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## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

### 2.1 Introduction

The Santa Rosa County LMS Task Force has been established to make the population, neighborhoods, businesses and institutions of the community more resistant to the impacts of future disasters. The Task Force has undertaken a comprehensive, detailed evaluation of the vulnerabilities of the community to all types of natural hazards in order to identify ways to make the County and its municipalities more resistant to natural disasters. This document reports the results of that planning process for the current planning period.

### 2.2 Purpose

The Santa Rosa County LMS Plan is intended by the Task Force to serve many purposes. These include the following:

*Provide a Methodical, Substantive Approach to Mitigation Planning*

A step-by-step process has been utilized by the Santa Rosa County LMS Task Force to revise the plan. The process relies on soundly based, methodical planning concepts. Vulnerabilities to natural hazard disasters are identified. Mitigation initiatives are proposed that allow the County to avoid or minimize those vulnerabilities. Each step in the planning process builds upon the previous. A high level of assurance is developed so that each mitigation initiative proposed by the LMS Task Force has a valid basis for both their justification and priority for implementation. One key purpose of this plan is to document the process and to present its results to the community, along with state and federal agencies to justify potential mitigation funding.

*Enhance Public Awareness and Understanding*

The LMS Task Force is interested in finding ways to make the community aware of natural hazards. Additionally, there is a need to inform the community about the impact mitigation planning can have in the County. The plan identifies the hazards threatening County. It provides an assessment of the relative level of risk they pose. Details on specific vulnerabilities of the neighborhoods, business districts, and rural areas are provided. The plan includes a number of proposals on avoiding or minimizing vulnerabilities. This information is helpful to individuals that wish to understand how the community could be safer from the impacts of natural disasters.

The LMS Task Force organization also includes a Public Information Sub-Committee. The purpose of this subcommittee is to provide information and education to the public regarding ways to mitigate disasters. The public information committee has been active

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in communicating with the public and engaging interested members of the community in the planning process. This document, and the analyses contained herein, is the principal information resource for this activity.

#### *Create a Decision Tool for Management*

The Santa Rosa County LMS Plan provides information needed by the managers and leaders of local government, business and industry, community associations and other key institutions and organizations. This information will allow these people and entities to take actions to address vulnerabilities to future disasters. It also provides proposals for specific projects and programs that are needed to eliminate or minimize those vulnerabilities.

These proposals, called “mitigation strategies” in the plan, have been justified on the basis of their economic benefits using a uniform technical analysis, as well as prioritized for implementation using ten objective criteria. This approach is intended to serve as a decision tool for management and the community. Local government, business, and citizens can use the plan to learn why the proposed mitigation initiatives should be implemented. Additionally, this tool can demonstrate which project should first be implemented, and show the economic and public welfare benefits of doing so.

#### *Promote Compliance with State and Federal Program Requirements*

There are a number of state and federal grant programs, policies, and regulations that encourage or even mandate local government to develop and maintain a comprehensive hazard mitigation plan. This plan is specifically intended to assist participating local governments to comply with these requirements. The plan enables them to quickly respond to state and federal funding opportunities for mitigation-related projects. The plan defines, justifies and prioritizes mitigation initiatives that have been formulated through a technically valid hazard analysis and vulnerability assessment process. Those interested in applying for grants are better prepared, using this plan, to quickly and more easily develop the necessary grant application materials for seeking state and federal funding.

#### *Enhance Local Policies for Hazard Mitigation Capability*

A component of the hazard mitigation planning process is the analysis of the existing policy, program and regulatory basis for control of growth and development. Essentially, experiences, data, and facts of emergency planning (pre- and post-disaster) are brought together with day-to-day land use planning policy. Additionally, current mitigation-related policies of local government are compared to emergency planning policies relating to mitigation. This allows for a comparison of the hazards that threaten the jurisdiction and the relative risks they pose to the community. When risks of a specific hazard are not adequately addressed in the community’s policy or regulatory framework, the impacts of future disasters can be even more severe. The planning process utilized by the LMS Task Force supports detailed comparison of the community’s policy controls to the level of risk posed by specific hazards. This comparison supports and justifies efforts to

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propose enhancements in the policy basis for could or should be promulgated by the involved local jurisdictions to create a more disaster-resistant future for the community.

#### *Assure Multi-Jurisdictional Coordination of Mitigation-Related Programming*

A key purpose of the mitigation planning process is to ensure proposals for mitigation initiatives are reviewed and coordinated among jurisdictions (municipalities and County). In this way, there is a high level of confidence that mitigation initiatives proposed by one will be compatible with the interests of others. The multi-jurisdictional aspect of the process reduces the probability of duplication or overlooking a project. The operating procedures of the Task Force mandate that all proposed mitigation initiatives, regardless of their origin, be coordinated among all of the participants in the planning prior to their approval for incorporation into the plan.

#### *Provide a Flexible Approach to the Planning Process*

The LMS Task Force is flexible in meeting the analysis and documentation needs of the planning process. The Task Force can accept directives from the Board of County Commissioners or City Councils to develop special reports or research. Additionally citizens, businesses, non-profits, and other parties can request special work be done for their issues. The Task Force can then make recommendations to local governments to facilitate action.

The Task Force also has access to a wide variety of information. Members, local government offices, and other sources allow for the group to bring information together for planning purposes. Information that would otherwise be used for purposes other than mitigation can be brought together to study mitigation issues. These issues can be constructed to become mitigation initiatives for incorporation into this plan.

Each section of the LMS Plan presents detailed information to support these planning functions. The remainder of this plan describes the planning organization developed by the Task Force, as well as its approach to managing the planning process. It then summarizes the results of the hazard identification and vulnerability assessment process and addresses the current policy basis for hazard management by the participating jurisdictions and organizations. The plan also documents the structural and non-structural mitigation initiatives proposed by the participating jurisdiction to address the identified vulnerabilities. The plan concludes by addressing the goals and objectives of the Task Force for a five-year planning period, during which this plan will continue to be expanded and refined.

### **2.3 How to Use the Document Sections and Appendices**

The LMS Plan follows a logical sequence of organization. Beginning in Section 3, the formation and organization of the LMS Task Force is discussed (Section 3), followed by a thorough analysis of the natural hazards existing in the County (Section 4). In Section 5, a risk assessment is conducted that delineates areas where the greatest possibility of impact by a natural hazard could occur. Finally, Section 6 provides an outlook of goals

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and objectives of the LMS Task Force over the five year planning period (20~~1005~~ – 201~~05~~).

Appendices can be located in the back of the LMS Plan. Each appendix correlates by the number of the Sections and Subsections of the plan. For example, maps and tables correlating to the natural hazards will begin with the number “4” (correlating with Section 4 of the plan). Cross-referencing is done in some instances (particularly where one portion of Section 5 relates to major data input first used and identified in Section 4).

An Adobe Acrobat file (portable document file, or PDF) version of the plan is maintained in order to quickly and inexpensively provide the document and its information to local governments and the public-at-large. The PDF version is indexed using the “bookmarks” feature of Acrobat. Although the plan is password protected prevent unauthorized and unapproved changes, features such as printing and block text copy are permitted.

#### **2.4 Requesting Additional Information**

Additional information about the plan may be obtained by contacting the following:

**Santa Rosa County Emergency Management  
4499 Pine Forest Road  
Milton, FL 32583  
850-983-5360 voice**

*Or*

**Santa Rosa County Special Projects/Grants  
6495 Caroline St, Suite H  
Milton, FL 32570  
850-983-1848 voice**

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