

1.0 PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Purpose

The Indian River County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) hazard mitigation program has been funded by the Florida Department of Community Affairs (FDCA) with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds for the development of comprehensive mitigation planning. The purpose of the Indian River County LMS is to develop a unified approach among County and municipal governments for dealing with identified hazards and hazard management problems in the Indian River County area. This Strategy will serve as a tool to direct the County and municipal governments in their on-going efforts to reduce their vulnerability to the impacts produced by both natural and man-made hazards. The Strategy will also help establish funding priorities for currently proposed mitigation projects and develop priority mitigation projects to be completed with such disaster assistance funds as may be made available after a disaster.

The ultimate objectives of the LMS process are to:

- 1) Improve the community's resistance to damage from known natural, technological, and societal hazards;
- 2) Place Indian River County in a position to compete more effectively for pre- and post-disaster mitigation funding;
- 3) Reduce the cost of disasters at all levels; and
- 4) Speed community recovery when disasters occur.

Adoption of this strategy will provide the following benefits to both County and municipal governmental entities:

- Compliance with Administrative Rules 9G-6 and 9G-7, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), requirements for local comprehensive emergency management plans to identify problem areas and planning deficiencies relative to severe and repetitive weather phenomenon, and to identify pre- and post-disaster strategies for rectifying identified problems;
- Universal points from the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) Program for developing a Flood Plain Management Program, which may help further reduce flood insurance premium rates for property owners;
- Access to FEMA's Federal Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant program, which provides funding for pre-disaster mitigation projects and activities; and

- Identify and prioritize projects for funding under the State of Florida's Residential Construction Mitigation Program, to help reduce losses from properties subject to repetitive flooding damage.

1.2 Overview

The Indian River County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) accomplishes the following objectives:

- 1) Sets forth the guiding principles with which both the county and municipal governmental entities of Indian River County will address the issue of hazard mitigation (**Section 2.0, Guiding Principles**);
- 2) Identifies the known hazards to which the county is exposed, discusses their range of impacts, and delineates the individual vulnerabilities of the various jurisdictions and population centers within the county (**Section 3.0, Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment**);
- 3) Reviews and evaluates the existing legal, regulatory, and response framework currently in place to deal with hazard mitigation (**Section 4.0, Inventory and Evaluation of Existing Hazard Management Goals, Policies, Procedures, Ordinances, Projects, and Activities**);
- 4) Develops a detailed method by which the Indian River County community (municipalities and county government) can evaluate and prioritize proposed mitigation projects (**Section 5.0, Project Prioritization Methodology**);
- 5) Develops a conflict resolution procedure by which municipalities and county governmental entities can resolve any differences that arise over prioritized mitigation projects or mitigation strategies (**Section 6.0, Conflict Resolution Procedure**); and
- 6) Develops the process and schedule by which this entire Unified Local Mitigation Strategy will be reviewed and updated (**Section 7.0, LMS Updating Procedure**).

Various appendices are provided that list hazard data information sources (**Appendix A**), existing policies (**Appendix B**), types of mitigation projects, initiatives and funding sources (**Appendix C**), and example applications of the project prioritization scoring process (**Appendix D**).

One major objective of the Local Hazard Mitigation Strategy is to develop and maintain a Prioritized Projects List (PPL) of mitigation projects. The Indian River County Working Group through a designated Project Prioritization Subcommittee, has developed this list and cross-referenced the proposed projects with potential funding sources. The current, August 1999, PPL for Indian River County is presented as a supplementary table with this Strategy document.

1.3 LMS Working Group

The LMS Working Group has been organized to serve as the policy body for the Local Mitigation Strategy program. The role of the Working Group is to advise and assist in the development and implementation of the unified Indian River County LMS.

The composition of the Working Group includes representatives from the County, including the Community Development Department, Engineering Department, Department of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, and the Sheriff's Department; each municipality, including the Town of Fellsmere, Town of Indian River Shores, Town of Orchid, City of Sebastian, and the City of Vero Beach; and also the Treasure Coast Builders Association, BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc., Florida Light and Power Company, Indian River County Chamber of Commerce, and the American Red Cross. No formal voting mechanism was established. Majority vote of those attending prevailed.