

# Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan

DRAFT

## Grand Traverse County Michigan



Produced by:  
Northwest Michigan Council of Governments  
2194 Dendrinis Drive  
PO Box 506  
Traverse City MI 49685  
231-929-5000  
fax: 231-929-5012  
[www.nwm.org](http://www.nwm.org)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Acknowledgements	Page 3
II.	Transmittal Letter	Page 4
III.	Preface	Page 5
IV.	Executive Summary	Page 6
V.	Purpose of the Plan	Page 9
VI.	Community Profile	Page 11
VII.	The Development of the Plan	Page 13
	A. Data Methodology	
	B. Natural Hazards Information	
	1. Natural Hazards and Climate Change	
	2. Natural Hazards Recorded Events	
	3. Probability of Natural Hazards	
	C. Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Task Force and Public Input	
	D. Emergency Warning System Coverage	
	E. Economic Impact Analysis	
VIII.	Natural Hazards Mitigation Goals and Objectives	Page 22
IX.	Identification and Selection of Mitigation Strategies	Page 23
	A. Climate Change Solutions	
	B. Selection of Feasible Mitigation Strategies	
X.	Implementation of the Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan	Page 26
	1. Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Managers and Technical Assistance	
	2. Funding the Implementation of the Plan	
	3. Action Agenda	
	4. Monitoring and Evaluation	
XI.	Review of the Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan	Page 30
XII.	Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Adoption Resolution	Page 31
XIII.	Appendices	Page 34
	A. Glossary	
	B. Detailed Maps	
	1. Full County	
	2. Priority Areas	
	C. Population Density Map	
	D. Risk Assessment Work Sheet	
	E. Examples of Past Mitigation Projects	
	F. Resources	

## **I. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Plan is the culmination of the interdisciplinary and interagency planning effort that required the assistance and expertise of numerous agencies, organizations, and individuals. Without the technical assistance and contributions of time and ideas of these agencies, organizations, and individuals, this plan could not have been completed.

Following is a list of the key contributors to the Plan, who participated in the Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Task Force:

**Grand Traverse County Emergency Management**

Keith DeYoung, 911/Homeland Security

**Grand Traverse County Planning Department/TC TALUS**

Matt Skeels

**Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners**

Herb Lemcool

**Grand Traverse County Drain Commissioner**

Kevin McElyea

**Grand Traverse Conservation District**

Steve Largent

**Grand Traverse County Health Department**

Fred Keesler

**Traverse City Police Department**

Joe McCarthy

**Traverse City Fire Department**

Jim Tuller

**Traverse City Water Treatment Plant**

Carl Holder

**Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians**

Randy Stites, Fire Chief

**Cherry Capital Airport**

Kevin Klein, Assistant Airport Manager

## II. TRANSMITTAL LETTER

Date

Mike Sobocinski  
Michigan State Police Emergency Management Division  
4000 Collins Road  
PO Box 30636  
Lansing MI 48909-8136

Dear Mr. Sobocinski:

Enclosed, please find the Grand Traverse County natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. This Plan has been developed in conjunction with the County Emergency Management Staff, County Planner, Task Force Members, the public, and the State of Michigan. The Plan lays out the process of evaluating the potential natural hazards, land use, and mitigation strategies to protect lives and property in the County.

This transmittal letter serves notice that all future development decisions in Grand Traverse County will consider hazard vulnerability reduction as a standard practice. The intent of the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan is not to limit development, but to ensure that all development occurs in a manner that minimizes the possibility of damage from potential natural hazards to the greatest extent possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Grand Traverse County Emergency Management Staff, Keith DeYoung at 231.922.4751.

Sincerely,

County Board Chair

### III. PREFACE

Hazard mitigation is any action taken before, during, or after a disaster to permanently eliminate or reduce the long-term risk to human life and property from natural and technological hazards. This procedure is an essential element of emergency management, along with preparedness, response, and recovery. Emergency management includes four phases: a community prepares for a disaster; responds when it occurs; and then there is a transition into the recovery process, during which mitigation measures are evaluated and adopted. The evaluation improves the preparedness posture of the County for the next incident, and so on. When successful, mitigation will lessen the impacts of natural hazards to such a degree that succeeding incidents will remain incidents and not become disasters.

Reducing the impact of natural hazards on people and property through the coordination of resources, programs, and authorities prevents communities from contributing to the increasing severity of the problems. Mitigation allows repairs and reconstruction to be completed after an incident occurs in such a way that does not just restore the damaged property as quickly as possible to pre-disaster conditions. This process is needed to ensure that such cycles are broken, that post-disaster repairs and reconstruction take place after damages are analyzed, and that sounder, less vulnerable conditions are produced. Through a combination of regulatory, administrative, and engineering approaches, losses can be limited by reducing susceptibility to damage.

Recognizing the importance of reducing community vulnerability to natural hazards, Grand Traverse County is actively addressing the issue through the development and implementation of this plan. The many benefits to be realized from this effort are:

1. Protection of the public health and safety;
2. Preservation of essential services;
3. Prevention of property damage; and
4. Preservation of the local economic base.

This process will help ensure that Grand Traverse County remains a vibrant, safe, enjoyable place in which to live, raise a family, continue to conduct business, and maintain a tourist base.

#### IV. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2000, the Disaster Mitigation Act shifted the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) scope of work to promoting and supporting prevention, or what is called hazard mitigation planning. FEMA now requires government entities to have natural hazards mitigation plans in place as a condition for receiving grant money, such as hazard mitigation grant program funds, in the future.

To meet this requirement, the Michigan State Police provided funding to regional planning agencies throughout the State of Michigan to work with individual counties in developing their Natural Hazards Mitigation Plans. For northwest, lower Michigan the **Northwest Michigan Hazard Mitigation Planning Project** was coordinated by the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) and included the ten county area of Emmet, Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska, Missaukee, Wexford, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Benzie, and Manistee. NWMCOG worked with the Task Forces and developed plans for the counties. These plans included a general community profile, a comprehensive inventory of existing natural hazards, a natural hazards analysis, goals and objectives, and feasible mitigation strategies to address the prioritized hazards.

The Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan focuses on the following natural hazards - drought, wildfires, flooding, shoreline erosion, ground subsidence/landslides, thunderstorms and high winds, and severe winter weather, and was created to protect the health, safety, and economic interests of the residents and businesses by reducing the impacts of natural hazards through planning, awareness, and implementation. Through this Plan, a broad perspective was taken in examining multiple natural hazards mitigation activities and opportunities in Grand Traverse County. Each natural hazard was analyzed from a historical perspective, evaluated for potential risk, and considered for possible mitigative action.

The Plan serves as the foundation for natural hazard mitigation activities and actions within Grand Traverse County, and will be a resource for building coordination and cooperation within the community for local control of future mitigation and community preparedness around the following:

#### **Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Goals for Grand Traverse County:**

*Goal 1: Increase local participation in natural hazards mitigation*

*Goal 2: Integrate natural hazards mitigation considerations into the community's planning process*

*Goal 3: Utilize available resources and apply for others for natural hazards mitigation projects*

*Goal 4: Develop and complete natural hazards mitigation projects in a timely manner*

#### **The Grand Traverse County Task Force participants designated the following top Natural Hazards Mitigation Priority Areas:**

1. County: Potential of severe thunderstorms and high winds
2. County: Severe winter weather
3. Boardman River (dams and bridges): Potential of flooding
4. County: Potential wildfire/urban interface

5. *Grand Traverse Bay: Peninsula, East Bay, Acme Townships; Traverse City: Potential of erosion and ice damage*

