



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2020 update to the Cattaraugus County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) was prepared in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000). The DMA 2000 requires states and local governments to prepare HMPs to remain eligible to receive pre-disaster mitigation grant funds available in the wake of federally declared disasters. To restate, jurisdictions that do not participate in this process and do not adopt the resulting HMP will not be eligible to receive future pre-disaster mitigation grant funding (Section 404, grant funds). Importantly, pre-disaster mitigation grant funds are separate and distinct from federal and state funds available for direct post-disaster relief (i.e., Public Assistance [PA] and Individual Assistance [IA]). Availability of those funds remains unchanged: if a federally declared disaster occurs in Cattaraugus County, affected jurisdictions will still receive immediate recovery assistance regardless of their participation in this HMP. However, the DMA 2000 improves the disaster planning process by: (1) increasing requirements for hazard mitigation planning and (2) necessitating that participating municipalities document their hazard mitigation planning process and identify hazards; potential losses; and mitigation needs, goals, and strategies.

Hazard Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk and effects that can result from specific hazards.

FEMA defines a **Hazard Mitigation Plan** as the documentation of a state or local government evaluation of natural hazards and the strategies to mitigate such hazards.

CATTARAUGUS COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLANNING PROCESS

Cattaraugus County developed and adopted the original Cattaraugus County HMP in 2007 and updated the plan in 2013-2014. The DMA 2000 regulations require that local plans be formally updated and adopted every five (5) years, reassessing risk and updating local strategies to manage and mitigate those risks. To comply, Cattaraugus County and its inclusive jurisdictions actively participated in the 2020 update of the HMP. Extensive outreach efforts by the Cattaraugus County Office of Emergency Services and Department of Public Works resulted in participation from all 43 municipal governments. Upon completion and approval of the HMP, participating jurisdictions will continue to address and implement the findings and recommendations of this HMP.

Table ES-1 lists local governments that actively participated in the HMP update process to achieve or maintain their compliance with the DMA 2000 requirements.

Table ES-1. Participating Jurisdictions in the 2020 Cattaraugus County HMP Update

Jurisdictions	
Cattaraugus County	
Allegany (T)	Little Valley (T)
Allegany (V)	Little Valley (V)
Ashford (T)	Lyndon (T)
Carrollton (T)	Machias (T)
Cattaraugus (V)	Mansfield (T)
Coldspring (T)	Napoli (T)
Conewango (T)	New Albion (T)
Dayton (T)	Olean (C)
Delevan (V)	Olean (T)





Jurisdictions	
East Otto (T)	Otto (T)
Ellicottville (T)	Perrysburg (T)
Ellicottville (V)	Persia (T)
Farmersville (T)	Portville (T)
Franklinville (T)	Portville (V)
Franklinville (V)	Randolph (T)
Freedom (T)	Red House (T)
Gowanda (V)	Salamanca (C)
Great Valley (T)	Salamanca (T)
Hinsdale (T)	South Dayton (V)
Humphrey (T)	South Valley (T)
Ischua (T)	Yorkshire (T)
Leon (T)	

During the Cattaraugus County HMP planning process, the nation, the State of New York, and Cattaraugus County were facing the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic was declared a major disaster on March 20, 2020 (DR-4480). The Governor issued a stay-at-home Executive Order beginning March 22, 2020, which remained in effect the duration of the planning process.

The Cattaraugus County Office of Emergency Services, Department of Public Works, the Steering Committee members, and the planning partners were addressing the COVID-19 pandemic concurrent with completing the update to the HMP. Cattaraugus County and all planning partners made their best effort to work through this unprecedented time to complete the HMP update and meet FEMA and state requirements. Unfortunately, in-person public meetings were canceled for the safety of residents and planning partners. However, Steering Committee, Planning Partnership, jurisdiction-specific, and public meetings continued virtually. More targeted stakeholder and public involvement was initiated to ensure a broad audience was reached, described further below.

During this HMP update process, Cattaraugus County and the participating jurisdictions accomplished the following:

- Developed a Steering Committee and Planning Partnership
- Reviewed and updated the hazards of concern
- Profiled and prioritized these hazards
- Estimated inventory at risk and potential losses associated with these hazards
- Reviewed and updated hazard mitigation goals and objectives
- Reviewed and updated County and local mitigation strategies to address identified risks and vulnerabilities
- Updated and developed maintenance procedures to be executed upon approval of the HMP

As required by the DMA 2000, the participating jurisdictions and Cattaraugus County have informed the public about HMP update efforts and have provided opportunities for public comment and input regarding the planning process. In addition, numerous agencies and stakeholders have participated as core or support members to provide input and expertise to the planning process. This HMP documents the process and outcomes of the jurisdictions’ mitigation planning efforts.





