

FEMA REGION X
RISK MAP DISCOVERY INTERVIEW
TOWN OF WINTHROP, WASHINGTON
April 2, 2015 1:00 PM PST

Participating

Town of Winthrop

- Rocklynn Culp

STARR (FEMA Contractor)

- Becca Fricke-Croft, Meeting Host
- Troy Sova
- Andy Dobson
- Josha Crowley, Regional Services Center

Discussion

Becca Fricke-Croft made introductions and presented an overview of the RiskMAP program and the different projects and products that can benefit communities. Our overall goal is discovering how FEMA can help Winthrop be a more hazard and disaster-resilient community. A copy of the presentation is included with these meeting notes as Appendix A.

Pre-Discovery meetings and interviews with Winthrop have been scheduled throughout March and April, 2015. The Discovery Meeting is scheduled for the week of May 4 – 6, 2015.

The following information was collected during the interview. Unless otherwise noted, all comments are from the Town of Winthrop representatives.

Community Contacts

- Updating with new mayor: Sue Langdalen, same contact information
- The Okanogan County Conservation District is running a Carlton Complex long-term recovery group—Rocklynn mentioned they may be interested in attending the Discovery meeting and being involved in the project. She will track down a name for us.
- Likewise, there is a salmon recovery group working in area waterways. They may have flow or hydrology information that could be useful. As well as the Yakima Indian Reservation Group.

Fact Sheets and Interview Maps

- Troy explained the process of gathering various datasets from state and federal sources. He is working to retrieve additional mapping data from Okanogan County (Transportation and Parcels).

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- Basic community boundaries are not accurate—what we have comes from the Washington Department of Transportation and does not include recent municipal annexations. County will have updated Jurisdictional boundaries.
- Flood hazard data is also inaccurate. Okanogan County has not gone through FEMA’s Map Modernization program to update floodplain mapping. The only available digital flood data provides approximate floodplain locations and no base flood elevations.

Topography, LIDAR, GIS

- Critical facilities and infrastructure
 - The Winthrop Auditorium doubles as an evacuation center/shelter. It is located at the northwest corner of town, on the edge of a floodplain and therefore could be impacted by a flood event
 - Emergency Response Center – Public Facility
- Other projects that have collected topographic data
 - CHMP in 2003; channel migration zone (CMZ) analysis, data may be available from consultant – Critical Areas Ordinance
 - Consultant also took old FIRM panels and built some more accurate base flood elevations off of topographic information provided by state. Winthrop uses this information for permitting and analysis (this is not official FEMA flood data).
 - Fish and Wildlife puts out ecological and habitat data and might have information useful for environmentally-sensitive area delineation, Priority Habitat Species Data.
- Rocklynn is the only town GIS staff. She knows basic GIS functions and relies on others (County/State) for data and analysis.
- Community uses the National Wetlands Inventory.

Planning

- Notable about the community—economy, history, geography, etc.
 - Winthrop is an Old West theme town. Recreation and tourism are key to local economy.
 - Many small businesses in town. Fun Mountain Lodge destination resort nearby employs lots of people.
 - Salmon recovery projects and government land management activities are also notable employers.
 - Going through a new comprehensive plan process and discussing many ideas about community issues. Okanogan County is not very engaged in this effort.
- Status of FEMA Hazard Mitigation Planning projects
 - Okanogan County has a current HMP. Rocklynn was not involved, and her perception is that the County drove the project and Winthrop adopted the recommendations without having much input. There appears to be some significant disconnect between the County and Winthrop. This situation was brought up a few times during the interview.

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Earthquake Hazard

- Risk level/concern
 - Have never heard of damage in town resulting from earthquakes, get some shaking but nothing significant. Shaking comes from Loop Loop Area
- Vulnerable locations
 - Older buildings including Town Hall would likely be damaged
 - Two DOT bridges in town, unknown if they are reaching end-of-life status or how they might fare in a quake event
 - New pedestrian bridge—built strong enough to be a backup access across the river if other bridges ever failed. Higher than DOT bridges.