**And, recommended the following mitigation strategies – prioritized in bold:**

**Priority Area 1. Potential of severe thunderstorms and high winds throughout the County**

*Thunderstorm, High Winds, and Tornado Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Establish a short and fast, early warning weather system**
- b. **Establish a reverse warning system (911)**
- c. **Establish storm shelters, especially at campgrounds**
- d. Utilize a ham radio channel for local warnings
- e. Promote the establishment of the State of Michigan's Primary Radio Communication system for throughout the County
- f. Work with Utility Companies
  - Tree management
  - Promotion of burying utility lines in new construction
  - Burying power lines in high outage areas
- g. Identify potential wind damage areas
- h. Establish new generators where needed
- i. Have a debris removal plan for safety

**Priority Area 2. Potential of severe winter weather throughout the County**

*Snow Load Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Establish a short and fast, early warning weather system**
- b. **Establish a reverse warning system (911)**
- c. **Continue enforcement of building code regarding snow load limits through the permitting process**
- d. Utilize a ham radio channel for local warnings
- e. Promote the establishment of the State of Michigan's Primary Radio Communication system for throughout the County

**Priority Area 3. Potential of flooding along the Boardman River (dams and bridges)**

*Flood Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Removal of unsafe dams on the Boardman River (3)**
- b. **Drainage improvements a high flooding potential areas**
- c. **Continue enforcement of building codes and soil erosion regulations**

**Priority Area 4. Potential wildfire/urban interface throughout the County**

*Wildfire Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Public education and awareness activities such as programs and brochures regarding fuel management, proper vegetation, fire breaks; and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources flyers and the Federal Emergency Management Administration information at parks and campgrounds**
- b. **Assess fire suppression access and make improvements**

- c. **Continue enforcement of state fire codes regarding setback requirements**
- d. Real estate and insurance agents to distribute information
- e. Research the Department of Natural Resources' State Forest wildfire/urban interface rules or plan

**Priority Area 5. Potential of erosion and ice damage along Grand Traverse Bay and Peninsula Township**

*Landslide and Debris Flow Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Drainage control projects**
- b. **Public Education**
- c. **Enforcement of building codes (there is building now where no one would have built before)**
- d. Enforcement of soil erosion statutes/permits – water levels rising in the future at new construction sites built in low water level cycle
- e. Enforcement of the grading levels no more than 10%
- f. Placement of vegetation and utilizing native vegetation

**Other mitigation strategies:**

- **Public education and awareness activities**
- **Work towards uniform mapping and zoning throughout the county for natural hazards mitigation**
- **Incorporate the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan into the County's Master Plan and local zoning ordinances if in place.**

The Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan was recommended by the Grand Traverse County Planning Commission on \_\_\_\_\_ to the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners for adoption. The Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners adopted the Plan on \_\_\_\_\_.

## V. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 shifted the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) scope of work to promoting and supporting prevention, or what is called Hazard Mitigation Planning. FEMA has now required government entities to create natural hazards mitigation plans as a condition of receiving grant money, such as hazard mitigation grant program funds. To meet this requirement, the Michigan State Police funded regional planning agencies to work with individual counties to develop the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plans. The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments was the agency to develop this Plan.

The **purpose of the Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan** is to find solutions to existing problems; anticipate future problems; prevent wasteful public and private expenditures; protect property values; and allocate land resources. The implementation of the Plan is to prevent injury, loss of life, property damage, breakdown in vital services like transportation and infrastructure, economic slumps, diminished tourist activity, liability issues, and damage to a community's reputation. For Grand Traverse County in the northwest region of the lower peninsula of Michigan, the **planning process** utilized the following steps in the development of the Plan. Emphasis was placed on natural hazards that have had significant impact on the community in the past.

1. Identification of natural hazards and risks
2. Preparation of draft plan
3. Identification of natural hazards mitigation goals and objectives for emergency management programs
4. Selection of evaluation criteria
5. Selection of mitigation strategies using locally chosen criteria
6. Public Comment
7. Completion of the final plan

The Plan also lays out the implementation of the plan, and the monitoring and periodic revision of the plan.

### *What is a Hazard?*

A **hazard** is an event or physical condition that has potential to cause fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural loss, damage to the environment, interruption of business, or other types of harm or loss. This plan focuses on natural hazards such as drought, earthquakes, extreme temperatures, wildfires, urban and riverine flooding, high or wind driven waters that cause shoreline flooding and erosion, ground subsidence/ landslides, thunderstorms and high winds, tornadoes, and winter weather hazards. This Plan is intended to be a resource for building coordination and cooperation within a community for local control of future mitigation and community preparedness.

In the State of Michigan, the **principle natural hazards** are:

- Tornadoes
- Flooding
- Lightning
- Severe winds
- Severe winter weather (snow, ice, sleet)

These principle natural hazards events have caused the top impacts to be erosion/debris flow, frozen pipes, and floods.

Governor Declarations for major disasters in the State of Michigan that occurred from 1977 to 2001 include:

- Thirteen (13) severe storms
- Eleven (11) floods
- Eight (8) winter storms
- Six (6) tornadoes
- Three (3) fires

***What is Mitigation?***

Mitigation is the sustained action taken to lessen the impact from natural hazards and to work to reduce the long-term risk to human life and property, and their effects. This long-term planning distinguishes mitigation from actions geared primarily to emergency preparedness and short-term recovery. This Plan can be used to lessen the impact; to support and be compatible with community goals; to lay out considerations in choosing and evaluating methods; and to look at the feasibility of mitigation strategies.

## VI. COMMUNITY PROFILE

The community data located below is provided to describe Grand Traverse County for planning and implementing the mitigation strategies.

### Major Geographic Features of Grand Traverse County

Miles of Great Lakes shoreline	56 miles
Area in Water	17,792
Forest Lands	175,800 acres 59.1% of total land area
Wetlands	43,894 acres 14.7% of total land area
Operating Farms (2002)	489
Farmland (2002)	62,268 acres

The total County population is **77,654**. The projected growth for 2010 is 93,428 and for 2020 it is 106,328. The population numbers from the 2000 Census for the **13 Townships; 1 City; 2 Villages**:

Township	Population
Acme	4,332
Blair	6,448
East Bay	9,919
Fife Lake	1,517
-- Fife Lake	466
Garfield	13,840
Grant	947
Green Lake	5,009
Long Lake	7,648
Mayfield	1,271
Paradise	4,191
-- Kingsley	1,469
Peninsula	5,265
Traverse City (part)	14,383
Union	417
Whitewater	2,467

**Please see Attachment C. Population Density Map**

### County Resident Profile

1. There are approximately 37,235 Housing Units in Grand Traverse County with an average household size of 2.49 people per household. 36.4% of the households have 2 persons.
2. The number of residents 65 years and over is 10,144, or 13.1% of the population.

3. The number of residents 19 years and under 21,721, or 28% of the population.
4. The number if residents over 65 with a disability is 3,493, or 4% of the population.
5. The total number of residents with a disability is 11,887, or 15% of the population.
6. The number of residents that have a language barrier or are linguistically isolated is 259, or less than 1% of the population. There is an increase of migrant workers in the summer and fall season that do not speak English.
7. Percent below poverty level:  
February 2004 Poverty level: \$15,670 Family of 3 and \$9,310 Family of 1
  - Families in poverty with children: 577
  - Income less than \$15,000: 13.9%
  - Individuals in poverty: 4,490

### 1997 Economic Census

Industry Description	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees
Manufacturing	190	5,867
Wholesale trade	167	1,580
Retail trade	634	7,300
Real estate, rental, leasing	113	441
Professional, scientific, technical services	284	1,990
Administrative, support, waste management, remediation services	146	2,451
Educational Services	9	43
Health care, social assistance	272	2,175
Arts, entertainment, recreation	40	371
Accommodation and food services	223	3,895
Other services (except public administration)	187	1,045
<b>Merchant Wholesalers</b>		
Wholesale trade	140	1,291
Manufacturers' Sales Branches and Sales Offices	19	274
Agents, Brokers, and Commission Merchants	8	15

\*Information provided above was retrieved from the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments' *Benchmarks 2004, Northwest Lower Michigan County Profiles 2000*, and reports on the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments' website.

