



Members Update!

June 29, 2021

UPCOMING EVENTS

NHMA EVENTS:

[NHMA Practitioner's Meeting July 15, 2021](#)

The Natural Hazard Mitigation Association is again hosting its annual Practitioners Meeting on **July 15**, immediately after the **Natural Hazards Workshop**. Emergency managers, mitigation practitioners, and others who are concerned with reducing hazard risk are invited to attend. The theme of this year's meeting is [Building Community Capacity for Disaster Risk Reduction](#). Registration for this add-on meeting is free.

Other Events:



The 46th Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop this year focuses on the theme of [The Hazards and Disaster Workforce: Preparing to Meet 21st Century Challenges](#).

It will again be held virtually. We hope you will join us for the Workshop **July 11-14** and the [Researchers Meeting](#) that follows **July 14-15**.

Keynote speaker: Chauncia Willis, co-founder and CEO of the Institute for Diversity and Inclusion in Emergency Management. She is an emergency manager, professional coach, and cultural diversity professional with more than 20 years of experience, and the author of *Stretching: The Race towards Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in America*. Her keynote address will provide an introduction to the challenges and opportunities associated with growing and diversifying the hazards and disaster workforce.

Click here to view the [schedule](#). Click here to [REGISTER](#).

Additional upcoming events can be viewed on the [NHMA Calendar](#).

RECENT POSTS on the NHMA WEBSITE:

[Center for Disaster Philanthropy - News & Insights \(June 2021\)](#)

[New FEMA Building Code Adoption Tracking Resources](#)

[Registration is Now Open for Building Innovation 2021 \(September 27-29, 2021\)](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

[FEMA Seeking Public Comment on Climate Change and Underserved Communities and Populations](#) (through July 21, 2021 at 7:59 a.m. ET)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is seeking public comments on how the agency's programs deal with climate change and underserved communities and populations.

Submit your comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal, Docket ID: [FEMA-2021-0011](#). Feedback on the executive orders will be open through **July 21, 2021 at 7:59 AM ET**.

The type of feedback most useful to the agency identifies specific programs, regulations, information collections and/or policies that could benefit from reform. Additionally, feedback should refer to specific barriers to participation; address how to improve risk perception; offer actionable data; and specify viable alternatives to existing approaches that meet statutory obligations.

Background

Earlier this year, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. released three executive orders requiring agencies to assess existing programs and policies to determine the following:

- If agency programs and policies perpetuate systemic barriers to opportunities and benefits for people of color and other underserved groups.
- If additional agency actions are required to bolster resilience to climate change.
- If agency programs, policies and activities address the disproportionately high and adverse climate-related impacts on disadvantaged communities.

With the increasing severity and number of large-scale disasters in recent years, that may in part be from climate change, it is essential to reevaluate the agency's programs. These efforts may help to reduce unnecessary barriers to participation and effectiveness, to serve all communities, to increase equity and to promote preparedness and resilience.

For up-to-date information about Environmental Justice funding opportunities, events, and webinars, subscribe to EPA's Environmental Justice listserv by sending a blank email to: join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov.

PERSPECTIVE:

Emergency Management's Journey to Resilience: Using Our Words

By Jim Mullen [Emergency Management, Once Removed](#)
May 2021

Where does the term "resilience" fit among these standard emergency management terms?

Mitigation. Preparedness. Response. Recovery. Prevention (how did that get in here?).
Finally, **Resilience**.

Mitigation: efforts to minimize the negative consequences of a known hazard.

Preparedness: a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to assisting governments, businesses, and the entire community to be prepared to avoid or withstand the disruption of a known or even unforeseen hazard.

Response: accorded disproportional attention in disaster exercises, it is "what we do with what we have" in a crisis.

Recovery essentially means that whatever is not mitigated or sufficiently prepared for (and certainly not preventable) must be rebuilt, repaired, restored – this includes physical as well as psychological measures that address the realignment of a community's social equilibrium. **"Success" in recovery is frequently elusive, particularly when those with less influence are not returned quickly to normalcy, while the "privileged" are.**

Prevention: a term introduced shortly after 9/11 to capture the objectives of the government's counterterrorism initiatives, with the accompanying (*and silly*) notion that it would replace mitigation and even preparedness in our professional lexicon. **Mitigation** means recognizing that you cannot prevent everything but can minimize human and financial losses; **Preparedness** means one can minimize the disruption by anticipating essential requirements until normalcy returns; **Prevention** seems a poor choice for what emergency managers do: emergency managers exist because not everything can be prevented!

