

Step 1

Develop a Community Action Team



The first step in the RCCP process is for each community to create a “Community Action Team” (CAT). This step is critical to ensure success in the program. The CAT for each community will consist of key stakeholders to provide targeted input and champion the effort. As you begin working through this first step of the program, you may find it helpful to also refer to Step 1 in the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s (NIST) [Community Resilience Planning Guide Playbook](#).¹ Here you can find guidance for building a collaborative planning team, establishing leadership, and ensuring community buy-in.



Figure 4 | Town of Pine Knoll Shores CAT Meeting, 2022

Why is a CAT needed for each community?

Building a multi-disciplinary CAT with expertise in planning and community development, natural resource management, climate resilience, hazard mitigation, utility management, engineering, the community’s economy, engaging with vulnerable and underrepresented populations, and nature-based solutions will ensure a more holistic process. Building relationships, trust, and shared understanding among key stakeholders and the community is a foundation for implementing resilience actions.

How will the CAT members be chosen?

The contractor and community will select the CAT members through a review of key stakeholders and priorities in the jurisdiction. It is helpful to consider the members of your community that already have existing knowledge of coastal resiliency and consider what gaps may exist

¹ Additional resources related to the NIST playbook, including companion volumes I and II, can be found [here](#).

within that group. You should then consider how to fill those gaps so that when making decisions, the entire community is represented to the best of your ability. Some critical questions to ask when selecting members include:

- Who holds community trust or is seen as a leader?
- Who is especially impacted by relevant coastal hazards?
- Who is often underrepresented in decision-making?
- What industries have the greatest ability to help build resilience?
- Who has time and interest to participate?
- Who has knowledge of natural resource management and/or climate change?
- Who has been (or currently is) responsible for community planning and/or policy?

Hopefully, these questions will help to get you started in identifying representative stakeholders to invite to join the CAT. However, it is important to conduct a thorough review of all potential stakeholder groups to ensure that you are not inadvertently missing someone who could be a critical asset to the team. To do this, we suggest using NOAA's [Participant Checklist for Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Discussions](#). This document provides an overview of the stakeholder groups commonly found within a community and provides a template to help you consider what representatives best fits each category.

Step 1 Minimum Requirements

- Develop an inclusive and diverse Community Action Team with at least five members representative of the community and its diverse perspectives.
- Work with the contractor to identify additional community members if there are gaps in the expertise on the CAT (for example, the team lacks someone with natural resource management expertise).
- Appoint one of the CAT members as a "CAT Champion" to lead the CAT team; someone who has the knowledge, expertise, and passion to act as a point person with DCM, the contracting team, and the rest of the CAT team.
- Summarize the process for developing your Community Action Team, including the members chosen and what expertise they bring to the team.