## VII. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

### A. Data Methodology and Map Development

Grand Traverse County staff identified the critical facilities and infrastructure on the base map with the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments' GIS staff then digitizing the facilities as point files. Natural hazards points, polygons, and population centers data was then added to the base maps utilizing the following data:

#### ***Critical Infrastructure***

3	Airports Traverse City – 401,803 passengers in 2000
1	Bus Terminal
95	Churches
1	Coast Guard
5	Dams
1	Emergency Management Services Facility
14	Fire Stations
45	Government Buildings
1	Hospital
4	Industrial Facilities
5	Law Enforcement
11	Medical Facilities • Primary physicians per 100,000 population 1998 is 102.5
9	Mobile Home Parks
10	Post Offices
200	Resort/Recreation
44	Schools/Library
1	Sewage Treatment Facilities • 40.1% public sewer • 58.9% individual septic/cesspool • 1.0% other
10	Utility
9	Water Tower • 40.1% public system or private company • 63.0% individual wells

#### ***Flood Data***

Flood hazard information can usually be derived from the Flood Rate Insurance Maps (FIRM) available for jurisdictions. In order to delineate potential flood plain areas (seasonal floodplains) for each county, NWMCOG overlaid wetland, soils, and elevation data to determine the most likely flood prone areas. Once overlaid, isolated polygons (areas) were removed in order to show a more accurate representation of potential flood prone areas along lakes, rivers, and streams. Sources: Temporary/Seasonally Flooded Areas data are from the National Wetland Inventory of the US Fish and Wildlife Service; Hydric soils data are from the county digital soil surveys (where available); and Digital Elevation Model data are from the Center for Geographic Information, Michigan Department of Information Technology.

### ***Fire Data***

Modern forest fire data were obtained from the USDA forest service and the Departments of Natural Resources in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Fire regimes data (fire prone areas) were provided by the USDA Forest Service, North Central Research Station located in Wisconsin. Land type associations, and historical and modern fire rotations were used to identify the fire prone areas.

***Tornadoes*** - National Weather Service

***Damaging Winds*** - National Weather Service

***Large Hail*** - National Weather Service

***Winter Weather*** - National Weather Service

### ***Landslide/Erosion***

Shoreline erosion and landslide incident zones delineated by the US Geological Service. Digital Elevation Model data from the Center for Geographic Information, Michigan Department of Information Technology.

***Other hazards*** may exist in northwest Michigan communities, but are not considered to be substantial risks.

**The detailed Grand Traverse County Map is presented in Appendix B. #1.**

## **B. Natural Hazards Information**

### ***1. Natural Hazards and Climate Change***

Scientists are now convinced that human activity, primarily the burning of fossil fuels to produce electricity and drive cars, is changing the climate. These activities emit gases, primarily carbon dioxide, that blanket the planet and trap heat. Some of the signs of climate changes we are seeing already throughout the Great Lakes region include increasing average annual temperatures; more frequent severe rainstorms; shorter winters; and duration of lake ice cover. In general, Michigan's climate will grow considerably warmer and probably drier during this century, especially in the summer.

### ***Potential Impacts from Climate Change***

Northwest, lower Michigan depends heavily on groundwater, freshwater from Lake Michigan, and rainfall for agriculture, drinking, and industrial uses. As the population in this region continues to grow, the demand for water for all the needs increases. The projected changes in rainfall, evaporation, and groundwater recharge rates from climate change events may affect ecosystems and freshwater users.

- Lower summer water levels are likely to diminish the recharge of groundwater, cause small streams to dry up, and reduce the area of wetlands, resulting in poorer water quality and less habitat for wildlife.

- Lake levels are expected to decline in both inland lakes and the Great Lakes, as more moisture evaporates due to warmer temperatures and less ice cover.
- Pressure to increase water extraction from the Great Lakes will grow, exacerbating an already contentious debate in the region.
- Development and climate change will degrade the flood-absorbing capacities of wetlands and floodplains, resulting in increased erosion, flooding, and runoff polluted with nutrients, pesticides, and other toxins.

## 2. *Natural Hazards Recorded Events*

Data for weather events was compiled from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) website utilizing the following sections:

- Weather/Climate Events, Information, Assessments
- Climatology and Extreme Events
- U.S. Storm Events Data Base: 1950 to present, local storm reports, damage reports, etc. from various sources – events checked for Grand Traverse County included drought, flooding, funnel clouds, hail, lightning, snow and ice, thunderstorms and high winds, tornadoes, wild/forest fires.

The most severe events recorded for Grand Traverse County are listed below, including the number of events, dates, and descriptions of the most severe.

1. Drought – August 2001 (county): The stress on the crops was most noted for corn, but also hit hay crops to a lesser extent.
2. Fire – 17 events 10 acres or more
  - 1985: 13 acres, Whitewater Township
  - 1985: 10 acres, East Bay Township
  - 1987: 14 acres, Union Township
  - 1987: 10 acres, Whitewater Township
  - 1987: 10 acres, Paradise Township
  - 1988: 40 acres, Green Lake Township
  - 1990: 18 acres, Mayfield Township
  - 1990: 16 acres, Blair Township
  - 1992: 13 acres, Fife Lake
  - 1994: 148 acres, Whitewater Township
  - 1994: 105 acres, Union Township
  - 1994: 25 acres, East Bay Township
  - 1995: 23 acres, Union Township
  - 1995: 13 acres, Union Township
  - 1998: 11 acres, Green Lake Township
  - 1999: 26 acres, Whitewater Township
  - 1999: 17 acres, Long Lake
  -
2. Flooding – 7 events
  - January 1993: flooding (county and region); \$5,000 property damage; rainfall and snowmelt

- March 1993: flood (county and region)
  - April 1993: flood (county and region); \$5 million
  - July 1999: flash flood (county); small creeks overflowing their banks with secondary streets covered with water; Traverse City had several secondary streets flooded with the worst along East Front Street and 14<sup>th</sup> Street; one downtown business had minor basement flooding
  - July 2000: flash flood (county); heavy rain flooded city streets in Traverse City
  - September 2000: flash flood (county); flooding up to 4 feet on some city streets, numerous basements flooded, 60 mph wind gust, one inch diameter hail
  - April 2001: flood (county); rainfall and snowmelt; high water on the Boardman River which rose into yards but did not damage any structures
3. Hail – 14 events
- April 1975: 1.50 inch hail
  - June 1980: 2.00 inch hail
  - June 2000: 1.75 inch hail
  - September 2000: 1.00 inch hail; flooding up to 4 feet on some city streets, numerous basements flooded, 60 mph wind gust
  - June 2003: .75 inch hail; wind damage and marginally large hail
  - August 2003: .88 inch hail; wind damage and large hail
4. Lightning – 5 events
- March 2000: (county) \$20,000 property damage; lightning sparked a huge explosion at an oil company in Blair Township
  - September 2000: (county and Traverse City) one death, one injury, \$20,000 property damage; lightning struck the garage of a residential home and set it on fire; power outages to hundreds of homes and businesses in the Traverse City area; one man was killed by lightning and his son received minor injuries
  - April 2002: (county) \$125,000 property damage; a home was destroyed by fire caused by lightning strike near Old Mission
5. Snow and Ice – 51 events (12 inches or more of snow)
- January 1993: \$50,000 property damage (region) heavy snow
  - April 1993: \$50,000 property damage (region) heavy snow
  - December 1993: (region) heavy snow 10 to 15 inches; numerous accidents with several injuries
  - January 1994: \$5.0 million property damage (region) heavy snow/freezing rain
  - January 1997: heavy snow (county) 12 to 18 inches
  - February 1999: winter storm (region) heavy wet snow created hazardous driving conditions contributing to many accidents
  - December 2002: ice storm (region) quarter inch of ice causing icy road and sidewalks
  - March 2002: 10-16 inches of heavy snow/winter storm (region); also freezing rain and sleet; trees and power lines down
  - January 2004: heavy snow (4 county region) lake effect 20 inches of snow with 5 to 6 foot drifts across M-72

