

## Appendix B. General Mitigation Strategies

For the purpose of this mitigation plan, mitigation strategies will be divided into one of five categories according to how they accomplish mitigation. The six categories include:

- Emergency Services
- Natural Resource Protection
- Prevention
- Property Protection
- Public Information and Involvement
- Structural Protection

**Emergency Service:** Emergency Services protect people during and after a disaster.

Examples include:

- Mutual aid agreements
- Protection of critical facilities
- Health and safety maintenances
- Inventory of assets
- EMS/Police/Fire response and skill

**Natural Resource Protection:** Natural Resource Protection includes strategies that preserve or restore natural areas or the natural function that an area provides.

Examples include:

- Wetlands protection
- Pollution reduction
- Erosion and sediment control
- Fuels reduction
- Watershed maintenance

**Prevention:** Prevention measures are intended to prevent the problem from occurring and/or keep it from getting worse.

Examples include:

- Planning, zoning, and ordinance regulations
  - Open space preservation
  - Floodplain and wetland development regulations
  - Storm water management
  - Minimum set back requirements
  - Evacuation plans

**Property Protection:** Property Protection measures are used to modify buildings within high-risk areas in an attempt to reduce damage. For the most part property protection measures do not affect a buildings appearance of use making them less expensive and particularly suitable for historical sites and landmarks.

Examples include:

- Utility relocation
- Burying or flood proofing
- Non-structural earthquake mitigation
- Backup protections
- Insurance and other financial loss minimization actions
- Technical evaluations and mapping

**Public Information and Involvement:** Public Information and Involvement activities are intended to advise property owners, potential property owners, and visitors about the particular hazards associated with a property and ways to protect people and property from these hazards.

Examples include:

- Education
  - NFIP
  - URWIN areas
  - Hazard Identification
- Maps with high hazard locations identified
- Informational mailings
- Workshops
- Real Estate disclosures for natural hazards
- Real Estate insurance

**Structural Protection/Projects:** are man made structures, which prevent damage from impacting property.

Examples include:

- Detention/Retention basins
- Larger culverts
- Elevated seismic design
- Floodwalls
- Debris basins
- Landslide stabilization and levees

## **I. Flood/ Riverine Mitigation**

### Generic Mitigation

The following are generic mitigation strategies appropriate for addressing the hazard of flooding. Many of these strategies are expanded upon in the text that follows.

- Avoidance, land-use planning and zoning ordinances
- Better flood routing through communities
- Annual warning of risk information on how to protect property and lives
- Flood insurance awareness, emphasis, and marketing
- Projects such as levees/dams
- Funding by a stormwater tax in cooperation with Federal and State programs
- Additional SNOTEL sites and enhanced instrumentation
- Protection of roads and bridges
- Greater reservoir capacities
- Curtail development in flood-prone areas
- General infrastructure protection
- Develop river corridor parkways
- Protection of wastewater treatment facilities from excessive inflows
- Protection of drinking water supply systems
- Gather hazard and risk data/information
- Development of improved mitigation techniques
- Education of local officials, developers, and citizens
- Protecting natural floodplain resources
- Good watershed management

## **A. Emergency Services**

**Flood Warning:** Warning systems designed to alert residence of rising floodwaters. Warning systems can disseminate the information through a number of means such as sirens, radio, television, mobile public address system, reverse 911, or door-to-door contact. Multiple or redundant warning systems are most effective, giving people more than one opportunity to be warned.

**Flood Response:** Flood response refers to the actions that are taken to prevent or reduce damage once a flood starts, and example of flood response is the turning of State Street into a river during the 1983 flood event. Many of the below actions should be part of an emergency response plan EOP developed in coordination with the agencies that share responsibilities. The EOP once developed should be exercised and continually evaluated so when the plan is needed key players know what to do.

