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2022 PROGRESS REPORT – MULTI HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (CRS ACTIVITY 510)

Date this Report was Prepared: July 26, 2022

Name of Community: County of Ventura, CA

Name of Plan: 2015 Ventura County Multi Hazard Mitigation Plan

Date of Adoption of Plan: August 2, 2016

Location where copies are available for review:

County of Ventura Public Works

800 S. Victoria Ave. Ventura, CA 93009

<https://www.readyventuracounty.org/county-plans/>

DISCUSSION:

Communities in Ventura County face natural hazards such as earthquakes, wildfires, flooding, dam failures, landslides, debris flows, and tsunamis. The federal law known as the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires local hazard mitigation planning to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from natural hazards. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) encourages local communities participation in a Community Rating System (CRS) administrated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reduce or eliminate exposure to floods. Credit points are provided in CRS for the adoption and implementation of the Ventura County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP). Since May 1, 2016, unincorporated County of Ventura has achieved a Class 5 in the FEMA CRS rating system. The owners of floodplain properties in the unincorporated Ventura County have been receiving an annual policy premium discount of up to 25% on new and renewal policies, with an estimated total annual saving of \$256,000 across 748 policies (Data from FEMA's Insurance Services Office).

The County of Ventura adopted its first FEMA-approved 2010 Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP) in 2011. As required by the CRS, the MHMP needs to be updated every five years. An updated version of the MHMP was completed in October 2015 and the Ventura County Board of Supervisors adopted the updated MHMP the same month. Efforts to update the MHMP, renamed by FEMA to Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP), have been underway since May 2021, led by the Sheriff's Office of



Emergency Services (OES) and supported by planning partners from unincorporated areas, incorporated cities, and special districts. OES plans to request adoption of the MJHMP by the Board of Supervisors in the coming months.

Per CRS requirements, the MHMP implementation progress report must be filed with FEMA on an annual basis. This report fulfills three purposes:

1. Hazard mitigation plan action items review: This report provides an evaluation and update on the implementation of the mitigation plan.
2. Outreach: This report must be submitted to the governing body and made available to the public
3. County's Annual CRS Recertification: This report must be submitted with the community's annual recertification.

Since the filing of the 2021 progress report (<https://ventura.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=206199&type=2>), the following major progress has been made in the implementation of the Ventura County MHMP:

2021 Multi Hazard Mitigation Plan Annual Progress Report

1. Community Rating System
 - Prepared and submitted 2021 annual recertification to FEMA in July and received FEMA approval.
2. Maintenance of Flood Control Facilities
 - Carried out repairs and debris cleaning out for flood control channels and debris/detention basins.
3. Dam Safety and Emergency Action Plans (EAP)
 - Continued preparation of the EAPs for the remaining seven state regulated dams that are owned by Public Works Agency Watershed Protection (PWA-WP), submittal to Cal OES is planned for the Fall 2022.
4. Hazard Mitigation Projects (HMP)
 - Draft 65% design has been completed for the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project and the next step is focused stakeholder outreach and completing California Environmental Quality Act project requirements. PWA-WP will continue to hold biannual stakeholder outreach to the public through the Ventura River Watershed Council.
5. Levee rehabilitation
 - Continued the planning and design of levee rehabilitation projects on Ventura River Levees (VR-1 and VR-2).
 - Submitted 65% design to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the Santa Clara River (SCR-1).
 - Construction of Phase 2 SCR-3 Levee Rehabilitation project is planned to begin in September 2023. Secured Pre-Disaster Mitigation funding and seeking additional grant funding for construction.