6. Thunderstorm and High Wind – 45 events
  - July 1995: thunderstorm and wind (Acme); 52 knots with trees down
  - May 1998: thunderstorm and wind (Traverse City); 50 knots with numerous trees and power lines down
  - September 1998: thunderstorm and wind (county); 52 knots with trees snapped off and/or uprooted
  - February 1999: thunderstorm and wind (Traverse City); 50 knots with a tree toppled on power lines
  - June 1999: thunderstorm and wind (Traverse City); 52 knots with trees and power lines down
  - June 1999: thunderstorm and wind (Interlochen); 50 knots with trees down
  - July 1999: thunderstorm and wind (Traverse City); 60 knots with trees and power lines down; one building destroyed; numerous reports of straight line wind damage
  - August 2001: thunderstorm and wind (Traverse City and Williamsburg); 50 knots with trees and power lines down
  - September 2001: strong wind (3 county region); 40 mph gusts with waves in excess of 10 feet on Lake Michigan causing several boats on Grand Traverse Bay to break loose from their moorings and wash up on shore
  - April 2002: thunderstorm and wind (Traverse City and Kingsley); \$15,000 property damage; 50-60 knots with large trees limbs, trees, and power lines down; roof blown off building in Kingsley
  - July 2002: thunderstorm and wind (Traverse City and Fife Lake); 50-65 knots with numerous trees and power lines down
  - August 2003: thunderstorm and wind (Acme); 50 knots with large tree down
  - November 2003: high wind (region); 68 knots with trees and power lines down producing wide power outages
  
7. Tornadoes – 4 events
  - April 1956: (county) F4; 15 miles long, 400 yards wide; \$250,000 property damage
  - September 1961: (county) F3; 14 miles long, 33 yards wide; \$25,000 property damage
  - May 1964: (county) F2; 17 miles long, 440 yards wide; \$250,000 property damage
  - June 1969: (county); F3: 6 miles, 600 yards wide; \$250,000 property damage

3. *Probability of Natural Hazards:*

The probability that a natural hazard such as hail, thunderstorm and high wind, tornadoes, and snow and ice will affect this area of Michigan is an annual possibility. The magnitude and severity depends on the season, which determines temperature, moisture in the air, ice cover on the lakes, etc. Also, the severity of an event is connected with tourist activity during the year, the pace of developing second homes, and an increasing base population in northwest, lower Michigan which in turn leads to more development. The events recorded by NOAA show that natural hazard events may be happening more frequently, but the geographic impact of the natural hazards' impact has remained the same in Grand Traverse County.

The areas where natural hazards overlap in Grand Traverse County can include heavy snow that causes trees and power lines down, and then melting, rain and flooding.

**Please see Appendix C: Risk Assessment Summary Table.**

**C. Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Task Force and Public Input**

To create the Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Task Force, invitations for the meetings were sent to the following entities requesting their participation:

County Clerk  
County Board of Commissioners  
County Sheriff/Emergency Services (911 Services Coordinators, Public Safety)  
County Emergency Manager/Coordinator  
County Health Department Director  
County Planning or Community Development Director  
County Drain Commissioner/Soil Erosion Officers  
County Road Commission Director  
County Conservation District Director/Soil Erosion Officers  
Township elected and appointed officials  
Township Supervisors  
Township Clerks  
Michigan State Police  
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Michigan Department of Transportation  
U.S. Coast Guard  
Hospitals  
City/Village Maintenance/Utilities  
Environmental/Conservation Groups/Organizations  
American Red Cross  
Groundwater Protection Organizations  
Housing Associations  
Chambers of Commerce  
National Weather Service (Gaylord)  
Michigan Family Independence Agencies

The Task Force meeting was held on **January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005** to identify the natural hazards priority areas and to develop the mitigation strategies for the priority issues. Participants in the meeting and review included representatives from:

**Grand Traverse County Emergency Management**  
Keith DeYoung, 911/Homeland Security

**Grand Traverse County Planning Department/TC TALUS**  
Matt Skeels

**Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners**  
Herb Lemcool

## **Grand Traverse County Health Department**

Fred Keesler

## **Traverse City Police Department**

Joe McCarthy

## **Traverse City Fire Department**

Jim Tuller

## **Traverse City Water Treatment Plant**

Carl Holder

## **Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians**

Randy Stites, Fire Chief

At the Task Force meeting, the NWMCOG staff presented the background of the required project; the principle natural hazards in Michigan; what mitigation planning is; the purpose of the plan; suggested goals; and the political process. A full county natural hazards map was available for review with four separate quadrant maps. These sectional maps were for the participants to review the areas of the county they were most familiar with.

The group analyzed the map areas for the top natural hazards priority areas by documenting the most threatening. They did a qualitative assessment of points and concerns where they saw potential conflicts with and the relationship to critical facilities and population centers. The general list created included:

1. Thunderstorms
2. High winds
3. Heavy rain and agriculture
4. Mobile home parks
5. National Cherry Festival Emergency Plan
6. More communication and notification
7. Ingress and egress at campgrounds
8. Construction area
9. Interlochen Arts Academy area
10. Severe winter weather
11. Hail and frost affecting agriculture
12. Power outages
13. Flooding in the Boardman River area, dams, bridges
14. Wildfires – county, but main areas Cedar Run, Blair Township, Kingsley
15. Erosion along Grand Traverse Bay and Peninsula Township
16. Ice damage

The participants then took the complete list above and developed their Top Five Natural Hazards Priority Areas. Due to the rural nature of the county, there has not been a lot of property damage, injuries, or deaths due to natural hazards. **Please refer to Figure 1.**

## **Top Five Natural Hazards Priority Areas**

**1. Potential of severe thunderstorms and high winds throughout the County, also the concern regarding mobile home parks, campgrounds, construction areas, Interlochen Arts Academy, National Cherry Festival**

There is a historical record of severe thunderstorms, high winds, and tornado events in the county. Thunderstorms are natural hazards that bring a variety of problems during the spring, summer, and fall seasons. They can bring potential lightning, flash flooding, hail, strong winds, and even tornadoes. Severe winds, or straight line winds that sometimes occur during severe thunderstorms can be very damaging to a community. Severe winds have the potential to cause loss of life from property damage and flying debris. Damage from straight line winds is more widespread than tornadoes and usually affects multiple counties. There is also risk of infrastructure damage from downed power lines due to falling trees and limbs.

**2. Potential of severe winter weather throughout the County**

Snowstorms can be very dangerous for a community for short periods of time. Heavy snows can shut down towns and businesses for a period of a few days if the snow is falling faster than it can be cleared in a timely fashion. Blowing and drifting with blizzard conditions cause driving hazards.

**3. Potential of flooding along the Boardman River (dams and bridges) – Townships of Garfield, Blair, Paradise, East Bay, Union; City of Traverse City**

Damages will probably be greater from flash flood types of events than they would from gradual floodplain inundation, especially regarding the dams and bridges.

In addition to “regular” flooding in a riverine floodplain, other flooding may involve low-lying areas that collect runoff waters; flaws or shortcomings in existing sewer infrastructure; undersized or poorly designed stormwater control practices; collective effects of land use and development trends; illegal diversion of water, or actions that interfere with the river/floodplain system function.

**4. Potential wildfire/urban interface throughout the County**

The forest types that have a potential to be fire prone are located throughout the county – white/red pine, and white pine and hemlock. Additional factors that increase fire risk include lightning and human factors are the number of persons residing in (trash burning), camping in, or traveling through an area.