Flood response actions might include:

- Activation of the emergency operations center
- Sandbagging designated areas
- Closing streets and bridges
- Shutting off power to threatened areas
- Releasing children from school
- Ordering an evacuation
- Opening evacuation shelters

**Critical Facilities Protection:** Protecting critical facilities is vital, yet this protection draws workers and resources away from protecting other parts of a town or county. For this reason listed below are vital facilities and facilities with the potential of causing a secondary disaster if destroyed. It is important to keep these locations in mind with considering potential mitigation projects.

Facilities or locations vital to flood response efforts:

- Emergency operations centers
- Police and fire stations
- Hospitals
- Highway garages
- Selected roads and bridges
- Evacuation routes

Facilities and locations, which if flooded would create a secondary disaster, applicable to all disasters:

- Facilities housing hazardous materials
- Wastewater treatment plants
- Schools
- Nursing homes

**Health and Safety Maintenance:** Response to floods or other natural disasters should include measures to prevent damage to health and safety such as:

- Patrolling evacuated areas to prevent looting
- Providing safe drinking water
- Vaccination residents for tetanus
- Clearing streets
- Cleaning up debris

Many of these recommendations should be integrated into a public information program to educate residence on the benefits of health and safety precautions.

## **B. Natural Resource Protection**

Wetlands Protection: Wetlands are capable of storing large amounts of floodwater, slowing and reducing downstream flows, and filtering the water. Any development that is proposed in a wetland is regulated by either federal and/or state agencies. Mitigation techniques are often employed, which might consist of creating a wetland on another site to replace what would be lost through the development. This is not an ideal practice, however, since it takes many years for a new wetland to achieve the same level of quality as an existing one.

Erosion and Sedimentation Control: Controlling erosion and sediment runoff during construction and on farmland is important, since eroding soil will typically end up in downstream waterways. Sediment tends to settle where the water flow is slower, it will gradually fill in channels and lakes, reducing their ability to carry or store floodwaters. Sediment and erosion control have two principal components: minimize erosion with vegetation and capture sediment before it leaves the site. Slowing runoff increases infiltration into the soil, thereby controlling the loss of topsoil from erosion and the resulting sedimentation. Runoff and erosion control can be done through vegetation, terraces, contour strip farming, no-till farm practices, and impoundments.

## **C. Prevention Measures**

Planning and Zoning: Land use plans are put in place to guide future development, recommending where and where not development should take place. Sensitive and vulnerable lands can be designated for uses that would not be incompatible with occasional flood events. The zoning ordinances can regulate development in these sensitive areas by limiting or preventing some or all development.

Open Space Preservation: Preserving open space is the best way to prevent flooding and flood damage. Open space preservation should not be limited to the flood plain. Other areas within the watershed may contribute to controlling the runoff that exacerbates flooding.

Floodplain Development Regulations: Floodplain development regulations typically do not prohibit development in the special flood hazard areas, but they do impose construction standards on what is built there. The intent is to protect roads and structures from flood damage and to prevent the development from aggravating the flood potential. Floodplain development regulations are generally incorporated into subdivision regulations, building codes, and/or floodplain ordinances.

Subdivision regulations: These regulations govern how land will be divided into separate lots or sites. In some Utah cities these are known as Site Based Ordinances.

Building Codes: Standards can be incorporated into building codes that address flood proofing for all new and improved or repaired buildings.

Floodplain Ordinances: Communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program NFIP are required to adopt the minimum floodplain management regulations, as developed by FEMA. The regulations set minimum standards for subdivision regulations and building codes. Communities may adopt more stringent standards than those set forth by FEMA.

Storm Water Management: Development outside of a floodplain can contribute significantly to flooding by covering impervious surfaces, which increase storm water runoff. Storm water management is usually addressed in subdivision regulations. Developers are typically required to build retention or detention basins to minimize any increase in runoff caused by new or expanded impervious surfaces, or new drainage systems. Most larger cities and counties within Utah enforce an ordinance prohibiting storm water from leaving a site at a rate higher than it did before the development.

Drainage System Maintenance: Ongoing maintenance of channel and detention basins is necessary if these facilities are to function effectively and efficiently over time. A maintenance program should include

regulations that prevent dumping in or altering watercourses or storage basins; regarding and filling should also be regulated.

