

Santa Rosa County  
Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Task Force  
Steering Committee  
August 5, 2008  
Milton, Florida

The Santa Rosa County LMS Task Force met on the above date. A copy of the sign in sheet showing attendees is attached in the file. Daniel Hahn called the meeting order at 1:00 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

Royals moved approval of the minutes from the November 17, 2007 meeting; Miller seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

**Escambia County LMS Chairperson presentation on LMS Revision Process**

Stephanie Wilson, Escambia County LMS Chairperson, said she and Daniel Hahn started talking and met through BRACE (Be Ready Alliance Coordinating for Emergencies) and the Co-Ed process in Escambia County. She said she is one of the founding board members of BRACE and is on the LMS Committee for Escambia County. Wilson discussed her duties as Chairperson of the LMS Committee. She said Escambia County is using the planning process as a tool to rework the entire LMS group and process in Escambia County. Wilson said the Escambia County LMS Committee is in the process of having a new name and logo created to have a new presence within the community. She said the State has ordained local mitigation strategies in order to be able to obtain funding from the federal government. Wilson said it is then up to the LMS Committee in each county on how they want to pursue funding. She said the LMS Committee in Escambia County decided they want to branch out and do more. She said one of the reasons is because of the big presence of larger counties in south Florida and the structure of their LMS groups. Wilson said when the State has left over monies after a disaster these counties will be called first because the State knows these counties already have projects on hand because they are structured and organized; if this money is not spent it will go back to the federal government. She said the LMS Committee also decided to participate in a county wide mitigation effort because of BRACE, and its mission to be the most disaster resilient community in America. Wilson said the LMS Committee in Escambia County wanted to help implement this effort with BRACE, and in order for them to do this, they were required to participate in outreach, education, and several other things. She said the plan gives them the perfect time to go back and examine the current plan for goals and objectives. Wilson said the State has something called a "crosswalk" or "matrix" of the statutory requirements to be included in the plan. She said the Escambia County LMS Committee wants to get a jump start and have a lot of the plan completed, if not all of the plan completed, nine to twelve months prior to the deadline in order to give time for revisions. Wilson said the State has a mitigation plan they submit to FEMA in order for the State itself to be eligible for funding; therefore local LMS's will too be eligible. She said depending on the plan, how it is processed, and how it is approved, there are different percentages of funding. Wilson said there are different plans, and money is received based on the type of plan you have. She said it is very important to have a strong LMS to push the plan through Tallahassee if needed. Wilson said there is a new Bureau Mitigation Chief, Miles Anderson, in Tallahassee. She said it will take Anderson a while to do what needs to be done. Wilson said Anderson is an excellent leader, but there has been change of leadership a couple of times so there have been difficulties in getting monies bestowed. She said all of the counties have had problems at the State level; therefore, the applicants get very discouraged about submitting their application for funding. Wilson said the plan is very important with the federal government because it dictates how much money the State of Florida receives. She said Escambia County has decided to go back and rework its goals and objectives within the plan. Wilson said the current plan is a good plan, but there is a lot of data and information that has been withheld and is needed. She said this document has really good static goals and objectives, but they were basic goals and objectives to get the LMS plan started. Wilson said the Escambia County LMS Committee has been in existence for a few years and has grown past that point. She said they decided to go through a visioning process to see what kind of outreach they want to have, if any at all. Wilson said the Escambia County LMS Committee meets monthly and has additional workshops as needed. She said there are current members that have disengaged and many others who have asked to participate. Wilson discussed the current makeup of the Escambia County LMS Committee. She said her hope is that all LMS committees join together to have more of a presence in this area of Florida. Wilson said a strong presence in this area of Florida will make it to where monies left over after a disaster may be made available because of the LMS presence.

Wilson said mitigation has become a word that is part of everybody's vocabulary. She said the public is unaware of the vocabulary. Wilson said people do not understand what mitigation means, and how it applies to them (home, family, business, etc.) She said the plan needs to be utilized as a tool to make sure subsequent administrations are able to continue with implementation. Wilson said the Escambia County LMS Committee wants to support the Santa Rosa LMS Committee because both counties together will be a much powerful voice for our area.

