



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### BACKGROUND

The Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition (TCRFC or Coalition) sponsored the development of a multi-jurisdictional **Hazard Mitigation Plan Update** that addressed all natural and man-caused hazards that could potentially affect communities that participated in the 2004 Hazard Mitigation Plan, “*Creating a Disaster Resistant Lower Colorado River Basin.*” Further, the TCRFC conducted an update of the 2004 Hazard Mitigation Plan to revise mitigation actions and risk assessments for communities in the TCRFC who wish to participate. The update is an opportunity to evaluate successful mitigation actions and to explore other means of avoiding future disaster loss.

The goal of the plan is to minimize or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from known hazards by identifying and implementing cost-effective mitigation actions. *Mitigation* is defined by FEMA as *sustained actions taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from hazards and their effects*. The purpose of the Coalitions’ mitigation plan is twofold: to protect people and structures, and to minimize the costs of disaster response and recovery.

The updated Hazard Mitigation Plan will result in the incorporation of newly added jurisdictions to the TCRFC. The plan is integrated into the existing Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Lower Colorado River Basin, utilizing a basin-wide approach. The plan is prepared as an update to the existing 2004 Hazard Mitigation Plan and will reflect conditions that have changed since the completion of that plan. When complete, the updated plan will comply with all requirements promulgated by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (DEM) and all applicable provisions of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Section 104 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) (P.L. 106-390), and the Bunning-Bereuter-Blumenauer Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-264), which amended the National Flood Insurance Act (NFIA) of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001, et al). It will also comply with FEMA’s February 26, 2002 Interim Final Rule (“the Rule”) at 44 CFR Part 201 which specifies the criteria for approval of mitigation plans required in Section 322 of the DMA 2000. The updated plan was also developed in accordance with FEMA’s Community Rating System (CRS) Floodplain Management Plan standards and policies.

A FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan is required for eligibility for grant funds through FEMA’s pre-disaster grant programs such as: Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC), and the Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL)



program; and for post-disaster grant programs such as: Public Assistance (PA) and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding. Funds from these federal grant programs may be awarded to local governments and non-profit organizations to implement mitigation projects identified as part of a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan. This plan update was prepared early in the planning process to cover communities in the TCRFC that previously were not included in the 2004 Hazard Mitigation Plan as well as new communities, which were subsequently integrated into the final multi-jurisdictional plan for the TCRFC.

## PROCESS OF PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Coalition secured the services of a project team headed by H2O Partners, Inc. to assist in the preparation of the plan update. H2O Partners has professional expertise in disaster and mitigation planning, public assistance programs and disaster recovery. The hazard mitigation planning process involved multiple steps:

### **1. Capability Assessment**

As part of this effort, the H2O team conducted a Capability Assessment by examining and evaluating the programmatic, technical, administrative and fiscal capabilities of the Coalition and participating jurisdictions to mitigate the effects of natural hazards. This assessment included the identification and review of relevant plans, policies and programs already in place such as land use plans, flood control programs, natural resource studies, zoning ordinances, building codes, subdivision regulations, post-disaster public assistance grants, and capital improvements plans.

### **2. Hazard Identification and Analysis**

During this step, the project team identified and compiled relevant data on all potential hazards that threaten the Coalition. Information collected included historical data on past hazard events in the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition area and how these events impacted residents, property, and the overall community since 2004.

Based upon historical occurrences and best available data from agencies such as FEMA and the National Weather Service, the project team described and profiled hazards that threaten the Coalition. Detailed hazard profiles included information on the frequency, magnitude, location and impact for each hazard in addition to estimating the probabilities for future hazard events.

### **3. Vulnerability Assessment**

The Vulnerability Assessment involved the collection and integration of best available data, including an inventory of assets that may be affected by hazards such as people, housing units, businesses, public buildings, critical facilities, infrastructure and utility lifelines. The project team collected this information from national and state databases and incorporated local level data where possible.



The team then assessed potential impacts from each hazard. The resulting information provided the Coalition with information that outlines the full range of hazards facing it and potential social impacts, damages and economic losses. Another key component of the risk assessment was to assess the potential future impact of hazards based upon the current and projected development trends and plans for the Coalition.

#### **4. Mitigation Strategy Development**

Based on the findings of the **Capability Assessment** and **Vulnerability/Risk Assessment**, the project team worked with the Coalition toward drafting an overall revised **Mitigation Strategy** for the Coalition and participating jurisdictions. This step was initiated during an interactive planning workshop by facilitating discussion on possible mitigation activities and by gaining consensus from a wide range of participants on the identification of general planning goals and target objectives for the hazard mitigation plan. Based upon these identified goals and objectives, the project team reviewed a comprehensive range of appropriate mitigation measures for the Coalition and other participating partners to consider in reducing the effects of identified high-risk hazards.

#### PLAN REVIEW, ADOPTION AND APPROVAL

In accordance with federal planning requirements, the Texas Colorado River Floodplain Coalition and other participating jurisdictions must review, approve and adopt the updated hazard mitigation plan. All participating jurisdictions have reviewed and provided comments to the project team. The Plan was submitted to the Texas Division of Emergency Management in August of 2009 for approval. TDEM approved the Plan and submitted to FEMA in May of 2010, and FEMA approved the plan in April 2011. In order to complete the process each jurisdiction must now formally adopt the plan either through their City Council or County Commissioner Meetings. The approved plan will be available on the TCRFC website, [www.tcrfc.org](http://www.tcrfc.org).