Cattaraugus County and the participating jurisdictions incorporate mitigation planning as an integral component of daily government operations through existing processes and programs. A public outreach campaign was initiated to commence the HMP update. A citizen survey to gauge hazard preparedness was developed. The survey asked quantifiable questions about citizen perception of risk, knowledge of mitigation, and support of community programs. Stakeholder surveys across multiple sectors was distributed to obtain input. The citizen survey was posted on the County’s mitigation plan website (<https://www.cattarauguscountyhmp.com/>). The stakeholder surveys were sent by the Office of Emergency Services and Department of Public Works to applicable stakeholder groups. Updates to the HMP will be announced on the County website and via municipal outreach after annual plan reviews and 5-year updates. The County HMP Coordinator and local planning partnership representatives will be responsible for receiving, tracking, and filing public comments regarding this HMP when posted for draft public review and throughout the plan’s period of performance.

CATTARAUGUS COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN ADOPTION

Following formal Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approval of this HMP update, Cattaraugus County and all participating jurisdictions will be required to formally adopt the updated HMP. A sample copy of an adoption resolution is included in Appendix A (Adoption Resolutions). Of the 43 participating planning partners listed in Table ES-1, all fully met the participation requirements specified by the Steering Committee.

CATTARAUGUS COUNTY PROFILE

Development increases population and structures and therefore can increase the impact of hazards on a community. For example, heavy development planned for a flood-prone area would likely increase the impact of the flood events as time progresses.

According to the 2018 American Community Survey (ACS) Census data, Cattaraugus County had a population of 77,868. Cattaraugus County is located in southwest New York State, north of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The County is bordered by Chautauqua County to the west, Erie and Wyoming Counties to the north, Allegany County to the east, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the south.

Cattaraugus County is located in the northwest portion of the Allegheny Plateau region of New York State. The northern part of the county is generally flat, while steeper slopes are found in the central and southern parts of the county. The southern region of the county – characterized by hills and valleys – is the only unglaciated portion of western New York State. Cuba Lake, Lime Lake, Crystal Lake, Quaker Lake, Rainbow Lake, Red House Lake, Science Lake, and Timber Lake are within the county.

Land use in Cattaraugus County is influenced by natural resources, topographic constraints, water lines, sewers, and roads. The county has a relatively compact development pattern and is made up of rural, suburban, and urban areas. Agriculture remains a large land use. Although the number of farms is decreasing slightly, the size of farms is increasing. This trend toward fewer but larger farm operations parallels statewide trends (Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning & Tourism 2015).

The Cattaraugus County HMP provides a general overview of current and anticipated population and land use within the study area. This information provides a basis for making decisions regarding the type of mitigation approaches to consider and the locations in which these approaches should be applied. This information can also be used to support decisions regarding future development in vulnerable areas. For potential increases in vulnerability, the county and jurisdictions can then plan ahead to mitigate those vulnerabilities early in the development process or can direct development to areas of lower risk. The Planning Partnership will revisit the HMP regularly to ensure that mitigation actions support sustainability to minimize increased risk, and to also ensure implementation and targeting of specific mitigation actions will address the potential impacts of development over time.



RISK ASSESSMENT

A key component of an HMP is accurate identification of risks posed by hazards and corresponding impacts on the community. The process of identifying hazards of concern, profiling hazard events, and conducting a vulnerability assessment is known as a risk assessment. The risk assessment portion of the mitigation planning process included the steps shown and summarized below.



Step 1: Identify hazards of concern. Cattaraugus County considered the full range of natural and non-natural hazards that could impact the county and then identified and ranked hazards of greatest concern. The following list of six hazards of concern was selected for further evaluation in the HMP:

- Flood
- Landslide
- Severe Storm
- Severe Winter Storm
- Utility Failure
- Wildfire

Step 2: Prepare a profile for each hazard of concern. These profiles assist jurisdictions in evaluating and comparing hazards that can impact their areas. Each type of hazard has unique characteristics that differ from event to event. That is, impacts associated with a specific hazard can vary depending on the magnitude and location of each event (a hazard event is a specific, uninterrupted occurrence of a particular type of hazard). Further, probability of occurrence of a hazard at a given location affects the priority assigned to that hazard. Finally, each hazard impacts different communities in different ways, depending on geography, local development, population distribution, age of buildings, and mitigation measures already implemented.

Steps 3 and 4: Evaluate assets of jurisdictions and identify assets exposed or vulnerable to the hazards of concern. Hazard profile information, combined with data regarding population, demographics, general building stock, and critical facilities at risk, prepares the community to develop risk scenarios and estimate potential damages and losses from each hazard.