#### **D. Property Protection**

Relocation: Moving structures out of the floodplain are the surest and safest way to protect against damage. Relocation is expensive, so this approach will probably not be used except in extreme circumstances.

Acquisition: Acquisition by governmental entity of land in a floodplain serves two main purposes: it ensures that the problem structure is addressed; and it has the potential to convert problem areas into community assets

Building Elevation: Elevation a building above the base flood elevation is the best on-site protection strategy. The building could be raised to allow water to run underneath it, or fill could be brought in to elevate the site on which the building sits.

Insurance: Above and beyond standard homeowners insurance, there is other coverage a homeowner can purchase to protect against flood hazard. Although this doesn't mitigate the problem it does allow the homeowner to shift the financial loss/risk onto another party. Two of the most common insurances offered against flood loss are:

- **National Flood Insurance**: when a community participates in the NFIP, any local insurance agent is able to sell separate flood insurance policies under rules and rates set by FEMA. Rates do not change after claims are paid because they are set on a national basis.
- **Basement Backup Insurance**: National Flood Insurance offers an additional deductible for seepage and sewer backup, provided there is a general condition of flooding in the area that was the proximate cause of the basement getting wet.

#### **E. Public Information and Involvement**

Outreach Programs: Outreach projects are proactive; giving the public information even if they have not asked for it. Outreach projects should be designed to encourage people to seek out more information and take steps to protect themselves and their properties.

Examples include:

- Mass mailing or newsletters to all residents
- Notices directed to high risk area residents
- Displays in public buildings
- Newspaper articles and special sections
- Radio and TV news releases and interviews
- A detailed property owners handbook tailored for local conditions
- Presentations at meetings and neighborhood groups

Real Estate Disclosure: Disclosure of information regarding flood or hazard prone properties is important if potential buyers are to be in a position to mitigate damage. Federally regulated lending institutions are required to advise applicant that a property is in the floodplain. However, this requirement needs to be met only five days prior to closing, and by that time, the applicant is typically committed to the purchase. This only includes flood prone areas, at the exclusion of other hazards.

Map Information: Flood plain maps developed by FEMA outline the boundaries or the flood hazard areas. These maps can be used by anyone interested in a particular property to determine if it is in the floodplain. These maps are available from FEMA, the Utah Division of Emergency Services, and at many city and

county planning offices. In addition the Utah Geologic Survey creates and maintains maps illustrating geologic hazards. These maps are available for sale at the Division of Natural Resources books store.

## **F. Structural Projects**

The intent behind structural projects for flood mitigation is to prevent floodwaters from reaching properties. The shortcomings of almost all structural mitigation projects are that:

- They can be very expensive
- They disturb the land, disrupt natural water flows, and destroy natural habitats.
- They are built to an anticipated flood event, and may be exceeded by a greater-than-expected flood.
- They can create a false sense of security

Reservoirs: Reservoirs control flooding by holding water behind dams or in storage basins. After a flood peaks, water is released or pumped out slowly at a rate the river downstream can handle. Reservoirs are expensive to build, occupy large tracts of land, require maintenance, and if they fail often result in greater downstream flooding than would occur during a natural flooding event.

Levees/Floodwalls: One of the best-known structural flood control measures levees and floodwalls are steel or concrete structures placed between the watercourse and the land.

Diversions: A diversion is simply a new channel that sends floodwaters to a different location, thereby reducing flooding along an existing watercourse. Diversion structures can consist of surface channels, overflow weirs, or tunnels. During normal flows, the water stays in the old channel but during flooding events floodwaters spill over into the diversion channel.

Channel Modifications: Channel modifications include making a channel wider, deeper, smoother, or straighter. Common channel modifications include:

- Dredging: Dredging is often cost-prohibitive because the dredged material must be disposed of somewhere else, and dredged streams usually fill back in with sediment.
- Drainage Modifications: These include man-made ditches and storm sewers that help drain areas where the surface drainage system is inadequate or where underground drainage ways may be safer or more attractive.

