

**National Hazard Mitigation Association
Add-On Workshop at the Natural Hazards Workshop**

Implementing Gilbert White's Vision:

Moving Hazard Mitigation Forward

**Forming, and Implementing a National Hazard Mitigation
Collaborative Alliance**

Broomfield, Colorado

July 13, 2010

Day One

The Add-On Workshop convened at 2 p.m. with 47 people present. *A list of participants is attached.*

Kathleen Tierney began the session with a brief speech. She noted that the Natural Hazards Center is in full support of NHMA's efforts and the white paper, adding that it can be seen as an extension of Gilbert White's vision.

Alessandra Jerolleman then welcomed participants on behalf of NHMA. She provided a brief overview of the agenda and briefly mentioned the contents of the folders which had been given to attendees. *All handouts are attached.*

Alessandra Jerolleman introduced the speakers for the first day: Jim Mullin, Dr. Sandra Knight and Ed Thomas. She then asked all participants to please introduce themselves.

Upon the conclusion of introductions, Alessandra Jerolleman reminded participants that the goal for the day was to talk about achieving a common vision and craft a way to realize that vision. She then turned the floor over to Jim Mullen.

Jim Mullen spoke about the NEMA Mitigation White Paper and the National Collaborative Alliance. He covered several topics including his own background and belief in mitigation, the need to help local communities and the current status of the Alliance. He elaborated upon the origins and history of the White Paper, noting that the purpose is in part to put into motion a national discussion and create positive momentum from grassroots in order to make nation safer and more disaster resilient. Other discussion topics included the need to focus on the long term and to identify what FEMA expenditures have accomplished.

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Jim Mullen described his experience with Project Impact and the value of empowering locals. He suggested that local government should be encouraged to demand mitigation funding because they have become convinced that mitigation will make their constituents safer and their town more resilient.

Alessandra Jerolleman then introduced Dr. Sandra Knight.

Dr. Sandra Knight began by discussing her review of the White Paper. She expressed her appreciation of the document, noting that it may be a starting point for the FEMA strategic plan in mitigation. She spoke of the value of broader collaborative partnerships, dealing with all hazards, and the need for communities to drive federal policy.

Dr. Knight described the need to strive for common or symbiotic objectives, such as combining green and mitigation jobs. She added that it is necessary to show that progress is being made, to demonstrate some quick wins and take credit. She mentioned that she wants to look at how we can align some of these federal policies, describing a sustainable planning grant from HUD.

Dr. Knight noted that FEMA needs to work on communicating risk and on creating a body of mitigation tools. She added that it is crucial to emphasize incentives. Regarding the Alliance, she noted that it seems like a great idea, and that she was interested in hearing the discussion. She also mentioned Project Impact and suggested that perhaps it should be dusted off, repackaged and rolled out again.

Dr. Knight suggested that FEMA needs a strategic plan, and suggested looking at guiding principles and then fleshing out objectives. The three principles are enhancing credibility, valuing people and relationships and advancing sustainability.

Alessandra Jerolleman then introduced Ed Thomas.

Ed Thomas discussed the challenges with getting the Add-On put together and thanked the Natural Hazards Center. He described the White paper as an incredible document that needs to be refined and then implemented. He went on to share his background and road to becoming involved in hazard

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mitigation. He described the shift from an attitude that hazard mitigation interferes with swift disaster recovery, to a growing acceptance of the value of mitigation.

Ed Thomas described the various organizations which are not speaking in favor of hazard mitigation including APA, ASPA, ABA and ASCE. He described a way forward, when we think of development or redevelopment or all our efforts – that we always think of it in terms of no adverse impact hazards management for our future. He then suggested that the next step beyond not harming people is to look at how to make things better for them. He described the successes of the flood program and suggested that progress needs to be made on other hazards.

Ed Thomas noted that he had worked about 200 disasters for FEMA and seen the changes in the flood program over time. He also described successes with fire loss, suggesting that if we can figure how to harness economic forces and the male ego, we can transform this nation over a long period of time.

Alessandra Jerolleman then opened the floor to questions.

Jim Murphy noted that some speakers at the Natural Hazards Workshops had appeared to take the attitude that the oil crisis was an example of community versus big business, but that one of the most important influences is our profit culture. He suggested that there must be a way to capitalize on that.

He then discussed the White Paper, observing that it emphasizes cooperation. He suggested three additional groups be added: reinsurers, chambers of commerce and investment banking.

Jim Mullen described the involvement of some reinsurance folks in the White Paper and suggested that NHMA is welcome to sign on as well. He noted that the Alliance is a work in progress and there are a lot of discussions going on.