Bob Cole said the current LMS plan was developed within the last four years. He asked if this is correct. Walker said the original LMS plan was adopted in the late 1990's. Rhonda Royals said the plan was updated in 2000. Harris said the last update was prior to Hurricane Ivan. She said the five year expiration will be in 2010. Harris said the State will meet with staff in November to kick off update process. She said the process consists of an 18 month timeframe where the County reviews and updates the current plan. Cole asked how often the plan has to be updated.

Walker said the plan must be updated statutorily every 5 years. Royals said the LMS Committee has to provide an update to the Board of County Commissioners as part of the County's participation in the Community Rating System. Hahn said the LMS Committee will be required to go through what was decided five years ago when the plan was written and show the State (the State will show FEMA) what Santa Rosa County has accomplished. He said if the County has not accomplished goals outlined within the plan, the County must show why those goals and objectives have not been accomplished. Hahn said this is the process the LMS Committee will use to update the current LMS plan beginning in November.

Walker asked Daniel Hahn the process with revising and updating the plan. Hahn said he does not have any plans at this time. He said he felt a committee/working group is a good idea for the creation of a working document.

Sheila Harris said one of the biggest updates is the flood portion of the document. She said she envisions the expertise of a consultant or perhaps Sharon Marsh, if possible. Wilson said this process takes an enormous amount of time. She said it is like

revising the Comprehensive Plan.

Hahn said the CEMP (Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan) is also being updated at the same time. He said this will take up a lot of his time.

Paul Trimble said there are many areas the County will have to draw from as far as expertise. He said one that has not been mentioned is the three municipalities. Trimble said in updating this whole plan those municipalities have to be brought in as an interval part of the update. Walker said this was a struggle during the last LMS plan update.

Sheryl Bracewell asked Hahn if the County has a crosswalk of the State's plan. She said this is where the LMS Committee needs to start. Hahn said the plan also needs to focus on the CRS Flood Mitigation portion. Royals said Santa Rosa County's Building Code effectiveness rating expects to go to a 6 in October; the County is currently at a 7. She said this rating will provide a 20% discount to flood policies in designated flood areas. Walker said Bracewell has a good idea as far as distributing the matrix or crosswalk. He said the County has a relationship with Sharon Marsh, but the County may not have funding for her help. Walker said the State may have some funding assistance. He said the County traded with West Florida Regional Planning Council for their help in the past. Harris said she asked Marsh about previous funding, and Marsh said there was funding through a DMA2K grant. She said these grants are no longer available. Walker said Sharon Marsh will be good help. Harris said she talked with Sharon Marsh, and Marsh said given the right opportunity, she is willing to help.

Cole asked why it is such a major task to update and "tweak" the current plan. He said if there is currently a well organized plan, an update should not be a problem. Cole asked who says the current plan is weak. Adams said she felt current criteria have to be met. She said this criterion is within the plan. Bracewell said she felt the LMS Committee should start with the crosswalk. She said she agrees with Cole. Bracewell said the update should not be a huge task because the current plan was a "good" plan the last time it was submitted.

Charlie Brown said he would like to see the plan triple spaced where corrections can be made while reading it.

Harris said changes in development must be reflected in the update because of the potential for new hazards. She said progress in all mitigation efforts must be submitted. Harris said in the last couple of years the County has made tremendous progress. She said the County must identify those things the County wanted to do but never did and why. Harris said the priority list needs to be revised. She said she felt the priority list is probably significantly different. Harris said any disasters that have occurred must also be updated. She said the plan will have to identify what buildings have been damaged or mitigated. Harris said the update will be very comprehensive and take a lot of effort.

Walker said the County has undergone significant changes since Hurricane Ivan. He said he also agrees with Cole and does not want to make the update harder than it needs to be. Cole said he agrees with Brown. He said he felt the current plan should act as a "live document" so changes can be made as things happen. Harris said the LMS Committee has not met since November 2007. There was continued discussion on the plan update.

Walker asked Hahn if there will be some similarities with updating the CEMP. He said he is speaking of the risk assessment and the vulnerability assessment. Hahn said there are parts of the CEMP that will be applied to the LMS Plan but a lot of the information will not apply. Bracewell said the vulnerability assessment done annually can be applied to the LMS Plan.