- Submitted Calleguas Creek and Somis Drain Levee System (CC-2) project 60% Design to USACE.
- Continued implementing the upgrade of the Automated Local Evaluation in Real Time (ALERT2) flood warning system with grant funding from FEMA.
- 6. Floodplain Mapping, Flood Emergency Preparedness, and Coordination with FEMA
 - Continued cooperation and coordination with FEMA on Physical Map Revisions for the Santa Clara River watershed.
 - Collaborated with FEMA to initiate the Ventura County Levee Analysis to expand the risk mapping program.
 - Participated in California Flood Preparedness Week and conducted Storm Day emergency preparedness exercises and disseminated emergency preparedness information through National Public Works Week.
 - Continued communication and coordination with FEMA to address floodplain management issues through quarterly floodplain managers' meetings.
- 7. Road, Bridge, and Drainage Facility Improvements
 - Construction of Santa Ana Bridge replacement project is at 70% with construction completion expected by end of 2022.
 - Continued design of Camino Cielo Bridge replacement project.
 - Continued planning to rehabilitate Bridge Road Bridge (#442). The Mitigated Negative Declaration is currently open for public comment.
 - Completed a Bridge Management Program to prioritize maintenance rehabilitation and reconstruction of County bridges.
 - Completed the construction of tšumaš Creek Phase II improvement project.
- 8. Habitat Improvements
 - Continued the implementation of the Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridor project.
 - Continued grant funded habitat restoration efforts in the Ventura River, Santa Clara River, and Calleguas Creek watersheds.
- 9. Fire Hazard Reduction Program
 - Continued the implementation of Ventura County Fire Department's Fire Hazard Reduction Program.
- 10. Information Services Sharing Agreement (ISSA)
 - Obtained the signed Information Services Sharing Agreement and the updated repetitive loss data from FEMA.

Detailed 2022 MHMP implementation progress is reported as follows:

STATUS UPDATE OF THE MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

In Fiscal Year 2021-2022, the County of Ventura continued working closely with FEMA Region IX in implementing the recommended mitigation plan contained in Appendix G of the MHMP. MHMP recommendations focused primarily on flood risk mapping, levee



rehabilitation with a goal to achieve FEMA levee certification, flood preparedness and storm day exercise, flood risk awareness and public outreach through annual Public Works Week, flood control channels and basins cleaning and debris removal, inspections for potential structural deficiencies and retrofitting of critical facilities and transportation systems in unincorporated Ventura County, project partnerships with FEMA, implementing vegetation management practices to protect properties from wildfires, and establishing hazard warning and public evacuation systems. Most of the recommendations are being implemented and are part of the normal business operation of the County. This demonstrates the County's ongoing commitment to providing community safety and protection from flooding and other hazards, which is a key goal of the CRS program.

The following is a list of the mitigation strategies as described in the 2015 MHMP and the later section of the report will provide a detailed status update for 2021:

P1: Geographic Information System (GIS) based Pre-application Program

Create a GIS-based (Accela) pre-application review for new construction and major remodels in hazard areas, such as levee break, high and/or very high wildfire areas.

P2: Integration of the 2010 Hazard Mitigation Program (HMP) into Other Planning

Integrate the 2010 HMP, in particular the hazard analysis and mitigation strategy sections, into local planning documents, including general plans, emergency operation plans, and capital improvement plans.

P3: Seismic Retrofitting

Seismic structural retrofit or replace County local bridges that are categorized as structurally deficient by Caltrans Bridge Inspection Report, located in an extreme ground shaking, and/or are necessary for first responders to use during an emergency.

P4: Landslide Stabilization

Stabilize landslide-prone areas through stability improvement measures, including interceptor drains, in situ soil piles, drained earth buttresses, sub drains, removal of slide areas, and dewatering ground.

P5: Road, Bridge and Drainage Facility Improvements

Reinforce and maintain County local roads, bridges, ditches, and culverts from flooding through protection activities/measures.

Annual Maintenance Programs: Culvert Repair and Rehabilitation at various locations; maintenance of existing ditches and catch basins.

Improvement Projects: 1.) Mupu Road Bridge (#443) Improvements 2.) Wheeler Canyon Road Bridge (#109) Improvements 3.) Bridge Road Bridge (#442) Improvements 4.) Hueneme Road at Arnold Road Drainage Improvements.

P6: Address Floodplain Management Issues



Work with FEMA Region IX to address any floodplain management issues that may have arisen/arise from the countywide Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM), Community Assessment Visits, and/or Department of Water Resources (DWR).

P7: CRS Participation

Increase participation in the NFIP by entering the CRS program which through enhanced floodplain management activities would allow property owners to receive a discount on their flood insurance.

P8: Tsunami Ready Program

Participate in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrations (NOAA) Tsunami Ready Program.

P9: Fuel Reduction Program

Implement a fuel reduction program, such as the collection and disposal of dead fuel, within open spaces and around critical facilities and residential structures located within a State Responsibility Area or very high wildfire zone.