Storm Water Management: Mitigation techniques for managing storm water include installing storm water systems, enlarging pipes, and street improvements in existing storm water systems.

## **II. Earthquakes**

### Generic Mitigation

Below is a list of generic earthquake mitigation strategies pertaining to secondary threats often associated with earthquakes.

### Generic Ground Shaking Mitigation

- Understand peak horizontal acceleration and recurrence interval
- Design appropriately
- Zoning ordinances and building codes

### Generic Liquefaction Mitigation

- Move soil out
- Densify soils in place
- Remove ground water
- Structural design

### Generic Surface Fault Rupture Mitigation

- Avoidance
- Zoning ordinances
- Earthquake resistant building design codes
- Retrofitting of critical facilities and supporting equipment
- Retrofitting under-designed buildings
- Annual warning of risk/info on how to protect property and lives
- Projects to seismically upgrade critical public facilities/utilities and shelters
- Gather hazard and risk data/information
- Protection of roads and bridges
- General infrastructure protection
- Development of improved mitigation techniques
- Education of local officials, developers, and citizens

#### **A. Emergency Services**

Emergency Operations Planning: Maintain an earthquake response plan to account for secondary problems, such as fire and hazardous material spills.

Critical Facilities Protection: Protecting critical facilities are vital as the facilities play an important role in coordinating response and recovery following an earthquake. For this reason listed below are vital facilities and facilities with the potential of causing a secondary disaster if destroyed.

- Facilities or locations vital to earthquake response efforts
- Emergency operations centers
- Police and fire stations
- Hospitals
- Highway garages
- Selected roads and bridges
- Evacuation routes

Facilities and locations, which if destroyed would create a secondary disaster:

- Facilities housing hazardous materials
- Wastewater treatment plants
- Schools
- Nursing homes

#### **B. Natural Resource Protection**

- Design of pipelines
- Land-use planning
- Community master plans and zoning ordinances

#### **C. Prevention**

While earthquakes are not preventable proper planning, zoning, and building codes can prevent much of the damage common with earthquakes. Planning, zoning, and building codes should address minimum setbacks, critical facility locations, steep slopes, areas with liquefiable soils, and insure high factor of safety ratings for critical facilities. Community master plans and zoning ordinances define hazard areas and require developers to show that any existing hazards have been investigated and new construction will not be exposed to unacceptable risk.

## **D. Property Protection**

Nonstructural Mitigation: Nonstructural mitigation consist of mitigation measures that don't affect the overall look or purpose of the building yet prevent damage to no structural aspects and reduce the loss of life. In addition buildings with non-structural mitigation are frequently usable after an event.

- Tie downs
- Flexible utility connections
- Mylar film on windows to prevent the glass from shattering
- Added bracing.

Retrofitting: Retrofitting consists of upgrading the seismic safety of a building through structural and nonstructural mitigation techniques.

Insurance: Above and beyond standard homeowners insurance, there is other coverage a homeowner can purchase to protect against earthquake hazard, something not covered under most homeowners insurance plans. Although this doesn't mitigate the problem it does allow the homeowner to shift the financial loss/risk onto another party.

## **E. Public Information and Involvement**

Public information and involvement for earthquakes is similar to the mitigation strategies outlined in the flood and riverine section mentioned above.

Real Estate Disclosure: Disclosure of information regarding earthquakes and hazard prone properties are important if potential buyers are in a position to mitigate damage. Unlike floodplains there are no federal laws, which require disclosure of earthquakes.

## **F. Structural Protection/Projects**

Mitigation measures can be any type of activity that reduces the likelihood or modifies what is at risk from the hazard. Earthquake mitigation can be accomplished through building codes that ensure safe and adequate construction including earthquake resistant designs and construction. Older building should be retrofitted to comply with the codes.

