

Minutes

**Indian River County Local Mitigation Strategy
Working Group Meeting**

Indian River County Administration Building
Conference Room A
1840 25th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960

November 17, 2004
1:30 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.

John King, Chairman of the Indian River County Working Group, began the meeting with the welcome and introductions.

Etta LoPresti, Indian River County Emergency Management, discussed the importance of having hazard mitigation projects/initiatives listed on the LMS Project Prioritization List (PPL). Key hazard mitigation funding sources [e.g., Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Pre Disaster Mitigation (PDM), National Fire Plan Grant, Florida Emergency Management Preparedness Assistance Trust Fund (EMPA)] will fund only projects listed on the LMS PPL. Only local governments, state agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments and non-profit organizations and institutions are eligible applicants under the HMGP program.

Lincoln Walther of Continental Shelf Associates discussed the project prioritization process and how a local government can sponsor a project for individual homeowners. NOTE: Homeowners are NOT eligible applicants according to HMGP guidelines.

Mr. Lonnie Ryder, a representative from FEMA, gave an overview of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). HMGP is authorized under Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. It provides grants to States and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the program is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster. The amount of funding available for the HMGP under a particular disaster declaration is limited and may provide a State with 7.5% percent of the total disaster grants awarded by FEMA. FEMA may fund up to 75% of the eligible costs of each project. The State or sub-grantee must provide a 25% match, which can be fashioned from a combination of cash and in-kind sources.

Eligible applicants are State and local Governments, Private non-profit organizations, institutions that own or operate a private non-profit facility as defined in 44CFR 206.221(e), or Indian Tribes or authorized tribal organizations.

Eligible projects are property acquisition & demolition, building elevation, drainage upgrades, seismic retrofit, wind retrofit - Storm Shutters, or flood proofing.

What makes an eligible HMGP project?

1. Be in conformance with the State Mitigation Plan and Local Mitigation Plan approved under 44CFR Part 201;
2. Have a beneficial impact upon the designated disaster area, whether or not located in the designated area;
3. Be in conformance with 44 CFR part 9 Flood Plain Management and Protection of Wetlands, and 44 CFR part 10 Environmental Considerations; and,
4. Solve a problem independently or constitute a functional portion of a solution where there is assurance that the project as a whole will be completed.

What is the Time Frame?

1. State submits local applications to FEMA within 12 months of the disaster declaration (November 15, 2004 begins the application period for Florida);
2. FEMA obligates all funds within 24 months of disaster declaration; and,
3. Any funds not obligated or committed to a pending project application after the 24 month obligation deadline are no longer available.

Taina Aldama, Florida Division of Emergency Management, discussed the Three-tiered Funding System:

1. ***First Tier Funding***

- a. FEMA provides state with initial HMGP funding amount
- b. State notifies the LMS Working Groups in the declared counties of their allocation
- c. Allocation is based on the prorated share of federal disaster funds spent in their county
- d. Working Group identifies projects and provides state with project list in priority order;
- e. State contacts project sponsors and holds Applicant Briefings;
- f. Sponsors forward completed applications to state for eligibility review;
- g. State verifies that project meets HMGP eligibility criteria and conducts B/C;
- h. Eligible projects are forwarded to FEMA for approval;
- i. FEMA approval, state funds projects in order specified by the LMS

Working Group

2. ***Second Tier Funding***

- a. Some Working Groups will fail to obligate all of their funding;
- b. Un-obligated funds will go to another declared county Working Group with a partially funded project contained in original submission;

c. If more than one project, funding goes to Working Group with lowest allocation.

3. ***Third Tier Funding***

a. Funds cannot be obligated in Second Tier, the un-obligated funds will be provided to any applicant statewide with a project application submitted within the application period.

In light of the Three-Tiered Funding System, the State recommends that each county “over-submit” the number of projects for funding, while each declared county will receive a proportional share of HMGP funds it is not unusual for money to go un-obligated, thus the reasoning for the tiered funding system.

Members of the public were in attendance at today’s meeting and expressed concerns about repetitive flooding in the areas of Country Club Pointe (Indian River County) and Whippoorwill (City of Vero Beach). These may be viable projects, but they would have to be submitted to the appropriate jurisdiction to decide if they warrant being on the LMS project list and are ranked high enough on the PPL to qualify for funding.

Cindy Palmer, Florida Division of Emergency Management, announced that a Notice of Intent (NOI) should be received from FEMA in the next week announcing the Applicant’s Briefing Workshop schedule. At this time, it is anticipated that it will occur sometime in the first two weeks of December.

Nathan McCollum advised members that the NOI and announcement of when the Applicant’s Briefing would be held will be posted on the county’s website.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m. The next meeting of the Indian River County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group will be announced at a later date.