P10: Vegetation Management Program

Create a vegetation management program that provides vegetation management services to elderly, disabled, or low-income property owners who lack the resources to remove flammable vegetation around their homes.

P11: Post-Fire Debris Flow Treatments

Implement post-fire debris flow hillslope and channel treatments, such as seeding, mulching, check dams, and debris racks, as needed.

P12: Fuel Modification Program

Implement a fuel modification program, which also includes residential maintenance requirements and enforcement, plan submittal and approval process, guidelines for planting, and a listing of undesirable plant species. Require builders and developers to submit their plans, complete with proposed fuel modification zones, to the local Fire Protection District for review and approval prior to beginning construction.

P13: Habitat Improvements

Work with Cooperating Agencies of Ventura River Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan to continue to implement mitigation measures identified in the Plan; i.e., improving habitat and/or access to habitat.

P14: Levee Rehabilitation

Rehabilitate eight major Ventura County levees countywide (owned and operated by PWA-WP) in order to document local compliance with the Federal Levee Certification regulatory requirements found in 44 CFR 65.10. Once rehabilitated and certified, these eight levees will be accredited by FEMA on DFIRM as provide flood protection from the 1% annual-chance flood event.



P15: After Action Report and Improvement plan Development

After every exercise or event, an After-Action Report should be completed. The After-Action Report has two components: (1) It captures observations and recommendations based on incident objects associated with the capabilities and tasks; and (2) an Improvement Plan which identifies corrective actions, assigning them to responsible parties, and establishes targets for their completion.

P16: Life/Safety Warning/Evacuation Systems

Implement appropriate life/safety warning/evacuation systems in Ventura County, including the Emergency Alert System (EAS) Flood Threat Recognition System, Reverse 911 System, and Tsunami Watch and Warning messages during an event or disaster.

The following are status report on each recommendation in the action plan:

P1: Create a GIS-based (Accela) pre-application

Status: Currently utilizing the Accela Automation Land Records Management and Permit Processing/Tracking System. This is an interdependent electronic permit processing and tracking system that is currently being used by the Public Works Agency Resource Management Agency (RMA), and the Ventura County Fire Protection District (VCFPD). It is a GIS system that integrates flood, wildfire, landslide, liquefaction, and other hazard information (mapping) with land use planning, transportation, site grading, and other County permit processes. Accela enables County staff to access a single, common, and comprehensive information data base, thereby improving the delivery of permit-related services, including technical reviews and approvals, code enforcement, and issuance of land-use development entitlements.

P2: Integrate the 2010 HMP into other planning

Status: In September 2020, the Board of Supervisors adopted the 2040 General Plan Update which integrates hazard mitigation plan recommendations into policy. RMA is also in the process of updating the Local Coastal Program to address Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas. PWA's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan continued to emphasize the integration of the HMP recommendations. The VCFPD continued its implementation of the Fire Hazard Reduction Program (FHRP) which is the cornerstone of the Wildland Fire Action Plan.

P3: Seismic Retrofitting

Status: In 2011, the Public Works Agency Roads and Transportation (PWA-RT) received a \$150,000 grant from the Federal Highway Bridge Program to prepare a scope of work for any repairs or replacements needed for three bridges that have been classified by Caltrans as structurally deficient (Bridge Road, Mupu Road, and Wheeler Canyon). The Scope of Work was completed in 2013. The recommended work is as follows: (1) Bridge Road Bridge (#442) rehabilitation/replacement; (2) Mupu Road Bridge and Wheeler Canyon Road rehabilitation. In 2021-2022, the Bridge Road Bridge Rehabilitation Project Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) has been released for public



comment. Mupu Road Bridge and Wheeler Canyon Road Bridge MND were completed in 2016 - 2017.

P4: Landslide Stabilization

Status: Public Works Agency Land Development Services (PWA-LDS) regularly reviews private development projects relative to grading, soils, and geology (seismic, liquefaction). Plan checking, imposing conditions of development, construction compliance and enforcement are implemented as part of the grading and building permit application and approval process.