**5. Potential of erosion and ice damage along Grand Traverse Bay and Peninsula Township**

Shoreline erosion hazards involve the loss of property as sand or soil is removed by water action and carried away over time. This can cause structures to stand perilously close to waters or bluffs. The foundation of a structure, or underground utility pipes in the area, may become fully exposed and vulnerable to weather, extreme temperatures, water damage, or other sources of risk. Shoreline roadways whose banks erode and cause the road surface to crack, become unstable, or more prone to deposits of sand, snow, water, and ice from nearby beaches and water bodies.

Soil erosion and stormwater runoff hazards can involve the loss of property along waterways and natural drainage areas as sand or soil is removed by water action and carried away over time. The foundation of a structure, or underground utility pipes in the area, may become fully exposed and vulnerable to weather, extreme temperatures, water damage, or other sources of risk. Roadways can also be washed away by stormwater and can cause the road surface to crack, become unstable, or more prone to deposits of sand, snow, water, and ice.

Please refer to Appendix B. #2 Priority Area Maps.

#### **D. Emergency Warning System Coverage**

*Tornado/Severe Weather Systems:* There are no warning sirens in the county. Weather alert radios were purchased and distributed to all the schools, nursery schools, and senior homes.

*Flood warning system:* There are sirens located at Logan Valley and River Road for dam failures/flooding downstream.

#### **E. Economic Impact Analysis**

The total Damaging Events' Costs recorded since 1950 with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for Grand Traverse County, the region, and the state are as follows:

1.	Drought -	\$0
2.	Flooding -	\$5,005,000
3.	Hail -	\$0
4.	Lightning -	\$165,000
2.	Snow and Ice -	\$5,100,000
3.	Thunderstorms and High Wind -	\$170,000
4.	Tornadoes -	\$775,000

NWMCOG staff worked with the Grand Traverse County Equalization Department to calculate each Priority Area's economic value through the State Equalized Values (SEV) for real and personal property (residential and commercial). The following includes the 2000 Census data for the priority area and the SEV dollar amount times two (estimated fair market values) for each priority area.

##### *1. Grand Traverse County*

Population: 77,654 plus seasonal influx during the summer  
 Total: \$9,238,630,124

##### *2. Grand Traverse County*

Population: 77,654 plus seasonal influx during the summer  
 Total: \$9,238,630,124

3. *Boardman River Area*

Population: 17,103 plus seasonal influx during the summer  
Total: \$143,136,276

4. *Grand Traverse County*

Population: 77,654 plus seasonal influx during the summer  
Total: \$9,238,630,124

5. *Peninsula, East Bay, Acme, Townships and Traverse City*

Population: 12,246 plus seasonal influx during the summer  
Total: \$1,654,153,246

## VIII. NATURAL HAZARDS MITIGATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan is to protect the health and safety of the public and property in the County which includes prevention of injury, loss of life, property damage, breakdown in vital services like transportation and infrastructure, economic slumps, maintain tourist base, and liability issues. This is done by taking action to permanently eliminate or reduce the long-term risks from natural hazards.

Specific goals and objectives have been established based upon the community's natural hazards analysis, as well as input from the Task Force participants and the public through meetings, posting of the draft plan with a request for comments in the local newspaper and on the NWMCOG website, and the presentation of the plan to the Grand Traverse County Planning Commission.

### **Goal 1: Increase local awareness and participation in natural hazards mitigation strategies**

#### *Objectives:*

- A. Encourage cooperation and communication between planning and emergency management officials
- B. Encourage additional local governmental agencies to participate in the natural hazards mitigation process
- C. Encourage public and private organizations to participate

### **Goal 2: Integrate natural hazards mitigation considerations into the community's comprehensive planning process**

#### *Objectives:*

- A. Enforce and/or incorporate natural hazards mitigation provisions in building code standards, ordinances, and procedures
- B. Create or update ordinances to reflect building codes, shoreline protection rules, etc.
- C. Incorporate natural hazards mitigation into basic land use regulation mechanisms
- D. Develop community education programs and public warning systems
- E. Strengthen the role of the Local Emergency Planning Committee in the land development process
- F. Integrate natural hazards mitigation into the capital improvement planning process so that public infrastructure does not lead to development in natural hazards areas
- G. Encourage county agencies to assess local roads, bridges, dams, and related transportation infrastructure for natural hazards vulnerability

### **Goal 3: Utilize available resources and apply for additional funding for natural hazards mitigation**

#### *Objectives:*

- A. Provide a list of desired community mitigation measures to the State
- B. Encourage the application for project funding from diverse entities

### **Goal 4: Develop and complete natural hazards mitigation projects in a timely manner**

#### *Objectives:*

- A. Encourage public and business involvement in natural hazards mitigation projects

## **IX. IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION OF MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

### **A. Climate Change Solutions**

Regional residents, business leaders, and policymakers can help reduce the potential impacts from climate change by pursuing three necessary and complementary strategies:

- Reducing heat-trapping gas emissions will help curb the threat from a changing climate. This can be achieved by increasing energy efficiency, switching to renewable energy sources such as wind and biomass, increasing the fuel economy of vehicles, and investing in clean transportation choices.
- Minimize pressures on the environment by improving air quality, protecting the quality and supply of water resources, protecting habitat, and limiting sprawl.
- Prepare for impacts from global warming that cannot be avoided through better planning and emergency preparedness, adaptations in agriculture, strengthening public health response and warning systems, and adjusting flood control infrastructure based on projected precipitation trends.

### **B. Selection of Feasible Mitigation Strategies**

A set of evaluation criteria was developed to determine which mitigation strategies were best suited to address the identified problems in Grand Traverse County.

1. The measure must be technically feasible.
2. The measure must be financially feasible.
3. The measure must be environmentally sound and not cause any permanent, significant environmental concerns.
4. The measure must be acceptable to those participating in the strategy and/or primarily affected by the strategy.

By anticipating future problems, the County can reduce potential injury, structure losses, loss of power, such as electric and gas, and prevent wasteful public and private expenditures.

At the Task Force meeting in **January 2005**, the participants reviewed the suggested list of natural hazards mitigation strategies, matched them with each of the natural hazards priority areas, and also suggested other alternatives to create a list of the most desired strategies for each.

#### **1. Potential of severe thunderstorms and high winds throughout the County**

*Thunderstorm, High Winds, and Tornado Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. Establish a short and fast, early warning weather system
- b. Establish storm shelters, especially at campgrounds
- c. Utilize a ham radio channel for local warnings
- d. Promote the establishment of the State of Michigan's Primary Radio Communication system for throughout the County
- e. Establish a reverse warning system (911)
- f. Work with Utility Companies
- g. Tree management

- h. Promotion of burying utility lines in new construction
- i. Burying power lines in high outage areas
- j. Identify potential wind damage areas
- k. Establish new generators where needed
- l. Have a debris removal plan for safety

## **2. Potential of severe winter weather throughout the County**

### *Snow Load Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. Continue enforcement of building code regarding snow load limits through the permitting process
- b. Establish a short and fast, early warning weather system
- c. Utilize a ham radio channel for local warnings
- d. Promote the establishment of the State of Michigan's Primary Radio Communication system for throughout the County
- e. Establish a reverse warning system (911)

## **3. Potential of flooding along the Boardman River (dams and bridges)**

### *Flood Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. Removal of unsafe dams on the Boardman River (3)
- b. Drainage improvements in high flooding potential areas
- c. Continue enforcement of building codes and soil erosion regulations

## **4. Potential wildfire/urban interface throughout the County**

### *Wildfire Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. Public education and awareness activities such as programs and brochures regarding fuel management, proper vegetation, fire breaks
- b. Continue enforcement of state fire codes regarding setback requirements
- c. Public education utilizing the Michigan Department of Natural Resources flyers and the Federal Emergency Management Administration information at parks and campgrounds
- d. Real estate and insurance agents to distribute information
- e. Assess fire suppression access and make improvements
- f. Research the Department of Natural Resources' State Forest wildfire/urban interface rules or plan

## **5. Potential of erosion and ice damage along Grand Traverse Bay and Peninsula Township**

### *Landslide and Debris Flow Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. Drainage control projects
- b. Enforcement of soil erosion statutes/permits – water levels rising at new construction sites
- c. Enforcement of building codes (there is building now where no one would have built before)
- d. Enforcement of the grading levels no more than 10%
- e. Placement of vegetation and utilizing native vegetation

**Other mitigation strategies:**

- **Public education and awareness activities**
- **Work towards uniform mapping and zoning throughout the county for natural hazards mitigation**
- **Incorporate the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan into the County's Master Plan and local zoning ordinances if in place.**

## **X. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY NATURAL HAZARDS MITIGATION PLAN**

### **1. *Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Managers and Technical Assistance***

The leader for implementing the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan is the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners, with the staff leader being the Emergency Management staff and Planning Staff. Working partnerships can be established with the following to provide technical assistance to accomplish the goals and objectives of the Plan.

