

# Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

## 1.1 Background

The dramatic increase in the costs associated with natural disasters over the past decades fostered interest in identifying and implementing effective means of reducing vulnerability. On February 26, 2002, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) published Interim Final Rule 44 CFR Part 201, which required all states and local governments to develop natural hazards mitigation plans to be eligible for certain hazard mitigation grant programs, and in the case of the states, to be eligible for certain categories of disaster assistance.

Disasters occur as a predictable interaction among three broad systems: natural systems (e.g., watersheds and continental plates), the built environment (e.g., cities and roads), and social systems (community organization infrastructure that includes demographics, business climate, service provision, etc.). What is not predictable is exactly when natural hazards will occur or the extent to which they will affect communities within the state. However, with careful planning and collaboration it is possible to minimize the losses that can result from natural hazards.

*Hazard mitigation* is defined at 44 CFR 201.2 as *any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards*. Hazard mitigation is the responsibility of individuals, private businesses and industries, state and local governments, and the federal government. Engaging in mitigation actions provides the state, counties, cities, businesses, and citizens with a number of benefits: fewer injuries and deaths; less damage to buildings, critical facilities, and infrastructure; diminished interruption in essential services; reduced economic hardship; minimized environmental harm; and quicker, lower-cost recovery.

The Oregon Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (NHMP, Plan) guides mitigation actions throughout the state. It contains the most complete and up-to-date description of Oregon's natural hazards and their probability, the state's vulnerabilities, its mitigation strategies and implementation resources. Oregon's counties and cities can rely upon this information when preparing local natural hazards mitigation plans. Similarly, local NHMPs provide the state with a deeper understanding of local and regional mitigation goals and issues, advancing alignment of mitigation goals and strategies statewide. Further, Oregon's Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan meets FEMA eligibility requirements for enhanced hazard mitigation and disaster assistance funding, benefitting the state and local communities alike.

The Oregon NHMP is one component of the first volume of the *Oregon Emergency Management Plan*, administered by the Oregon Military Department's Office of Emergency Management. [Figure 1-1](#) illustrates this organizational relationship. Relationships with other state and federal plans and programs are discussed in the [ENHANCED PLAN](#) chapter.

**Figure 1-1. The Oregon NHMP as a Component of the Oregon Emergency Management Plan**



Source: Modified from Oregon Partnership for Disaster Resilience

## 1.2 Plan Structure

The Oregon Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan is an Enhanced Plan, meeting the requirements of both 44 CFR 201.4 (Standard State Mitigation Plans) and 201.5 (Enhanced State Mitigation Plans).

The Standard Plan contains three main chapters: (a) Risk Assessment, (b) Mitigation Strategy, and (c) Planning Process.

The Enhanced Plan is a stand-alone chapter demonstrating the state’s commitment to a comprehensive natural hazard mitigation program and its proficiency in project and program management.

A list of acronyms, a glossary, and a list of references follow these chapters.

The Plan closes with links to appendices providing additional information illuminating the Risk Assessment, Mitigation Strategy, Enhanced Plan, and Planning Process chapters.