# **III. Dam Failure**

## Generic Mitigation

- Proper floodplain maps, including dam breach flood potential
- Public knowledge of floodplains for the general public and emergency managers
- Updated Emergency Operation Plans (EOP) integration with GIS Systems
- Maintain proper floodplain/ wetland geometry and vegetation for flood routing
- Floodplain usage compatible with floodplain needs
- More debris dams; they help to maintain flooding, debris, and mud
- Flood control pool in existing dams
- Protection of roads and bridges
- General infrastructure protection
- More authority to order releases and better forecasting would help in snowmelt floods and runoff
- Gather hazard and risk data/information
- Development of improved mitigation techniques
- Education of local officials, developers, and citizens

## **A. Emergency Service**

- Good emergency management and emergency action plans
- Dam conditioning monitoring
- Warning system and monitoring

- Understand standard operating procedures

**B. Natural Resource Protection**

- Zoning of downstream usage
- Risk assessment
- Good watershed management

**C. Prevention**

- Dam failure inundation maps
- Planning/zoning/open space preservation to keep downstream areas clear
- Building codes with flood elevations based on dam failure
- Dam safety inspections
- Draining the reservoir when conditions appear unsafe

**D. Property Protection**

- Acquisition of building in the path of a dam breach flood
- Flood insurance

**E. Public Information and Involvement**

- Communication and education of dam owners
- Communication and education with the public
- Evacuation procedures

**F. Structural Protection/Projects**

- Dam improvements
- Spillway enlargements
- Remove unsafe dams
- Design and construction review
- Direction for consulting engineers
- Instrumentations and monitoring of dams
- Remedial repair procedures
- Incremental damage assessment

**IV. Wildfire**

Generic Wildfire Mitigation

- Avoidance
- Define, create, and maintain a defensible space
- Plant drought and fire resistant vegetation
- Ordinances
- Modification of fuel loading in high hazard interface areas
- Wildland fire training and experience for fire department personnel
- Public education effort for people living in the interface
- Additional suppression equipment needs of fire departments and the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands
- Fuel modification in moderate hazard interface areas
- Protection of roads and bridges
- Annual warning of risk/info on how to protect life and property
- Gather hazard and risk data/information
- General infrastructure protection
- Development of improved mitigation techniques

- Education of local officials, developers, and citizens
- Protection of drinking water supply systems

#### **A. Emergency Service**

- Fire fighting

#### **B. Natural Resource Protection**

- Prohibit development in high-risk areas.
- Vegetation control

#### **C. Prevention**

- Zoning ordinances to reflect fire risk zones
- Planning and zoning to restrict development in areas near fire protection and water resources
- Requiring new subdivisions to space buildings, provide firebreaks, on-site water storage, wide roads and multiple accesses.
- Building code standards for roof materials, spark arrestors.
- Maintenance programs to clear dead and dry bush trees
- Regulations on open fires.

#### **D. Property Protection**

- Retrofitting of roofs and adding spark arrestors
- Landscaping to keep bushes and trees away from structures
- Insurance rates based on distance from fire protection
- Planning how to deal with URWIN fires before they occur
- Good visibility

#### **E. Public Information and Involvement**

- Educating homeowners and future homeowners about risk
- Planning how to deal with URWIN fires before they occur
- Emergency warning system, action plan
- Communication tree between fire departments and homeowners
- Community actions
- Adequate water supply and systems

#### **F. Structural Protection/Projects**

- Building and property assessments
- Use appropriate construction materials
- Adequate access to buildings

### **V. Landslides**

#### Generic Mitigation

- Avoidance
- Recognize landslide area
- Zoning ordinances
- Remove landslide materials
- Drain subsurface materials
- Install surface drains
- Remove materials for the head of the landslide
- Re-grade
- Build buttress or retaining wall at the toe of the slope
- Install soil nails and rock anchors

