

December 2024
Amended FEMA Review Draft

2024 NEVADA COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Volume I—Basic Plan





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PREPARED FOR

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Executive Summary

Hazard mitigation is the use of long-term and short-term policies, programs, projects, and other activities to minimize the loss of life, injury, and property damage that can result from a disaster. Communities, residents, and businesses across the United States have been faced with continually increasing costs associated with natural and human-caused hazards. Hazard mitigation is the first step in reducing risk and is the most effective way to reduce costs associated with hazards.

Nevada County has developed a hazard mitigation plan (HMP) to reduce risks from disasters to the people, property, economy, and environment within the County. Developed by the County and seven participating local jurisdictions (the Planning Partners), this HMP updates the 2017 Nevada County HMP. It includes countywide assessment of hazards, risk, and capabilities. The following are the jurisdictions in Nevada County that have participated as Planning Partners:

- Nevada County
- Town of Truckee
- City of Grass Valley
- City of Nevada City
- Nevada Irrigation District
- Nevada County Consolidated Fire District
- Truckee Donner Public Utility District
- Washington County Water District

The plan complies with federal and state hazard mitigation planning requirements to establish the Planning Partners' eligibility for funding under Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant programs.

The Planning Process

Overall Approach

To support the planning process for this HMP, the Planning Partners accomplished the following:

- Developed a Steering Committee consisting of key stakeholders and a countywide Planning Partnership made up of the Steering Committee members, the Planning Partners, and other regional stakeholders
- Reviewed the 2017 Nevada County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
- Involved a wide range of stakeholders and the public in the plan update process
- Identified hazards of concern to the County to be included in the update
- Profiled the hazards of concern
- Estimated the inventory at risk and potential losses associated with these hazards
- Reviewed and updated the mitigation goals and objectives

- Reviewed mitigation actions outlined in the 2017 HMP to determine progress
- Developed new mitigation actions to reduce the vulnerability of assets from hazards of concern
- Developed HMP maintenance procedures to be executed after obtaining approval of the plan from Cal OES and FEMA

Multiple Agency Support for Hazard Mitigation

Primary responsibility for hazard mitigation lies with local governments. Partners at the regional, state, and federal levels are available to assist local communities with their mitigation strategies. FEMA provides grants, tools, guidance, and training to support mitigation planning. In California, Cal OES is the lead agency providing hazard mitigation planning assistance to local jurisdictions.

The participating jurisdictions provided significant input into the preparation of this HMP, in particular the preparation of jurisdiction-specific annexes included in Volume II. They fully coordinated with and solicited participation from county and local governments, relevant organizations and groups, state and federal agencies, and the general public. This coordination ensured that stakeholders had established communication channels and relationships to support mitigation planning and mitigation actions included in the plan.

Under the project management of the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services, the Nevada County Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee provided oversight for the preparation of this plan. The Steering Committee included representatives from the following:

- Nevada County Office of Emergency Services
- Town of Truckee Office of Emergency Services
- FREED Center for Independent Living
- CAL FIRE
- Nevada Irrigation District
- Bear Yuba Land Trust
- Nevada County Consolidated Fire District
- Truckee Fire Protection District
- Washington County Water District Fire Department
- Yuba Watershed Institute
- South Yuba River Citizens League
- Coalition of Firewise Communities
- Nevada City, City Manager

Risk Assessment for Local Hazards of Concern

The Planning Partners evaluated each jurisdiction’s vulnerability to each of 12 identified hazards of concern, based on past events, past and predicted future losses, and the expected probability of future occurrence. From these evaluations, hazards were ranked as high, medium, or low risk to each jurisdiction. The hazard rankings were used to focus and prioritize individual jurisdictional mitigation strategies. Summary overall hazard rankings for all of Nevada County are as follows:

- Avalanche—Low
- Dam Failure—Low
- Drought—Medium
- Earthquake—Low
- Extreme Cold—Low
- Extreme Heat—Medium
- Flood—Low
- Hazardous Materials Release—Low
- Landslide—Low
- Volcano—Low
- Wildfire—High
- Winter Storms—High

Capability Assessment and Plan Integration into Other Local Mechanisms

Effective mitigation is achieved when hazard awareness and risk management become integral parts of public activities and decision-making. Nevada County has many plans and programs that support hazard risk management. This HMP integrates, complements, and references those plans and programs to the extent practical in order for it to be a comprehensive resource for hazard mitigation.

The HMP includes a capability assessment to review relevant local mechanisms for each participating jurisdiction. This assessment identifies where each jurisdiction is currently able to implement hazard mitigation measures and where each would benefit from improved capabilities for such measures. The capability assessment provides a summary of the existing plans, programs, and regulatory mechanisms at all levels of government (federal, state, county and local) that support hazard mitigation in the County. In the jurisdictional annexes, each participating jurisdiction identifies how it has integrated hazard risk management into its existing planning, regulatory and operational/administrative framework, and how it intends to continue to promote this integration.

Mitigation Strategy

Hazard Mitigation Plan Goals and Objectives

The HMP includes mitigation goals for reducing or avoiding long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards of concern. The planning process included a review and update of previous mitigation goals and objectives developed to guide the selection of mitigation actions. The goals and objectives were updated based on the updated risk assessment, discussions, research, and input from plan participants and stakeholders. The goal development process considered the goals expressed in the California State Hazard Mitigation Plan, as well as other relevant county and local planning documents.

Implementation of the 2017 Plan

The status of the mitigation projects identified in the 2017 HMP was reviewed for this HMP. Numerous projects and programs have been implemented that have reduced hazard vulnerability to assets in the planning area. Uncompleted projects have been reevaluated, modified as necessary, and incorporated into this plan. The Planning Partners' annexes describe these mitigation activities in more detail, and plan maintenance procedures have been developed to encourage thorough integration with local decisions and processes and regular review of implementation progress.

2024 Mitigation Strategy

Based on the risk assessment and the review of previously identified mitigation actions, each participating jurisdiction established a new set of recommendations for ongoing mitigation under the 2024 HMP and assigned a priority for each action. Figure ES-1 summarizes the number and priority of mitigation actions for each jurisdiction.

Figure ES-1. Summary of Mitigation Actions for the 2024 HMP