Grand Traverse County Government Staff  
Townships, cities, and villages  
Grand Traverse County Conservation District  
Grand Traverse County Drain Commissioner  
Grand Traverse County Road Commission  
Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians  
Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy  
The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay  
New Designs for Growth  
Michigan State University Extension  
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Insurance Companies  
Real Estate Companies

All natural hazards mitigation planning could be pursued with the new tool available to the local governments which is Michigan Public Act 226 of 2003, the Joint Municipal Planning Act. This Act provides for joint land use planning by cities, villages, and townships, and allows two or more municipalities' legislative bodies to create a single joint planning commission to address planning issues. This tool helps with planning for the "big picture" issues such as natural hazards that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

The intent of this legislation is for local governments to consider the following:

- ☞ Individual units of government modifying their ordinances simultaneously to include language that would incorporate aspects of protection
- ☞ Developing an overlay zoning district that would cross jurisdictional boundaries which would be incorporated into existing independent units of government's zoning ordinances
- ☞ Forming a new joint (multi-jurisdictional) planning commission or zoning board
- ☞ Sharing zoning administration
- ☞ Sharing enforcement activities

## **2. Funding the Implementation of the Plan**

To assist with the funding of the proposed natural hazards mitigation strategies, here is a list of potential financial assistance entities to help fund the implementation projects of the Plan.

Federal Emergency Management Administration – Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development: Rural broadband opportunity – high speed telecommunication funding from the Public Telecommunications Facilities Planning and Construction grants

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Community, Regional Foundations

Businesses

## **3. Action Agenda**

Following is summary for accomplishing the **recommended natural hazards mitigation actions with priority actions in bold** for Grand Traverse County which includes the townships of Acme, Blair, East Bay, Fife Lake, Garfield, Grant, Green Lake, Long Lake, Mayfield, Paradise, Peninsula, Union, Whitewater; the City of Traverse City; the Villages of Fife Lake and Kingsley.

### **Priority Area 1. Potential of severe thunderstorms and high winds throughout the County**

*Thunderstorm, High Winds, and Tornado Mitigation Strategies:*

- j. Establish a short and fast, early warning weather system**
- k. Establish a reverse warning system (911)**
- l. Establish storm shelters, especially at campgrounds**
- m. Utilize a ham radio channel for local warnings
- n. Promote the establishment of the State of Michigan's Primary Radio Communication system for throughout the County
- o. Work with Utility Companies
  - Tree management
  - Promotion of burying utility lines in new construction
  - Burying power lines in high outage areas
- p. Identify potential wind damage areas
- q. Establish new generators where needed
- r. Have a debris removal plan for safety

### **Priority Area 2. Potential of severe winter weather throughout the County**

*Snow Load Mitigation Strategies:*

- f. Establish a short and fast, early warning weather system**
- g. Establish a reverse warning system (911)**

**h. Continue enforcement of building code regarding snow load limits through the permitting process**

- i. Utilize a ham radio channel for local warnings
- j. Promote the establishment of the State of Michigan's Primary Radio Communication system for throughout the County

**Priority Area 3. Potential of flooding along the Boardman River (dams and bridges) – townships of Garfield, East Bay, Union, and Paradise; City of Traverse City**

*Flood Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Removal of unsafe dams on the Boardman River (3)**
- b. **Drainage improvements a high flooding potential areas**
- c. **Continue enforcement of building codes and soil erosion regulations**

**Priority Area 4. Potential wildfire/urban interface throughout the County**

*Wildfire Mitigation Strategies:*

- f. **Public education and awareness activities such as programs and brochures regarding fuel management, proper vegetation, fire breaks; and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources flyers and the Federal Emergency Management Administration information at parks and campgrounds**
- g. **Assess fire suppression access and make improvements**
- h. **Continue enforcement of state fire codes regarding setback requirements**
- i. Real estate and insurance agents to distribute information
- j. Research the Department of Natural Resources' State Forest wildfire/urban interface rules or plan

**Priority Area 5. Potential of erosion and ice damage along Grand Traverse Bay – City of Traverse City and the townships of Peninsula, East Bay, and Acme**

*Landslide and Debris Flow Mitigation Strategies:*

- g. **Drainage control projects**
- h. **Public Education**
- i. **Enforcement of building codes (there is building now where no one would have built before)**
- j. Enforcement of soil erosion statutes/permits – water levels rising in the future at new construction sites built in low water level cycle
- k. Enforcement of the grading levels no more than 10%
- l. Placement of vegetation and utilizing native vegetation

**Other mitigation strategies:**

- **Public education and awareness activities**
- **Work towards uniform mapping and zoning throughout the county for natural hazards mitigation**
- **Incorporate the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan into the County's Master Plan and local zoning ordinances if in place.**

The County should consider the following key land use issues and the relationship to natural hazards mitigation:

- Safe, beneficial uses for natural hazards prone areas
- Concentration issues
- Proximity issues
- Location of public facilities and infrastructure
- Development standards for public facilities and infrastructure
- Effect of accumulated development on community systems and facilities

#### **4. *Monitoring and Evaluation***

The Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan will be monitored on a regular basis by the Emergency Management Staff and Planning Staff. Because Grand Traverse County is a dynamic, changing county with population growth, it is expected that the plan should be reviewed on an annual basis.

To assess the effectiveness of the Plan, some questions to ask in the review include: 1) How many and which mitigation strategies were developed? Implemented? 2) Did any new natural hazards events take place the past year to report? This review will be administered by the Emergency Management Coordinator with the Local Emergency Planning Committee, the County Planning Commission, and the public. If changes are needed, the plan will be presented to the Task Force participants for revisions.

Although review of the plan will occur annually, and a formal revision may not be needed each year, a new edition of the plan will be expected within every five year period. A continual process for updates will take place with annual reviews, monitoring, evaluation, and an accumulation of official feedback and public input through public notices. When it is appropriate to publish a revised version of the plan, the Task Force participants shall again be involved in the revision process. Each new edition of the plan will again be officially adopted by the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners.

## **XI. Review of the Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan**

The opportunities for review by other governmental entities and the public included the following:

- A. Quarterly reports were given to the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments' Board of Directors for neighboring counties' review.
- B. *A Public Notice was published in the Traverse City Record Eagle newspaper:*

### **Public Notice**

*The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments is requesting public comment on the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan draft for Grand Traverse County. The Plan is available for review at the Grand Traverse County Planning Department, County Building in Traverse City or at [nwm.org](http://nwm.org), Community Resources, Community and Economic Development, Hazard Mitigation Planning Program, Grand Traverse County Plan. Please send comments by September 6, 2005 to: Hazard Mitigation Plans, NWMCOG, PO Box 506, Traverse City MI 49685-0506.*

- C. Postcards that gave notice of the draft plan for review were sent to all the Township Supervisors.
- D. The Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan was presented to the Grand Traverse County Planning Commission where the meetings are posted in the newspaper and are open to the public. Commission members gave their input.
- E. The Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan was presented to the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners where the meetings are posted in the newspaper and are open to the public.