- Maintain natural vegetation
  - Improved geologic mapping to identify potential landslide problems
  - Zoning ordinances prohibiting construction in or adjacent to areas with high landslide potential
  - Soil moisture sensors at SNOTEL sites
  - Gather hazard and risk data/information
  - Protection of roads and bridges
  - Development of improved mitigation techniques
  - Education of local officials, developers, and citizens
  - Protection of drinking water supply systems
  - Generic Rock Fall Mitigation
  - Avoidance
  - Stabilize rocks
  - Prerelease
  - Build berms or benches
  - Build structures to stop rocks
- A. Emergency Services**
- Warning systems
  - Hazard identification and areas at risk
- B. Natural Resource Protection**
- C. Prevention**
- Land use planning ordinances
  - Identify old landslides
    - Old landslides usually show irregular or subdued hill-like topography
    - Younger or more recently occurring landslides show signs of hummocky terrain, scarps, inclined trees, ground cracks, sharp vegetation differences, and numerous depressions or ponds.
  - Identify unstable slopes
  - Identify areas that could be affected by slope failures
    - Potential rock falls can be found in steep cliff areas or where bedrock crops out onto mountain slopes.
- D. Property Protection**
- Good land-use practices
  - Avoid slope-irrigation, undercutting, and over-steepening
- E. Public Information and Involvement**
- Communications systems
  - Proper property assessments of slope conditions
- F. Structural Protection/Projects**
- Proper assessments of slope conditions
  - Grading or removing the material from the top and placing it at the toe of a slope can lessen the slope gradient
  - Subsurface drainage control used to dewater and stabilize slopes
  - Retaining structures
    - Concrete block walls or large masses of compacted earth
  - Constructing debris basins
  - Building deflection walls upslope of structures
  - Avoiding ground level windows that face upslope
  - Catchment fences
  - Tieback walls

- Rock bolts
- Cut benches and berms

## **VI. Severe Weather**

### **A. Emergency Services**

- Early warning systems
- Communication systems

### **B. Natural Resource Protection**

### **C. Prevention**

- C. Building code standards for light frame construction
- D. Ordinances that include weather resistant designs

### **D. Property Protection**

### **E. Public Information and Involvement**

- Listen to a weather radio
- Watch and listen to weather forecasts and warnings
- Develop a plan so you know where to take your family for shelter
- Understand risk and identify ways of reducing the impacts

### **F. Structural Protection/Projects**

- Strengthen un-reinforced masonry

## **VII. Problem Soils**

### Generic Problem Soil Mitigation

- Avoidance
- Presoak and Compact
- Remove problem soil
- Landscape so that runoff moves away from foundations

### **A. Emergency Service**

### **E. Natural Resource Protection**

- Soil awareness

### **F. Prevention**

- Landscaping with vegetation that does not concentrate or draw large amounts of water from the soil near foundations
- Insulating floors or walls near heating or cooling units to prevent evaporation that could cause local changes in soil moisture
- Avoid areas underlain by limestone and dolomite to prevent ground water contamination and foundation problems in karst terrain
- Use soil tests to find gypsum; do not plant high level of water plants near the house
- Reduce piping damage by limiting construction that disturbs natural drainage
- Peat deposits should be removed or avoided at construction sites
- Avoid abandoned mine areas
- Sands, and calcareous loamy soils are highly erodible

**G. Property Protection**

- Special foundation designs
- Installing gutters and downspouts that direct water at least 10 feet away from foundation slabs
- Landscape with vegetation that does not concentrate or draw large amounts of water from the soil near foundations

**H. Public Information and Involvement**

**I. Structural Protection**

- Special foundation designs
- Installing gutters and downspouts
- Proper drainage along roads and around structures

**VIII. Drought**

**A. Emergency Service**

- Provide low interest loans or private assistance for farmers and ranchers

**B. Natural Resource Protection**

- Manage wildlife during drought periods
- Incorporate wildfire hazard mitigation planning
- Integrate financial assistance for transportation or water hauling for livestock

**C. Prevention**

- Implement cloud seeding during drought years to enhance precipitation
- Protect culinary water systems and/or provide culinary water to people or systems
- Incorporate a drought management plan
- Introduce more water resources such as wells, ponds, reservoirs, and reservoir capacity

**D. Property Protection**

**E. Public Information and Involvement**

- Create or join water conservation programs that are designed to reduce water consumption
- Incorporate a drought management plan
- Drought resource coordination

**F. Structural Protection/Projects**