Wildfire Hazard

- Risk level/concern
 - High, Carlton Complex Fire was devastating to local businesses due to extended power outage (eight days), unknown evacuations, and general danger in the future. Interested in mitigation related to fires. Secondary concern related to rising eagle fire.
- Vulnerable locations
 - Town is vulnerable to sagebrush fires that move unexpectedly in their direction—last year went through period where town was under evacuation watch
- Other needs
 - Electrical service—lost power during Carlton Complex for eight days--could use emergency backup generation or redundant service connections

Landslide Hazard

- Risk level/concern
 - Not prohibiting development in areas, require geotechnical analysis to demonstrate proposed construction can hold up. Potential areas mapped out.
- Vulnerable locations, neighborhoods, infrastructure
 - Vulnerable areas haven't been significantly developed, not much concern for property/structure loss due to landslides.

Severe Storm Hazard

- History and frequency
 - Windstorms and heavy rains are frequent events, occurred in 2014 after Carlton Fire.
 - Town Hall basement flooded last year which caused a lot of damage and expensive cleanup
- Shelter needs and facilities
 - Last year, had to shelter people (elderly) and provide meals during extended blackout related to wildfire--both town residents and people who came into Winthrop for assistance.

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- Communication and warning systems
 - Use town's marshal office to get word out, but were in a fix last year during blackout—no electrical backup for Town Hall so communications were completely gone
 - Reader-board in middle of town became their communications system
 - They learned of their vulnerability and needs last year during wildfire

Flood Hazard

- New development or construction that could affect runoff amounts, impact waterways
 - Not a lot of development overall, maybe three floodplain permits in last dozen years according to Rocklynn
 - Some development pressure on vacant land in town--could use better SFHA mapping because administering and permitting off old FIRM panels is difficult and accuracy is a problem
 - Rocklynn marked up the interview map where there is pressure/interest in new development (south end of town adjacent to Methow River)
 - Potential development with vacant land.
 - Use of digital floodplain can be very helpful especially related to floodway.
- Other flooding issues or concerns
 - Significant bank erosion at river confluence in center of town, concern that it will progress to the point that center of town will be impacted—buildings could potentially get undermined
 - Potential Impact to downtown economic development, on east side of river.
 - Identify potential impacts 5-10 years out.
 - Storm drainage system can get overloaded during heavy rains
 - Soil absorbs most drainage, so ponding disappears quickly

Levees

- Other levees or flood control structures not shown on the map
 - none

Communications and Outreach

- Current community outreach/engagement
 - Winthrop is a small town (population 400) with few resources they can spare for outreach/education
- Use of RiskMAP products for outreach, communication, and education
 - They would be very interested, due to last summer being a wakeup call. Could partner with Long Term Recovery group, Kiwanis, local Chamber of Commerce, fire recovery group, and local non-profit which operates the Winthrop Auditorium for outreach programs.

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Compliance and Training

- Floodplain administrator
 - Very interested in additional training. Especially if mapping becomes updated, there would be new opportunities to educate residents about flood issues.
 - Becca saying we will get Rocklynn informed about training and reference materials

Next Steps

- Discovery Meetings scheduled May 4-6, 2015
- Working out meeting locations, how to group communities together for best coverage and coordination among staff and STARR team
- Becca asked if Rocklynn had any other concerns or thoughts before we hold Discovery Meetings
 - Rip-rap around the piers for DOT bridges across Chewuch River. Northern bridge is inaccurate.
- Twisp is an obvious meeting match-up, prefer not to go to Oroville or someplace farther away
- Want to make sure “outlying” communities don’t feel left out, or their concerns passed over relative to larger cities in Okanogan County
- Sounds like the smaller communities would like to have better relationship and communications with Okanogan County

Appendix A: Interview Presentation



Risk MAP Discovery

Okanogan & Wenatchee Watersheds

Information Exchange Sessions
March/April 2015

RiskMAP

Increasing Resilience Together



Information Exchange Agenda

- **Overview of Risk MAP and Discovery**
- **Introduction to Enhanced Risk MAP Products**
- **Interactive Questionnaire**
- **Close**

The Vision for Risk MAP

Through collaboration with State, Local, and Tribal entities, Risk MAP will deliver quality data that increases public awareness and leads to action that reduces risk to life and property