P5: Road, Bridge and Drainage Facility Improvements

Status: The PWA-RT conducts annual ditch cleaning and culvert cleaning before winter storm season to maintain the capacity of ditches and proper drainage flow to mitigate roadway flooding in rural areas of the county. In addition to the annual cleaning of ditches and culverts, the PWA-RT is actively working to rehabilitate Bridge Road Bridge (#442) which is currently in design and environmental permitting phase. Replacement of Catalina Drive Bridge (#384) was completed in May 2020 and replacement of Casitas Vista Road Bridge (#327) was completed in September 2020. Mupu Road Bridge and the Wheeler Canyon Road Bridge improvements projects were completed in 2016-2017. The VCPWA-RT has developed a Bridge Management Program to maintain County bridges. The program identifies and prioritizes PWA-RT's 160 bridge structures which include bridges on the National Bridge Inventory (NBI) and non-NBI structures. This program identifies budget needs, and schedules for preventive maintenance as well as budget for required rehabilitation or replacement of PWA-RT maintained bridges for short and long-term planning needs. In 2021-2022, the PWA-WP continued to clean flood control channels and catch basins to prepare for winter storm seasons. The construction of the Santa Ana Bridge replacement on Ventura River is on schedule and should be completed in December of this year. Detailed design of Camino Cielo Bridge has also been continued according to schedule. A channel improvement project for tšumaš Creek was completed during this reporting period.

P6: Address Floodplain Management issues

Status: In 2021-2022, County staff worked closely with FEMA Region IX and CA DWR staff on a regular basis to address floodplain management issues. In coordination with FEMA Region IX, floodplain managers from the county and cities meet quarterly to discuss and address issues facing the floodplain management community. The County continues to work with FEMA in moving forward with the Physical Map Revisions (PMR) for Santa Clara River watershed. Revised Preliminary Maps are schedule to be released by FEMA July 31, 2022. The mapping projects for the Ventura River watershed and the California Coastal Analysis and Mapping Project (CCAMP) were completed with maps effective 1/29/2021. In 2021-2022, the county has been coordinating and supporting FEMA and its consultants in kicking off the Levee Analysis Study for Ventura County levees. In 2021-2022, County staff are working closely with FEMA and DWR on developing EAPs for seven state regulated dams in the county and are working to gain



approval by fall 2022. Inundation mapping has been approved for all seven dams. Comments have been received for the Las Lajas dam EAP. The EAP for Matilija Dam EAP was approved by Cal OES in 2020.

P7: CRS Participation

Status: Active and increased participation in the NFIP has resulted in the unincorporated county of Ventura being elevated to Class 5 in the CRS rating since May 1, 2016. Owners of floodplain properties in the Unincorporated Ventura County have been receiving an annual policy premium discount of up to 25% on new and renewal policies since then. The estimated annual total saving for policy holders is \$256,800 across 781 policies.

P8: Tsunami Ready Program

Status: In 2012, the County of Ventura became certified by FEMA as a Tsunami Ready Community. Approximately 70 tsunami warning signs have been installed at specified locations along the county's coastline informing residents and visitors about the hazard.

P9: Fuel Reduction Program

Status: The VCFPD annually implements fuel reduction and public outreach programs that benefit all residents through the unincorporated Ventura County. The fire department sends out a "Notice to Abate Fire Hazard" annually to affected property owners. Those property owners are expected to maintain their property free of hazards or nuisance vegetation year-round. Common requirements are 100-feet of vegetation clearance from structures and 10-feet for road access.

P10: Vegetation Management Program

Status: The VCFPD utilizes a wide variety of methods and programs to reduce the effects of wildfires. The FHRP the cornerstone of the County's Wildland Fire Action Plan. Property owners included in the program receive an annual "Notice to Abate Fire Hazard" and are expected to maintain their property free of fire hazards or nuisance vegetation year-round. The program has been used as a model by many jurisdictions throughout the nation.

P11: Post-Fire Debris Flow Treatments

Status: The VCFPD implements fuel reduction and public outreach programs that benefit all residents through the unincorporated Ventura County. In 2021-2022, the PWA-WP continues to clean out channels, debris basins, and utilize stop-log flood control gap structures as needed during high flow storm events.

P12: Fuel Modification Program

Status: The VCFPD has established standards and guidelines, codes, and ordinances to guide developments. Through the County's land-use entitlement process administered through the RMA Planning Division, the VCFPD reviews, comments, and



imposes conditions of approval on all development applications, including but not limited to, maintenance requirements, required plantings, and establishment of fuel modification zones.