## **XII. NATURAL HAZARDS MITIGATION PLAN ADOPTION RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, Grand Traverse County, Michigan has experienced a few disasters that have damaged commercial, residential, and public properties, displaced citizens and businesses, closed streets and bridges, and presented general public health and safety concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, Grand Traverse County has prepared a *Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan* that outlines the County's options to reduce overall damage and impact from natural hazards; and

**WHEREAS**, the *Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan* has been reviewed by County residents, business owners, and federal state, and local agencies, and has been revised to reflect their concerns;

### **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT**

1. The *Grand Traverse County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan* is hereby adopted as an official plan of Grand Traverse County, Michigan.
2. The Emergency Management Coordinator and Planning Commission are charged with supervising the implementation of the Plan's recommendations within the funding limitations as provided by the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners or other sources.
3. Priority attention shall be given to the following action items recommended by the *Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan*:

#### **Priority Area 1. Potential of severe thunderstorms and high winds throughout the County**

*Thunderstorm, High Winds, and Tornado Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Establish a short and fast, early warning weather system**
- b. **Establish a reverse warning system (911)**
- c. **Establish storm shelters, especially at campgrounds**

#### **Priority Area 2. Potential of severe winter weather throughout the County**

*Snow Load Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Establish a short and fast, early warning weather system**
- b. **Establish a reverse warning system (911)**
- c. **Continue enforcement of building code regarding snow load limits through the permitting process**

#### **Priority Area 3. Potential of flooding along the Boardman River (dams and bridges)**

*Flood Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Removal of unsafe dams on the Boardman River (3)**
- b. **Drainage improvements a high flooding potential areas**
- c. **Continue enforcement of building codes and soil erosion regulations**

**Priority Area 4. Potential wildfire/urban interface throughout the County**

*Wildfire Mitigation Strategies:*

- a. **Public education and awareness activities such as programs and brochures regarding fuel management, proper vegetation, fire breaks; and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources flyers and the Federal Emergency Management Administration information at parks and campgrounds**
- b. **Assess fire suppression access and make improvements**
- c. **Continue enforcement of state fire codes regarding setback requirements**

**Priority Area 5. Potential of erosion and ice damage along Grand Traverse Bay and Peninsula Township**

*Landslide and Debris Flow Mitigation Strategies:*

- d. **Drainage control projects**
- e. **Public Education**
- f. **Enforcement of building codes (there is building now where no one would have built before)**
- g. Enforcement of soil erosion statutes/permits – water levels rising in the future at new construction sites built in low water level cycle
- h. Enforcement of the grading levels no more than 10%
- i. Placement of vegetation and utilizing native vegetation

**Other mitigation strategies:**

- **Public education and awareness activities**
  - **Work towards uniform mapping and zoning throughout the county for natural hazards mitigation**
  - **Incorporate Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan into the County’s Master Plan and local zoning ordinances if in place.**
4. The Emergency Management Coordinator should convene the Natural Hazards Mitigation Task Force once per year. The Group shall monitor implementation of the plan and shall submit a written progress report to the County Board of Commissioners in accordance with the following format:
- a. A review of the original plan.
  - b. A review of any disasters or emergencies that occurred during the previous calendar year.
  - c. A review of the actions taken, including what was accomplished during the previous year.
  - d. A discussion of any implementation problems.
  - e. Recommendations for new projects or revised action items. Such recommendations shall be subject to approval by the County Board of Commissioners.

**Passed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_**

### **XIII. APPENDICES**

#### **Appendix A**

##### **Glossary of Mitigation Planning Terms**

**Alluvial fan:** A gently sloping fan-shaped landform created over time by the deposition of eroded sediment and debris.

**Base Flood:** A flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

**Coastal high hazard area:** An area of special flood hazard extending from offshore to the inland limit of a primary frontal dune along an open coast and any other area subject to high velocity wave action from storms.

**Community:** Any state, area, or political jurisdiction or any Native American Tribe, authorized tribal organization, Alaska native village, or authorized native organization that has the authority to adopt and enforce floodplain management ordinances for the area under its jurisdiction. In most cases, a community is an incorporated city, town, village, township, or an unincorporated area of a county.

**Disaster:** A major detrimental impact of a hazard upon the population and economic, social, and built environment of an affected area.

**Exposure:** The number, types, qualities, and monetary values of various types of property or infrastructure and life that may be subject to an undesirable or injurious hazard event.

**Flood Insurance Rate Map:** As defined under the National Flood Insurance Program, an official map of the community on which the administrator of the Flood Insurance Administration has delineated both the special flood hazard areas and the risk premium zones applicable to the community.

**Floodplain or flood prone area:** Any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source.

**Floodplain management:** The operation of an overall program of corrective and preventive measures for reducing flood damage, including but not limited to emergency preparedness plans, flood control works, and floodplain management regulations.

**Fuel:** Combustible plant material, both living and dead, that is capable of burning in a wildland situation; any other flammable material in the built environment that feeds a wildfire.

**Hazard:** An event or physical condition that has the potential to cause fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural loss, damage to the environment, interruption of business, or other types of harm or loss.

**Hazard identification:** The process of defining and describing a hazard, including its physical characteristics, magnitude and severity, probability and frequency, causative factors, and locations or areas affected.

**Lifeline systems:** Public works and utilities such as electrical power, gas and liquid fuels, telecommunications, transportation, and water and sewer systems.

**Major disaster:** As defined in the Stafford Act, “any natural catastrophe or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion in any part of the United States, which in the determination of the President causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under this Act to supplement the efforts and available resources of states, local governments, and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby.”

**Mitigation:** Sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from natural hazards and their effects. Note that this emphasis on long-term risk distinguishes mitigation from actions geared primarily to emergency preparedness and short-term recovery.

**Multiple-objective management:** A holistic approach to floodplain management (or the management of other hazards) that emphasizes the involvement of multiple distinct interest in solving land use problems related to the hazardous area.

**Natural hazard:** Hurricanes, tornadoes, storms, floods, tidal wave, tsunamis, high or wind-driven waters, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, snowstorms, wildfires, droughts, landslides, and mudslides.

**One hundred year flood:** The flooding event that has a one percent chance of occurring in a particular location in any given year. While this is the most common reference point statistically because it is used for regulatory purposes in the National Flood Insurance Program, the same language applies in referring to other actual or hypothetical events in terms of their statistical probabilities.

**Risk:** The potential losses associated with a hazard, defined in terms of expected probability and frequency, exposure, and consequences.

**Risk assessment:** A process or method for evaluating risk associated with a specific hazard and defined in terms of probability and frequency of occurrence, magnitude and severity, exposure, and consequences.

**Special flood hazard area:** Land in the floodplain within a community subject to one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year.

**Stafford Act:** The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (P.L. 93-288, as amended by P.L. 100-707), which provides the greatest single source of federal disaster assistance.

**Structure:** A walled and roofed building, including a storage tank for gas or liquid that is principally above ground, as well as a manufactured home.