Louis Green said he would like to address Brown's concern about collaborative work. He said if a working document is put on an office "live" website the document can be shared. Green said individuals can go in and put in their own corrections using user logins. He said other users can see changes that have been made. Green said the owner will collect the entire document with all of the corrections, and the changes can be made based on everyone's input. He said from the County's perspective, access is very inexpensive. Green said Microsoft gives this software out for free to those individuals who have a "live" ID. He said he is sure the County's IT Department can help with this software. Green said he is available for help if he is needed. Walker said he is sure the County has this capability. He said it can not be hard to develop this type of document. Green said this Microsoft Word document is a shared document on an office live site. He said each individual user will have a login to control who has access.

Walker asked Bracewell to work with Harris and Hahn on a format to bring back to the LMS Committee. Hahn said he plans to invite Joy (the State reviewer looking at Santa Rosa County's LMS plan) to give a briefing on her perspective at the November meeting. Walker asked how often the LMS Committee needs to meet. He said he felt additional meetings will be necessary to update the LMS plan. Bracewell said she felt Harris, Hahn, and herself should meet to look at the crosswalk. She said the crosswalk can be divided into sections to review. Hahn suggested a September meeting and then a November meeting.

Walker said the LMS Committee will know if an October meeting is necessary once they meet in September. Walker said the goal for the September meeting is to have some type of draft. Gomillion suggested committee members look at the plan and bring back suggestions about things they feel need to be changed.

Harris asked about the makeup of the LMS Committee. She said Escambia County's LMS Committee is made up of mostly citizens, and Santa Rosa County's LMS Committee is made up of mostly governmental entities. Harris asked if this is something that has been discussed in the past. Royals said Santa Rosa County has tried involving citizens in the past. She said there were representatives from local businesses in the past. Royals said local business representatives came to one or two meetings but never returned. Harris asked Hahn to work on some local businesses that may be interested in participating in the LMS Committee. Hahn said he will try. He said he has a Co-Ed meeting in the month of September. Hahn said he will see if one of these committees will support the LMS Committee. Walker said the LMS Committee will be a good "tie in" with those business groups.

Royals said the plan needs to be provided to the Board of County Commissioners by the last meeting in September 2008.

### **Update of Ivan and Dennis hazard mitigation projects and grant applications**

Harris said all Phase I storm water projects have been finished. She said the County has been reimbursed. Harris said the County should be hearing back on the Phase II storm water projects. She said she has no indication on how many of these (7) projects will get approved. Harris said the County was recently notified the Ward Basin Road Storm Water Improvement Drainage Project from Hurricane Dennis was obligated. She said the total project cost at the time of application was estimated

to be \$5.5 million. Harris said there is only \$2 million available for federal funding for this project and as a result the local match is \$3.5 million. She said she and Walker will be presenting more information on this project to the Board of County Commissioners. Harris said the County requested money for Holley by the Sea in Tier II funding. She said there is no money available for a local match for this project. Harris said the County has to make a determination on whether or not to undergo this project. She said this project is estimated at \$4.8 million and only \$3 million is available for federal funding. Harris said this creates a local match in the amount of \$1.8 million.

Walker said neither of the phases has been completed on these two projects. Harris agreed. She said the County needs to let the State know whether or not the County is interested in moving forward. Walker said the local matches are extreme.

Gomillion asked Harris to remind the members about the (7) Phase II storm water projects. Harris said those projects consist of Harrison Avenue, Sabertooth Avenue, Orion Lake, Ganges, Madura, Villa Venyce, Greenbriar, and Ramblewood. Gomillion asked if these are all 2005 projects. Harris said these projects were prioritized. She said on the LMS approved list these projects are ranked in order. Harris said this may be something the Board wants to consider.

Furman said another methodology for ranking these projects was with those who needed the greatest need financially. He said economics played an important role in the prioritization. Cole asked how many homes are covered in the Holley by the Sea project. Harris said when the application was written the area was very broad. She said Phase I will determine the areas with the most need if the County decides to undertake this project. Harris said the entire Holley by the Sea area can not benefit from this project. She said she is not quite sure about the coverage area. Furman said there are only three or four homes that actually get water in them in Holley by the Sea. He said the cost benefit ratio for trying to mitigate for three or four homes given two 100 year storms back to back is not there. Furman said the County has made great strides in correcting the worst chronic flooding problem areas. He said the County dedicated a drainage crew almost entirely to Holley by the Sea, and they worked in Holley by the Sea for probably one solid year in correcting some of the County's worst flooding areas. Furman said there are still quite a few areas that cover several yards where there is nuisance flooding. He said the flooding is not in the house or in the garage and is gone in five or six hours after a rainfall event. Furman said there is also the chronic problem with water in ditches that never goes away. He said the County is working with individual homeowners who feel this is too big of a nuisance for them to live with. Furman said for these homeowners the County participates in a cost share program where the homeowners purchase the pipe and the County supplies the labor and material to install the pipes. He said this corrects some of the standing water problems in the drainage ditches. Furman said the County is systematically attacking the worst problem areas and working with the citizens to attack the nuisance areas that bother them and do not really bother the County. There was continued discussion on the cost benefit ratio of moving forward with this project in Holley by the Sea.