## 1.3 Standard Plan

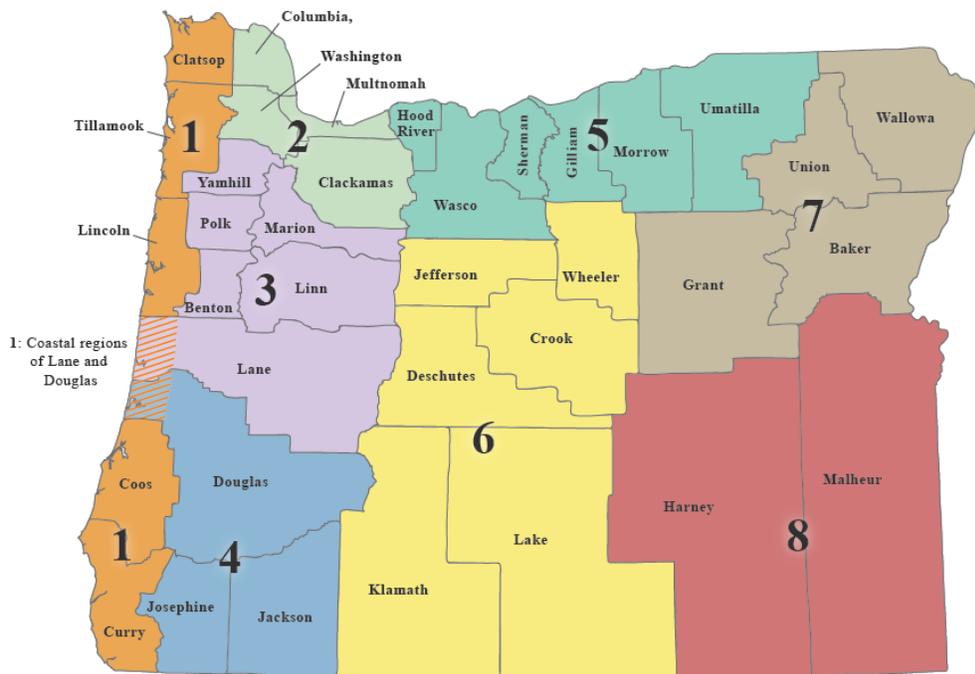
### 1.3.1 Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment is presented on two levels: statewide and regional.

The State Risk Assessment profiles each of Oregon’s 11 natural hazards and introduces the predicted impacts of climate change on each of the hazards. It also discusses Oregon’s vulnerabilities to each hazard and provides loss estimates for state-owned/leased buildings and critical/essential facilities. Finally, it describes enhancements for which Oregon is striving over the life of this Plan to improve the Risk Assessment at the next update.

The Regional Risk Assessment consists of eight separate risk assessments, one for each of the eight Oregon NHMP Natural Hazard Regions (Figure 1-2) established by the Oregon Military Department’s Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Each Regional Risk Assessment begins with a summary, then profiles the region’s unique demographic, natural environment, land use, and economic characteristics. Finally, each Regional Risk Assessment describes how each hazard presents in the region; analyzes the region’s vulnerabilities, including seismic lifeline vulnerabilities, to each hazard; and provides loss estimates for state-owned/leased buildings and critical/essential facilities located in the region’s hazard areas.

**Figure 1-2. Oregon NHMP Natural Hazards Regions**



### 1.3.2 Mitigation Strategy

The Mitigation Strategy establishes the state’s mission, vision, and goals for natural hazard mitigation. A set of tables describe mitigation actions the state has completed, continues to perform, and desires to achieve over the life of this Plan. Current and potential funding sources for implementing mitigation actions are identified.

This chapter also assesses the state’s ability to implement the mitigation strategy, both before and after a disaster, through its policies, programs, and funding sources. It also generally assesses the effectiveness of local mitigation policies, programs, and other capabilities.

Finally, the Mitigation Strategy describes the state’s support of local mitigation planning, prioritization of funding for local mitigation plans and projects, and coordination of local NHMPs with the Oregon NHMP.

### 1.3.3 Planning Process

This chapter details the process of updating the Oregon NHMP and identifies the changes made to the Plan through the update process. It frames processes for tracking implementation progress, and for monitoring, evaluating, and eventually updating this edition of the Plan. It highlights how the Oregon NHMP is related to, coordinates with, or is integrated with other planning initiatives.

## 1.4 Enhanced Plan

The Enhanced Plan chapter is the state’s opportunity to showcase its commitment to a comprehensive natural hazard mitigation program and its ability to support that commitment through skilled and effective management of funding, projects, and planning; support of local mitigation plans and projects; integration of mitigation plans and projects with other state and federal plans, programs, and initiatives; and continual progress in implementation. It contains detailed information about how funding was obtained and used during the life of the previous Plan; how funding decisions are made; how completed mitigation projects are evaluated; and how the state provides funding and technical assistance to cities and counties for developing and updating local NHMPs and accomplishing mitigation actions. This exceptional level of effort and demonstration of excellence earns dividends in the form of increased federal funding.