## Tornado Classifications:

F-Scale Number	Intensity Phrase	Wind Speed	Type of Damage Done
F0	Gale tornado	40-72 mph	Some damage to chimneys; breaks branches off trees; pushes over shallow-rooted trees; damages sign boards.
F1	Moderate tornado	73-112 mph	The lower limit is the beginning of hurricane wind speed; peels surface off roofs; mobile homes pushed off foundations or overturned; moving autos pushed off the roads; attached garages may be destroyed.
F2	Significant tornado	113-157 mph	Considerable damage. Roofs torn off frame houses; mobile homes demolished; boxcars pushed over; large trees snapped or uprooted; light object missiles generated.
F3	Severe tornado	158-206 mph	Roof and some walls torn off well constructed houses; trains overturned; most trees in forest uprooted
F4	Devastating tornado	207-260 mph	Well-constructed houses leveled; structures with weak foundations blown off some distance; cars thrown and large missiles generated.
F5	Incredible tornado	261-318 mph	Strong frame houses lifted off foundations and carried considerable distances to disintegrate; automobile sized missiles fly through the air in excess of 100 meters; trees debarked; steel reinforced concrete structures badly damaged.
F6	Inconceivable tornado	319-379 mph	These winds are very unlikely. The small area of damage they might produce would probably not be recognizable along with the mess produced by F4 and F5 wind that would surround the F6 winds. Missiles, such as cars and refrigerators would do serious secondary damage that could not

			<p><b>be directly identified as F6 damage. If this level is ever achieved, evidence for it might only be found in some manner of ground swirl pattern, for it may never be identifiable through engineering studies</b></p>
--	--	--	---

**Urban Wildfire:** A fire moving from a wildland environment, consuming vegetation as fuel, to an environment where the fuel consists primarily of buildings and other structures.

**Urban/wildland interface:** A developed area, also known as the “I-zone,” occupying the boundary between an urban or settled area and a wildland characterized by vegetation that can serve as fuel for a forest fire.

**Vulnerability:** The level of exposure of human life and property to damage from natural hazards.

**Watershed management:** The implementation of a plan or plans for managing the quality of flow of water within a watershed, the naturally defined area within which water flows into a particular lake or river or its tributary. The aims of watershed management are holistic and concern the maintenance of water quality, the minimization of stormwater runoff, the preservation of natural flood controls such as wetlands and pervious surface, and the preservation of natural drainage patterns. Watershed management is, in many ways, an enlargement of most of the concerns that underlie floodplain management.

**Wildland:** An area in which development has not occurred with the exception of some minimal transportation infrastructure such as highways and railroads, and any structures that are widely spaced and serve largely recreational purposes.

## **Appendix B**

### **Detailed Maps**

1. **11" x 17" Full Map**
2. **11" x 17" Zoom in of Priority Areas**

## Appendix C

### Population Density Map

Appendix D

Risk Assessment Summary Table: GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY

HAZARD	How Frequently has the Hazard Occurred in the Past? (major recorded events)	How Likely is the Hazard to Occur in the Future?	Potential Geographic Size of the Affected Area	Population Impact  Potential Population Impacted	Significance of Impact (Population, Economic, Environment, etc.)	Ranking (Priority of Mitigation Activities for this Hazard)
<b>Drought</b>	1 major event	2% chance	<b>County Wide</b>	77,654	Economics	
<b>Erosion/Landslides</b>	0 major events	0% chance	Traverse City, Peninsula, East Bay, and Acme Townships	12,246	Population, Economic, Environment	<b>5</b>
<b>Fire Hazards</b>			<b>County Wide</b>			<b>4</b>
<b>Flooding Hazards</b>	7 major events	13% chance	<b>County Wide – Traverse City Boardman River</b>  Boardman River	77,654  17,103	Population, Economics - \$5,005,000, Environment  Population, Economics, Environment	<b>3</b>
<b>Hail</b>	14 major events	30% chance	<b>County Wide</b>	77,654	Economics, environment	<b>1</b>
<b>Lightning</b>	5 major events	9% chance	<b>County Wide – Blair, Peninsula Townships</b> County Wide	77,654	Population, economics - \$165,000, environment	<b>1</b>
<b>Snow and Ice</b>	51 major events	94% chance	<b>County Wide</b>	77,654	Population, economics – \$5,100,000, environment (power outages)	<b>2</b>
<b>Thunderstorm/High Winds</b>	45 major events	83%	<b>County Wide</b>	77,654	Population, Economics – \$170,000, Environment (power outages, festivals)	<b>1</b>
<b>Tornadoes</b>	4 major events	7%	<b>County Wide</b>	77,654	Population, economics - \$775,000, environment	<b>1</b>

## Appendix E

### Examples of Past Mitigation Projects

Flood Projects	Tornado/Wind Projects	Extreme Cold/Winter/Infrastructure Failure Projects
Replace culvert with bridge	Modify roof ballast system on airport	Insulate municipal water tower
Install stormwater relief drain	Construct storm shelters in public buildings	Insulate city infrastructure
Upgrade road culvert	Construct storm shelters for homes, facilities	Insulate sanitary/storm sewer mains
Elevate floors of homes	Wind bracing for microwave/radio towers	Insulate water mains
Acquire of floodway properties	Construct mobile home park storm shelter	Bury utility lines
Create retention basin	Wind retrofitting for municipal buildings	Relocate sewer mains
Construct new dike	Wind bracing for school facilities	Reroute power lines under a river
Upgrade bridge over a creek (for greater stream flow)	Upgrade warning sirens**	Install plumbing devices to prevent sewer backup
Install sea wall	Install warning sirens**	Elevate and build casing for generator for EOC
Install rip rap to protect roadway	Purchase/Distribute NOAA radios**	Living snow fences for highways and roadways
Re-route various county drains	Severe weather monitoring systems**	
Purchase back-flow prevention valves	Implement long-term community outreach**	
Construct new drains for flood relief		
Flood study for home acquisition		
Flood study of community's flood risk	<b>Thunderstorm/Lightning Projects</b>	<b>Wildfire Projects</b>
Flood study for stream, roadways		
Elevate electrical equipment in basements	Lightning protection (grounding/phasing)	Vegetation management for roadways
Floodproof wastewater treatment plant	Purchase/Distribute NOAA radios**	Vegetation mgmt. for urban interface areas of city
Warning sensor for creek/river	Install weather alert monitors**	Vegetation mgmt. for homes in fire prone areas
Warning sensor for dam		Urban Interface Education Program**
Raise manholes above 100-Yr floodplain		
Expand storm sewer network for subdivision		
Excavate floodway channel bypass		
Establish permanent flood elevation benchmarks**		
Increase pump capacity for pump stations		
Remove abandoned dam		
Construct emergency floodway		
Install plumbing devices to prevent sewer backup		

\*\*Denotes Hazard Mitigation Grant Program State Discretionary projects (only 5-10% set aside of HMGP funding)

## Appendix F

### Resources

*Benchmarks 2004*, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

*Confronting Climate Change in the Great Lakes Region, Michigan* fact sheet, Union of Concerned Scientists and the Ecological Society of America, April 2003.

*Integrating Human-Caused Hazards Into Mitigation Planning, State and Local Mitigation Planning how-to guide*: Federal Emergency Management Agency, September 2002, FEMA 386-7 CD.

*Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Workbook*: EMD-PUB 207, February 2003, Emergency Management Division, Michigan Department of State Police.

*Michigan Hazard Analysis*: EMD PUB-103, December 2001, Emergency Management Division, Michigan Department of State Police.

*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: Weather/Climate Events, Information, Assessments; Climatology and Extreme Events; U.S. Storm Events Data Base; 1950-present*, local storm reports, damage reports, etc. from various sources. [www.ncdc.noaa.gov](http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov)

*Northwest Michigan County Profiles 2000*, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, November 2002.

Northwest Michigan Council of Governments Website Data, [nwm.org](http://nwm.org).

*Planning for a Disaster-Resistant Community: A One-Day Workshop for City and County Planners, Planning Officials, and Consultants*: American Planning Association Research Department, American Planning Association, 2002 in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Planning and Mitigation Branch (materials only).

*State and Local Mitigation Planning how to guide: Understanding Your Risks, identifying hazards and estimating losses*: Federal Emergency Management Agency, August 2001, FEMA 386-2.