Wendy Hoeflich asked Furman why the original project was estimated to be so high if there are only a few homes that were truly affected. Furman said the \$4 million was a figure that was estimated and included infrastructure costs. He said the County had to come up with "hard" numbers that were considered to be a reasonable plan to alleviate the chronic flooding problems. Walker said the Holley by the Sea project was a "catch all" project. Furman said from a Public Works standpoint staff does not feel it is practical to spend millions of dollars to try to save a couple of houses when the County, in the course of daily activities, can go in and correct minor drainage problems that collectively give a lot of relief. He said this effort may not dry up every ditch but a lot of yard flooding and standing water can be eliminated. Hoeflich asked if there is any way to scale back the plan to make the project more feasible. Walker said the County will have to go back and see. He said he felt the project can be scaled back in Phase I iff specific areas can be identified. Walker asked Furman and Hoeflich to meet and discuss the issues in Holley by the Sea. Hoeflich said she would like to see the project scaled back to give the Holley by the Sea project more of a chance for funding in the future. Harris said she and Walker will get with the State to see what kind of flexibility there is with the numbers. She said it is her understanding that if the County asked for \$4.8 million and this amount was approved, the County must use the money according to the application sent in and approved by the State.

### **Residential Shutter Project under Hurricane Dennis**

Harris said 17 of the 21 projects are complete. She said 2 additional projects are substantially complete. Harris said there was an issue with one homeowner, but the County is trying to work out the issues with the homeowner. She said the remaining two projects may be asked to withdraw if they have not made significant progress this month. Harris said these homeowners have experienced financial hardships and asked to delay or have not made an effort. She said the expiration of the contract is approaching, and it may be too late for these homeowners to finish up what is required. Walker said the County provides the assistance in helping the homeowners file the grant application. He said the State provides 75% of the funding, and the homeowner is responsible for the remaining 25%. Harris updated the LMS Committee on several HMGP mitigation projects.

### **Discussion of upcoming FY2009 Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program Application Cycle**

Harris said the application cycle for the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, Flood Mitigation Assistance Program, Repetitive Flood Loss Program, and Severe Repetitive Loss Program is open through November 2008. She said Kirkland Spraggins is the County's Department of Emergency Management Project Coordinator. Harris said Spraggins has offered to come to Santa Rosa County to hold a workshop on Monday August 18, 2008 or Tuesday August 19, 2008. She said half of the day will focus on information for staff about the programs and how to complete applications. Harris said the second half of the day will be for homeowners who fall on the severe repetitive flood list. She said she will be sending out letters to homeowners this week. Walker said this list is for people who have demonstrated documented repetitive damage (2 or more). Adams said the City of Milton would like to be included in the workshop. Harris asked if this workshop will need to be advertised.

### **Other Business & Public Comments**

Louis Green asked about the mitigation list through Rebuild Northwest Florida and whether or not the list for Santa Rosa County was ever reconciled. Harris said she does not have an update. She said it is her understanding Rebuild Northwest Florida ran out of money for Santa Rosa County. There was discussion about notifying those people on the original list who requested help through Rebuild Northwest Florida to let them know money is no longer available.

Walker said Santa Rosa County took over the SHIP Housing Program and HHRP Program. Gomillion said the County has no idea how Rebuild Northwest Florida developed their list. Green said the people on the list who requested help through Rebuild Northwest Florida need to know that there is no money

left to help them. Harris agreed. She said she will research this issue. Walker said he will go back and see what can be reconciled with Rebuild Northwest Florida.

**Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the LMS Committee at this time, the meeting adjourned.