING PROGRESS ON MITIGATION PROJECTS

Mitigation projects funded by one of the programs administered through the NJOEM are tracked from initiation. Jurisdictions that receive project grant awards are required to submit a quarterly progress report on the status of their project(s). Site visits are conducted to inspect the work and to maintain a close association with the jurisdiction. A final site visit is made after project completion to ensure all requirements of the program have been met.

NJOEM will be using the *NJEM.grants* system to track local mitigation property protection and structural projects. This system will be maintained by the NJOEM Mitigation Unit and shall continue to track project progress through the grant application, project execution and close-out phases.

#### 7.2.7 DOCUMENTING EFFECTIVENESS OF MITIGATION PROJECTS

The State of New Jersey and FEMA have invested millions in State hazard mitigation programs. While the fiscal benefits of mitigation are widely acknowledged, there have not been any New Jersey specific studies that prove its long-term benefits. Nationally, more than a decade after releasing its original report on mitigation, the National Institute of Building Sciences issued Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves: 2017 Interim Report. The 2017 Interim Report highlights the benefits of two mitigation strategies.

The Institute's project team looked at the results of 23 years of federally funded mitigation grants provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and found mitigation funding can save the nation \$6 in future disaster costs, for every \$1 spent on hazard mitigation.

To better document mitigation project effectiveness, NJOEM will be performing a New Jersey specific loss avoidance study by using the *NJEM.grants* system to develop/acquire a local mitigation property protection and structural project tracking system to track project progress through the grant application, project execution and close-out phases.

#### 7.2.8 UPDATING STATE MITIGATION CAPABILITIES

Since Superstorm Sandy, there have been significant changes in how mitigation is being managed. These programmatic changes and the corresponding agency capabilities (regulatory, staffing, funding), are continually shifting. The NJOEM Mitigation Unit will update agency capabilities as they become established and adopted.

### 7.2.9 STATE HAZARD MITIGATION TEAM-NEXT STEPS

The schedule for Plan monitoring has been outlined in this section. Those who participated in the SHMP planning process will meet approximately every 6 months.

The web version of the Plan shall be updated yearly around November. A summary shall be included in an update appendix. This summary shall detail any changes made during the monitoring and evaluation periods. If changes were to occur as a result of the bi-annual plan maintenance meetings, those will be outlined in the web version as well.

## 7.3 UPDATING THE PLAN

To be effective, the State HMP must be kept current. For example, a supplemental section may be needed in the HMP to address new hazard mitigation needs or issues, re-prioritize existing recommendations, or expand the HMP to address additional hazards. In the long term, changes in policy and administration may affect the usefulness of the HMP and the relevance of issues addressed by it.

At the beginning of the second year of plan implementation, the NJOEM Mitigation Unit and State Hazard Mitigation Officer shall convene the plan participants to determine if the NJOEM Mitigation Unit resources currently dedicated and available for the ongoing plan review and maintenance are sufficient to support the full plan update process. If additional resources are needed (such as grant funding or a request for proposals for contract support), the NJOEM Mitigation Unit and State Hazard Mitigation Officer will follow internal protocol to secure these resources.

As part of the regulatory plan update process, plan participants will review the following factors potentially affecting the HMP:

- New Presidential disaster or emergency declarations and other applicable events
- Progress in completing tasks listed in the mitigation strategies section of the Plan
- Changes in development
- Progress in statewide mitigation activities, including meeting state mitigation goals
  - Project status
  - Projects funded
  - Jurisdictional mitigation plan status
- Change in priorities
- Changes in available funding sources and programs
- Advances in GIS data acquisition and other technologies
- Increases in available information
- Changes in State or federal laws, including amendments to FEMA rules and guidance
- The State 5-Year Emergency Management Program Strategic Plan (5YRSEMPSP)
- Other factors affecting the Plan, including:
  - Do goals and objectives still address current and expected conditions?
  - Have the nature and magnitude of hazard risks and/or development changed?
  - Are the current resources appropriate for implementing the Plan?
- On an annual basis, evaluate and roll-up local HMP capability assessments and risk assessments as local HMPs are updated.

The regulatory plan update process shall incorporate the findings of, and information developed through: annual plan review and reporting process, technical plan update process, and post-disaster, after-action reports.

As the State continues efforts to achieve enhanced plan status, programmatic changes in the way the State manages, monitors and reports mitigation progress and administration may be required based on FEMA’s review of the State’s mitigation program against enhanced plan requirements.

Following approval by FEMA, an updated New Jersey HMP will be adopted by the Governor every three years.