P13: Habitat Improvements

Status: During 2021-2022, PWA-WP continued habitat restoration at about 10 sites in the Ventura River, Santa Clara River, and Calleguas Creek watersheds as either grant funded or compensatory mitigation work. At nearly all sites, habitat restoration comprises removal of many non-native species including giant reed (*Arundo donax*), and native plant establishment by natural recruitment in the streambeds and planting on the banks and floodplains. Biological monitoring, water quality monitoring, and reporting was also conducted for many of these sites.

The RMA continues to enforce the Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2019.

P14: Levee Rehabilitation

Status: During 2021-2022, PWA-WP, working in close coordination with federal and state agencies, continued to advance progress in the design, engineering, environmental permitting, and the construction of flood mitigation projects. PWA-WP is coordinating the 60% design of the Calleguas Creek and Somis Drain Levee System rehabilitation project (CC-2) in the City of Camarillo with the USACE. For the Ventura River Levee rehabilitation project (VR-2) in the unincorporated community of Casitas Springs, the PWA-WP is in process of selecting a consultant to complete the 100% design. For the Santa Clara River Levee rehabilitation project (SCR-1) in Oxnard, the PWA-WP submitted the 65% design USACE for their feedback and concurrence. The Ventura River Levee (VR-1) in Ventura, 60% design comments have been received from the USACE and the 90% design is in-progress. The Sespe Creek Levee (SC-2) rehabilitation from HWY 126 to Old Telegraph Road was completed in the fall of 2017. Phase I levee rehabilitation construction work required to support the eventual certification of the Santa Clara River Levee (SCR-3) in Oxnard was completed by the PWA-WP in June of 2018. The construction of phase II of SCR-3 is planned to start in September 2023. Ongoing coordination between the PWA-WP and the USACE, under the Section 408 Permit envelope, is underway for both the SCR-1 and VR-1 levees. PWA-WP continues to work closely with USACE, as well as affected cities, residents and property owners protected by PWA-WP levees throughout Ventura County, to marshal federal, state, and local funding resources necessary to complete local levee rehabilitation projects.

Once levee rehabilitation projects are successfully completed for the above-mentioned levees, the PWA-WP will be able to document full compliance with all applicable federal levee certification requirements found in Title 44 CFR 65.10 for these PWA-WP owned and operated levees.



P15: After Action Report and Improvement Plan Development

Status: The Sheriff's OES submits After Action Reports to state and federal agencies following all emergency occurrences. In October 2021, the PWA conducted its annual storm day exercise to test the overall effectiveness and efficiency of its flood warning and response procedures, technologies, communication networking, and other operational services associated with the County's Flood Warning & Response System. The exercise consisted of stop log installation training, scenario-based storm patrols, and field communication procedures. An after-action meeting was held to de-brief staff and a storm day exercise report was prepared to document observations and recommendations for future improvements.

P16: Life/Safety Warning/Evacuation Systems

Status: Ventura County uses a variety of systems to communicate important life/safety information during an emergency. The two primary systems responsible for the bulk of emergency notifications are the Emergency Alert Notification System (EANS) and the Ventura County Emergency Alert Notification System (VC Alert).

The Emergency Alert Notification System (EANS) is a joint effort among local radio and TV stations, the National Weather Service, and the Sheriff's OES. Emergency managers can interrupt regular cable television and radio broadcast programming with important information. Locally, 100.7 KHAY FM, KMLA 103.7 FM (Spanish) and 1590 KVTM AM all carry emergency alert system broadcasts.

In addition to the EANS, the Sheriff's OES in conjunction with all Ventura County Cities operates and maintains the VC Alert Emergency Notification System. VC Alert can send approximately 100,000 emails, telephone calls, and text messages per hour. The system contains listed and unlisted telephone numbers, in addition to thousands of Ventura County residents who have provided their information for notification purposes.

IMPLEMENTATION:

At this time all strategies for Ventura County listed in the 2015 MHMPS are on schedule.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The 2022 MJHMP update identifies new and revised hazard mitigation strategies. Future MJHMP updates will discuss the new plan once it is formally adopted. The current and draft update to the HMP is available to the public at:

<https://www.readyventuracounty.org/county-plans/>

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