RiskMAP

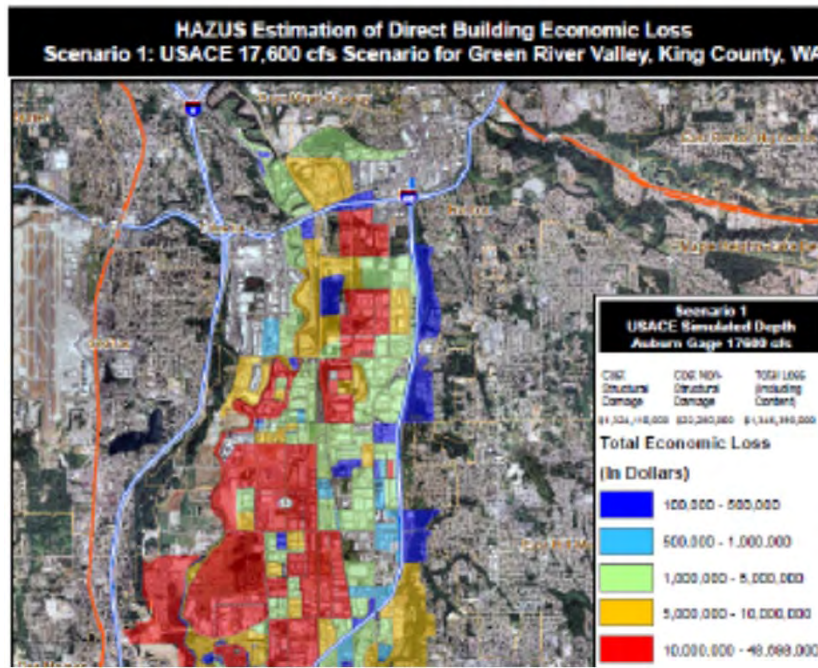
Increasing Resilience Together

- Collaborative approach
- Goals: quality data, public awareness, action that reduces risk
- Watershed-oriented
- Multi-Hazard
- Focus on up-front coordination
- Discovery is mandatory

Risk MAP Products

Multi-Frequency Depth & Water-Surface Elevation (WSE) Grids

10%, 2%, 1%, 0.5%, 0.2% annual chance profiles



Inundation

- 3 feet or less
- 3 to 6 feet
- 6 feet +

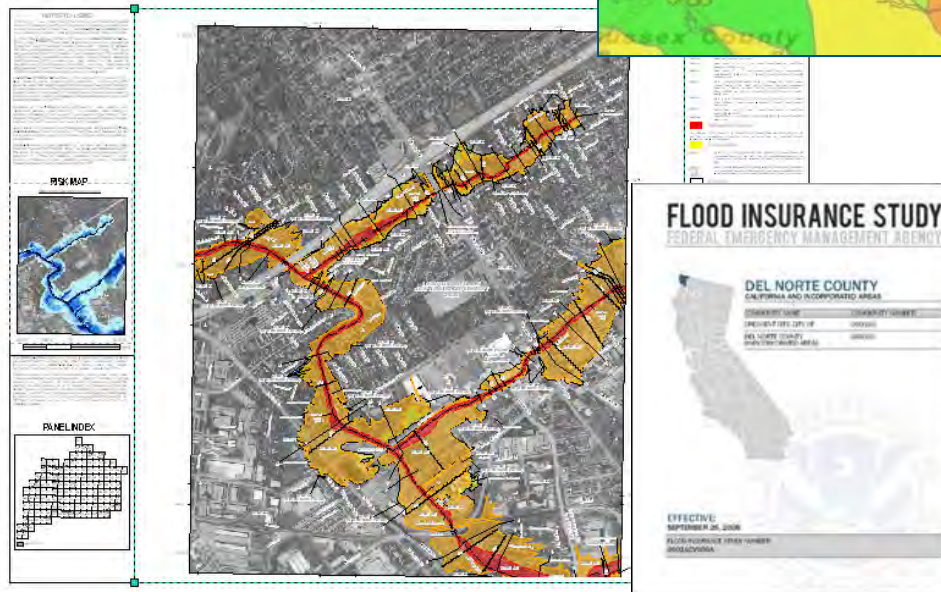
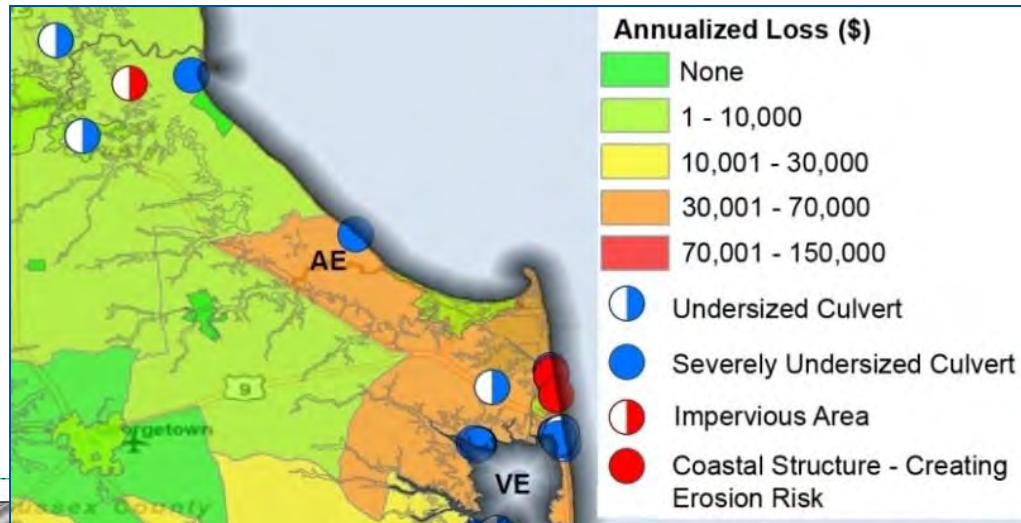
HAZUS Risk Assessment & National Flood Risk Layer

