

Section 2. The Planning Process

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Preparation of the Plan

This Hazard Mitigation Action Plan for the Guadalupe River Basin was prepared by the 26 jurisdictions covered by the Plan, with technical support and coordination provided by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority and its contractor, H2O Partners, Inc. of Austin, Texas. It was developed in accordance with the provisions of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390), the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program, Federal Regulations (44 CFR 206), and the planning standards adopted by the Texas Division of Emergency Management. The hazard mitigation planning process for the Basin is shown in Figure 2-1.

Open Public Process

An open public process was established to give all sectors of the basin communities an opportunity to become involved in the planning process. This helped to ensure that the Plan reflects a comprehensive, Basin-wide approach.

In September 2002 a series of three “Watermelon and Water Discussions” were held with local officials throughout the basin. During these discussions, an overview of the new hazard mitigation requirements was provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Basin officials were given an opportunity to discuss how

Figure 2-1. The Hazard Mitigation Planning Process





GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY

they wanted to approach hazard mitigation planning for the basin. Based on the discussions, GBRA officials applied for and, on October 24, 2002, received a FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant to support the planning process.

Three Kick-Off Workshops were held in April 2003 throughout the basin. The Kick-Off Workshops involved county commissioners, mayors, city council members, alderman, elected officials, city managers, floodplain managers, emergency management coordinators, fire marshals, police chiefs, sheriffs, county engineers, building officials and inspectors, and GBRA board members. Representatives of industry, neighboring jurisdictions, and outside organizations also attended, including the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Red Cross, the Texas Division of Emergency Management, Texas Water Development Board, Texas Department of Transportation, the Texas Forest Service, Councils of Government, and industry representatives. The purposes of the workshops were to discuss the proposed approach and the respective roles and responsibilities of GBRA, local jurisdictions, and H2O Partners, Inc. in the planning process. Papers outlining the proposed approach and detailing respective roles and responsibilities of all parties were distributed at meetings, along with a project timeline.

Identify Hazards

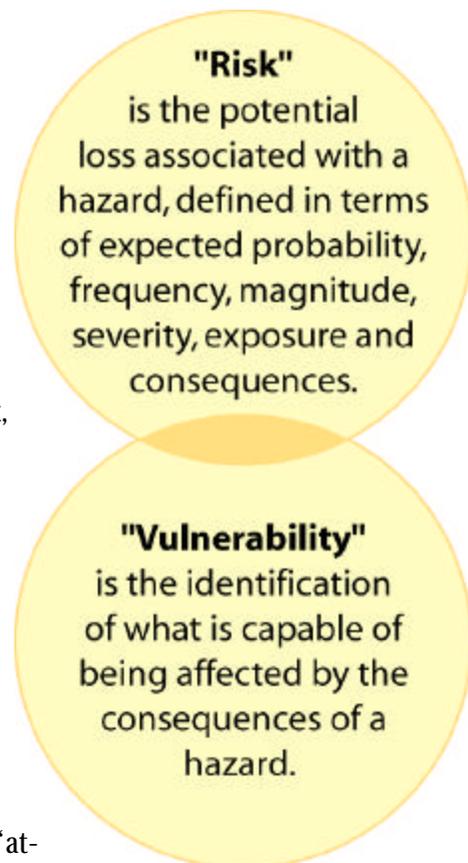
The Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment was completed on September 3, 2003. Thirteen hazards that have affected and may again affect the Basin were identified based on a review of historical records, national data sources, existing plans and reports, and discussions with local, regional, state, federal and national experts.

Hazard profiles were prepared to show their severity of impact, frequency of occurrence, seasonal patterns, warning time, cascading potential and applicable warning systems.

Assess Risks

The characteristics and potential consequences of each hazard were assessed to determine how much of the Basin could be affected and the potential effects on local assets.

The Basin was divided into three sectors for hazard-mitigation planning purposes: upper, middle, and lower Basin areas. An "at-





risk” inventory was taken of populations, buildings, infrastructure and lifelines, and commercial facilities in the Basin classified as “critical” or “special” or housing hazardous materials.

Potential dollar losses from each hazard were estimated, using the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Hazards U.S. (HAZUS) Multi-Hazards (MH) Model (HAZUS-MH) and other HAZUS-like modeling techniques. The techniques were applied to examine the impact of various hazards on the built environment, including on the general building stock (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial), critical facilities, lifelines, and infrastructure.

Two distinct assessment methodologies were used. The HAZUS-MH risk-assessment methodology modeled distinct hazard and inventory parameters (e.g., wind speed and building types), using the HAZUS software, to determine potential damages and losses in the built environment. The second, “HAZUS-driven” methodology, used a statistical approach to model risk by analyzing a hazard’s frequency of occurrence and estimated effects based on recorded damage data. Both methodologies use a common, systematic framework developed to supply a factual basis for determining which actions will mitigate risks. The assessments also were used to set priorities for mitigation based on potential dollar losses, loss of lives, and other factors. The hazards in Sections 5 through 16 of this Plan appear generally in priority order, based on risk to the basin as a whole, with the greatest hazards appearing first.