Jim Schwab then visited the issues of profitability, observing the difference between short term and long term profitability. He described a timber company representative advocating stronger zoning and subdivision

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standards for places they were selling off, because they didn't want that legacy left behind. In politics, he described the same thing, the challenge of the attitude that disasters will not take place in my term of office.

Dr. Knight responded there is a need to look at life cycle planning, and that when we set up these plans, we have to think about the life cycle cost. She suggested that we tend to think of mitigation as an alternative that costs more on the front end and not of long term costs. She then added that there are examples of people willing to take the risk.

Dick Krajewski brought up the religious community and described how they are working to help the poor. He described Grand Bayou as an example that mitigation is alive and well in the religious community, adding that the people in the pews have a great deal of power. He then brought up Project Impact as a program that had done important things and suggested that data needed to be gathered. He asked the research community to assist with this and show the positive results of citizen involvement.

Jim Mullen spoke about Project Impact in Seattle, noting that while it was difficult to get data, some jurisdictions had kept the program going. He also described some of the challenges that Project Impact faced, including the fact that it was begun by a charismatic leader and therefore affected by politics.

Dave Hall noted that it is important to be able to make a longer connection in the long haul.

Tim Lovell brought up the example of Tulsa Partners, observing that a charismatic leader is not enough. He suggested that instead of an attitude of government versus the private sector, it is critical to include the private sector and nonprofits, observing that leadership arises from the mix.

Tim Lovell provided an example of a group working on sustainability and disaster resistance, and asked if FEMA has considered integrating hazard mitigation planning into sustainability planning. He mentioned a model for that shared by Canada, which he has been asked to pilot.

Dr. Sandra Knight responded that she wanted to move in that direction but that there are challenges related to statutory boundaries. She suggested that

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working with HUD to connect the dots would be very important, and that it is necessary to show that hazard resilience is cost effective in the long haul.

Diana Coho commented that some folks had been asking why a multi-hazard group, such as NHMA is necessary. She then made several suggestions including working with DOT to translate some of their work in stakeholder involvement and outreach at the grassroots level to mitigation. She suggested that an International Committee might be of value, as well as a focus on tribal involvement.

Diana Coho talked about the need for a broader agenda that state emergency management. Regarding the private sector, she noted that many people approach the private sector in search of money, but that there are often more beneficial contributions that the private sector can make. She suggested involving them in the planning process, because they have a stake and resources and know what they own.

Jim Mullen responded that the private sector has been very willing to help in his experience. He cited Safeway as an example, noting that their first job is to keep their store open and their employees, but that then they are willing to help. He added that there is not that great of a difference between public and private, and that we just need to talk to the right folks.

Gina Wightman observed that we don't want to minimize post disaster mitigation, stating that her community finally acted following Isabel. She noted that benefits can accrue to the community and to the private sector as well. She stated that pre-disaster mitigation initiatives are excellent, but we can't let those post-event opportunities be neglected.

Dr. Sandra Knight responded that it is critical that we think post and pre disaster. She described the need to save lives and property, but also the importance of critical infrastructure. She suggested the need for post-disaster plans pre-disaster.

Darrin Punchard expressed his agreement with Dr. Knight. He described his experiences as the SHMO for North Carolina, and a series of acquisitions following flooding. He suggested that translating the idea and passion for mitigation down to where the rubber meets the road is a role for NHMA. He asked **how** can we address and create markets to make this happen? When

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you are talking about local government and tax bases, how can the nation create markets for mitigation? What can we learn from places like Tulsa, Charlotte, and Miami Dade? How do we create a public ethic? How do we communicate risk and the benefits of mitigation. He suggested that a goal for NHMA is to figure out how to marshal these resources.

Dr. Elizabeth English mentioned that there will be an International conference in Rotterdam: Deltas in a time of climate change. She noted that there will be presentations of a great many successful food mitigation strategies, and encouraged people here who are interested to attend. She added that European cultures have been in the same place for a longer time, greater sense of place as well as a stronger sense of need for mitigation.

Ed Thomas then described what he saw as NHMA role, that of a cog in the great machine of making things better. He described ASFPM, NEMA, FEMA, USCE, APA, and the insurance community as a part of that machine. He suggested that our role is to get things done, not just to talk about them. To figure how we can motivate people by changing the economics to reward good behavior and stop enabling people to gamble with property and transfer risk to others.

Ed Thomas charged the group to read the White Paper prior to Day Two, as well as look at the NEMA publication on benefits of mitigation. He suggested that the best possible, most cost effective flood hazard mitigation ever is doing it right before nature proceeds to do damage.

He also asked the group to read the two handouts related to insurance and offered to send some additional documents to the group such as ABA resolutions.

The session closed with an invitation to attend the reception that evening.