Enables communities to understand risk by reference to existing structure loss

Risk MAP Products

Contributing Hazard Factors

Highlights areas of concern identified throughout project



FIS Reports and DFIRM Maps

DFIRM and FIS will continue to fulfill regulatory requirements and support the NFIP

Discovery

Discovery is the process of data collection and analysis with the goal of initiating a hazard risk or mitigation project and risk discussions within the watershed

When:

- After an area/watershed has been prioritized
- Before a Risk MAP project is scoped or funded

Required for new and updated...

- Flood studies
- Flood risk assessments
- Mitigation planning technical assistance projects

Why:

- Increases visibility of flood risk information, education, involvement
- Helps inform whether a Risk MAP project will occur in the watershed



Okanogon & Wenatchee Discovery

- **Federal and State Data Collection**
- **Local Issues: Identify Risk MAP Needs**
 - Need support with mitigation planning?
 - Need mitigation projects?
 - Need new flood study data?
 - Need training on floodplain management?
 - Need support developing a hazard risk outreach program?
 - What else can FEMA do to help your community become resilient?
- **Pre-Discovery Interviews: March/April 2015**
- **Discovery Meetings: May 4-6, 2015**
- **Risk MAP Project(s) Identified**
- **Possible FEMA Funding Allocated for Risk MAP Project**

Discovery Interview

- **Local Contacts**
- **Data**
 - LiDAR
 - Local or Regional GIS Data
- **Mitigation Planning**
 - Desired Mitigation Projects
- **Local Hazards**
 - Earthquakes
 - Wildfires
 - Landslides
 - Severe Storms
 - Flooding
- **Levees**
- **Environmentally Sensitive Areas**
- **Communications and Outreach**
- **Compliance and Training**

Mitigation Planning		
How would you describe your level of involvement with the development of the mitigation plan? (Considerable, Moderate, Minimal)	Do you need assistance with mitigation planning in your community? (Yes, No, Possibly)	Mitigation Planning Comments, Explanations, Questions

Questions?

FEMA

- **Amanda Siok, Risk Analyst, amanda.siok@fema.dhs.gov**
- **Kristen Meyers, Mitigation Planner, kristen.meyers@fema.dhs.gov**
- **Ted Perkins, Regional Engineer, dwight.perkins@fema.dhs.gov**

WASHINGTON

- **Jerry Franklin, State Risk MAP Coordinator, jfra461@ecy.wa.gov**
- **Michelle Gilbert, Floodplain Management Specialist, migi461@ecy.wa.gov**

STARR

- **Emily Whitehead, emily.whitehead@stantec.com**
- **Troy Sova, troy.sova@stantec.com**
- **Becca Fricke-Croft, becca.croft@starr-team.com**