Overall vulnerability of Cattaraugus County to the hazards of concern cannot be overestimated. Frequent severe storms result in wind damage and flooding that impact residents, businesses, and government services. National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) statistics for Cattaraugus County in 2020 identify 479 NFIP policyholders with 382 claims made, totaling over \$2.8 million for damages to structures and contents. There are 60 NFIP Repetitive Loss (RL) properties in the county. Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) data was unavailable for this plan update.



CATTARAUGUS COUNTY MITIGATION STRATEGY

Outcomes of the risk assessment, supplemented by community input, provided a basis for reviewing past mitigation actions, future goals, and appropriate local mitigation actions.

Goals and Objectives

The 2014 HMP specified overarching mitigation goals with corresponding objectives that summarized hazard reduction outcomes the county and participating jurisdictions want to achieve. During the 2020 plan update process, the Steering Committee reviewed the goals and objectives established in the 2014 HMP. These goals and objectives were reviewed in consideration of the hazard events and losses since the 2014 plan; the updated hazard profiles and vulnerability assessment; the goals and objectives established in the 2019 NYS HMP, county and local risk management plans; and direct input from the county and jurisdictions for how to meet their needs to advance and best manage their hazard risk. Amendments include additions/edits to goals and objectives to express the planning partnership’s interests in integrating this plan with other planning mechanisms/programs and to support mitigation through the protection and preservation of natural systems (refer to Section 6 – Mitigation Strategies). The following summarizes the three (3) updated goals for the 2020 HMP.

The mitigation strategy portion of the HMP includes:

- A summary of past and current mitigation efforts
- Local hazard mitigation goals and objectives
- Identification and analysis of mitigation measures and projects under consideration
- Multi-jurisdictional mitigation strategy (goals and objectives)
- Mitigation action plan (summary of specific actions)

1. Protect life, property, and critical infrastructure from hazard impacts.
2. Reduce the risk of hazards on life, property, and the environment.
3. Educate the public, officials, and other stakeholders about the hazards they face and what can be done to mitigate hazard impacts.

Capability Assessment

Capability assessments were prepared by Cattaraugus County and each participating jurisdiction. A capability assessment is an inventory of a community’s missions, programs, and policies with an analysis of its capacity to implement them. This assessment is an integral part of the planning process. The capability assessment process includes identification, review, and analysis of current local and state programs, policies, regulations, funding, and practices that may either facilitate or hinder mitigation.

By completing these assessments, Cattaraugus County and participating jurisdictions learned how or whether they would be able to implement certain mitigation actions by determining the following:

- Types of mitigation actions that may be prohibited by law
- Limitations that may hinder mitigation actions
- The range of local and state administrative, programmatic, regulatory, financial, and technical resources available to assist in implementing their mitigation actions

Identification, Prioritization, Analysis, and Implementation of Mitigation Actions

Cattaraugus County has seen much success in the implementation of the 2014 HMP, particularly through actions that integrate hazard mitigation into a jurisdiction’s daily operations.

As part of the planning process for this HMP update, all participating jurisdictions evaluated their risks and known or anticipated losses to the hazards of concern, assessed their capabilities to manage hazard risk, reviewed





progress on past mitigation efforts, and identified a comprehensive range of mitigation alternatives and actions they endeavor to implement as resources are identified and available. The HMP identifies all proposed mitigation actions relevant to achievement of the goals and objectives presented above. The county and participating jurisdictions have identified appropriate local mitigation actions, along with hazards mitigated, goals and objectives met, lead agencies, estimated costs, potential funding sources, and proposed timeline. These actions are identified in Volume II, Section 9, which consists of annexes for the county and each participating jurisdiction.

PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

Hazard mitigation planning is an ongoing process. Section 7 (Plan Maintenance) of this plan presents procedures for HMP monitoring, integration, evaluation, and updating. The Planning Partnership will continue ongoing mitigation efforts to implement the HMP and revise and update the HMP, as necessary.

To monitor implementation of the HMP, Planning Partnership members will meet annually to discuss the status of HMP implementation and will prepare a report summarizing the status of the HMP and any needed updates. The mitigation evaluation will address changes as new hazard events occur, as the area develops, and as more is learned about hazards and their impacts. The evaluation will include an assessment of whether the planning process and actions have been effective, whether development or other issues warrant changes to the HMP or its priorities, progress toward achievement of the communities' goals, and whether changes are warranted. The HMP will be updated, at a minimum, within the 5-year cycle specified by the DMA 2000.

POINT OF CONTACT

To request information or provide comments regarding this HMP, please contact the Cattaraugus County HMP Coordinator:

Mailing Address:	Cattaraugus County Department of Public Works 8810 Route 242, Jack Ellis Drive Little Valley, NY 14755
Contact Name:	Kimberly A. Merrill, Secretary to the Commissioner of Public Works
E-mail Address:	kamerrill@cattco.org
Telephone:	(716) 938-9121 x2480