Develop Mitigation Strategies

A very inclusive and structured process was used to
Planning Meeting Invitation
develop and prioritize mitigation actions for this
Hazard Mitigation Plan. It included the following steps:

- A vision statement, mitigation goals and objectives were formulated to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from each hazard.
- A “menu” of approximately 300 optional mitigation actions was presented to the hazard mitigation team members during the Mitigation Workshops. They reviewed the optional mitigation actions and narrowed the list down to those that were most applicable to their area of responsibility and were most cost-effective in reducing risk, could be implemented easily, and would be likely to obtain community support.
- Potential Federal and State funding sources to help implement the proposed actions were inventoried. Information was collected on over 40 Federal and State funding sources, including the name of the program, the authority, funding source, purpose of the program, types of assistance and eligible projects, conditions on the funding, types of hazards covered, matching requirements, application deadlines and a point of contact. The information appears in the Funding Guide at Appendix B.
- Mitigation team members considered the benefits that would result from the mitigation actions versus the cost of those projects. For those actions in which the benefits could be quantified, an economic evaluation was one factor that helped team members select one mitigation action from among many competing ones. Cost-effectiveness of actions was considered as each team member developed their final list of mitigation actions. Economic considerations were part of the community’s analysis of the comprehensive range of specific mitigation actions and projects being considered.

MITIGATION WORKSHOP

GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY
HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Hazard mitigation workshops will be held in conjunction with the public meetings June 23rd to 25th, 2003. The workshops will be working sessions to formulate goals and objectives to mitigate the hazards identified in the risk assessment, and develop a preliminary list of mitigation actions and action plans for each jurisdiction.

Monday, June 23	Tuesday, June 24	Wednesday, June 25
Seguin Seguin County Coliseum	Gonzales Randle Rafter Building	Victoria University of Victoria Center Building

Schedule:
Mitigation Workshop 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Public Meeting 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Who should attend:
- Each jurisdiction participating in the Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Key stakeholders involved in hazard mitigation planning in their communities.

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Mitigation Workshop invitation.



- Then, hazard mitigation team members selected mitigation actions and prioritized them based on the following criteria: 1) benefits in terms of effect on overall risk to life and property, including the effects on both new and existing building and infrastructure: 2) ease of implementation; 3) political and community support; and 4) cost and funding availability. As a result of this exercise, an overall priority was assigned to each mitigation action. The overall priority is reflected in each action in Section 20.
- Team members developed action plans identifying proposed actions, estimated costs and benefits, the responsible organization(s), implementation schedule, related objective(s) to which the actions relate, priority, and potential funding sources.

Table 2-1. Public Meeting and Workshop Dates

Planning meetings with local officials	Kick-off Meetings with local officials	Mitigation Workshops (AM) and Public Meetings (PM)
9/16/02 Upper Basin, Smithson Valley (at Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative)	4/7/03 Lower Basin Kickoff (Victoria, University of Houston at Victoria)	6/23/03 Upper Basin (Seguin, at Seguin-Guadalupe County Coliseum)
9/19/02 Middle Basin, Gonzales (Randle Rather Building)	4/8/03 Middle Basin Kickoff (Gonzales, Randle Rather Building)	6/24/03 Middle Basin (Gonzales, Randle Rather Building)
9/30/02 Lower Basin, Victoria (Victoria College Student Center)	4/9/03 Upper Basin Kickoff (Seguin, at Seguin-Guadalupe County Coliseum)	6/25/03 Lower Basin (Victoria, University of Houston at Victoria)



Implement the Plan and Monitor Progress

A formal process was established at the workshops to ensure that the Plan is implemented and remains an active and relevant document. Plan maintenance is addressed in Section 21.

Public Involvement

Public input into the Plan was sought through a variety of mechanisms because public involvement is critical to the success of hazard-mitigation planning. Three basin public meetings were held to give the public an opportunity to learn about the hazards they face and ways to protect themselves and their families. The public also was given the opportunity at these meetings to provide comments, input into the planning process, and discuss other issues of concern to basin residents.

Announcements of the public meetings were distributed to the media and civic organizations and were displayed in public places. Announcements appeared in local newspapers, including the *Cuero Record*.

A Hazard Survey for the public was made available on the Authority's website and distributed at the public meetings. The survey sought information from citizens about hazards that have affected them and recommendations for action to reduce future risks. A total of 90 responses were received. The survey results provided an important source of information for use in formulating mitigation actions. Survey results appear in Appendix C.

The GBRA Website was also used to disseminate information to the public and other interested parties on the Hazard Mitigation Plan project. For example, posted materials included an article about the planning project, the public hazard survey, presentations made at public meetings, a summary of historical disasters in the Guadalupe River Basin, and information on grant opportunities.

Finally, the draft of this Plan was made available on the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority's website for public review and comment. Each participating jurisdiction also made available hard copies of the Plan for public inspection and review and formally solicited public review and comment prior to their Governing Bodies' adoption of the Plan. A copy of each resolution adopting the Plan is at Appendix F (**forthcoming upon adoption**).





Partners in Planning

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team was composed of local officials throughout the basin representing each participating City and County. The Planning Team was supplemented by officials from State and Federal agencies and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority. A list of team members is included in Appendix D. The Team had a central role throughout the planning process. It laid the groundwork for the Plan, examined risk in basin jurisdictions, conducted outreach to stakeholders and the public, and developed the mitigation actions and action plans included in the document. The Team met as the Plan was being developed in two half-day workshops: the first at the kick-off of the planning process and the second to help formulate the vision, goals, objectives and actions for each jurisdiction. In addition, regular communications with Team Members was conducted through face-to-face meetings, telephone calls and electronic mail.

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team served as the primary vehicle through which to share information, invite active participation, and coordinate hazard-mitigation plan development, implementation, and maintenance within participating jurisdictions.

The Team was assisted in developing the Plan by Federal and State agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency of the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the State Division of Emergency Management, the Texas Water Development Board, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the Texas Forest Service. Weather event data were provided by the National Weather Service, NOAA.

A secure portion of the GBRA Website was used for communications with Hazard Mitigation Planning Team Members. It contained all background materials, forms and status tracking instruments used as part of the project.