Resilience: I define resilience as "bending without breaking" – to be resilient is to comprehend that disasters are not likely to be preventable, not everything can be mitigated or prepared for, and while response can be swift and effective, it will still be necessary to "recover" what has been lost or damaged post-event. **Resilience** is the byproduct of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. A resilient community unflinchingly identifies what needs to be mitigated, works directly with its citizenry, business, and across government boundaries to prepare to counter predictable disruptions, making the disaster response more targeted and a satisfactory recovery after the fact at least possible. So, resilience is an umbrella term for what emergency managers seek to achieve.

Government (bless its "heart" – if it had one) has parsed response, recovery, preparedness, and mitigation into different categories – partly for the sake of sanity in managing grant programs Congress approves. But this parsing has had the effect of portraying each of these elements as standing on their own without sufficient regard to the linkage between them. "Resilience" as a concept is the byproduct of all of those activities, requiring a comprehensive approach (OK, "prevention" can be added not as a substitution but to recognize its existence as a public safety objective!).

Addressed separately, even successful initiatives are unlikely to resonate as programmatic necessities as budget debates rage over priorities. Presented as links in a chain aimed at resilience, programs that mitigate known vulnerabilities, prepare the community, coordinate response protocols, and envision recovery challenges in advance constitute a commitment to resilience that can, and must, be sustained.

Jim Mullen has spent 25 years in emergency management, including 12 years at the local level as director of the City of Seattle's Office of Emergency Management and 8 and a half years as Washington State's Emergency Management Division Director. Jim retired from state service in March 2013. Jim also served as President of the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) from January 2011 to October 2012. He is currently sole proprietor of "EM Northwest Consulting" based in Seattle, WA and serves on the Board of Directors for NHMA.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

[Why FEMA Aid Is Unavailable To Many Who Need It The Most](#)

NPR
By [Rebecca Hersher](#)
June 29, 2021 5:01 AM ET

Many survivors of climate-driven disasters, including hurricanes, floods and wildfires, struggle for months or even years to repair their homes or find new stable housing. Poor people are less likely to get some type of basic housing assistance from the federal government.

[Why Does Disaster Aid Often Favor White People?](#)

New York Times
By [Christopher Flavelle](#)
June 7, 2021

The federal government often gives less help to Black disaster survivors than their white neighbors. That's a challenge for President Biden, who has vowed to fight both inequality and climate change.

[As Wildfire Threat Rises, At-Risk Communities Eye New Defenses](#)

[The Wall Street Journal](#)
By [Jim Carlton](#)
Updated June 9, 2021 11:06 am ET

Building materials, architectural detailing, landscaping choices and even road design will enhance fire safety in the West and other parts of the country

[Below Aging U.S. Dams, a Potential Toxic Calamity](#)

Documents suggest that in more than 80 U.S. locations, the failure of an aging dam could flood a major toxic waste site.

[UNDARK](#)
[BY JAMES DINNEEN AND ALEXANDER KENNEDY](#)
06.01.2021

[Lake Mead at the Hoover Dam to reach lowest water level in decades](#)

[CNN](#)
By [Joe Sutton](#) and Kelly McCleary
Updated 6:27 PM ET, Tue June 8, 2021

A crippling drought in the western US is dropping the [water level](#) at Lake Mead and the Hoover Dam to a historically low level, putting pressure on the region's drinking water supply and the dam's electric capacity.

[Why hurricanes devastate some places over and over again – a meteorologist explains](#)

[THE CONVERSATION](#)
By [Athena Masson](#)
5/27/2021

Every coastline in the North Atlantic is vulnerable to tropical storms, but some areas are [more susceptible to hurricane destruction](#) than others.

[As hurricane season looms, Biden doubles funding to prepare for extreme weather](#)

[The Washington Post](#)
By [Juliet Eilperin](#), [Brady Dennis](#) and [Matt Viser](#)
May 24, 2021 at 6:26 p.m. EDT

Administration will also launch NASA initiative aimed at collecting better climate data

[Condo searchers eye tropical forecast as effort stretches on](#)

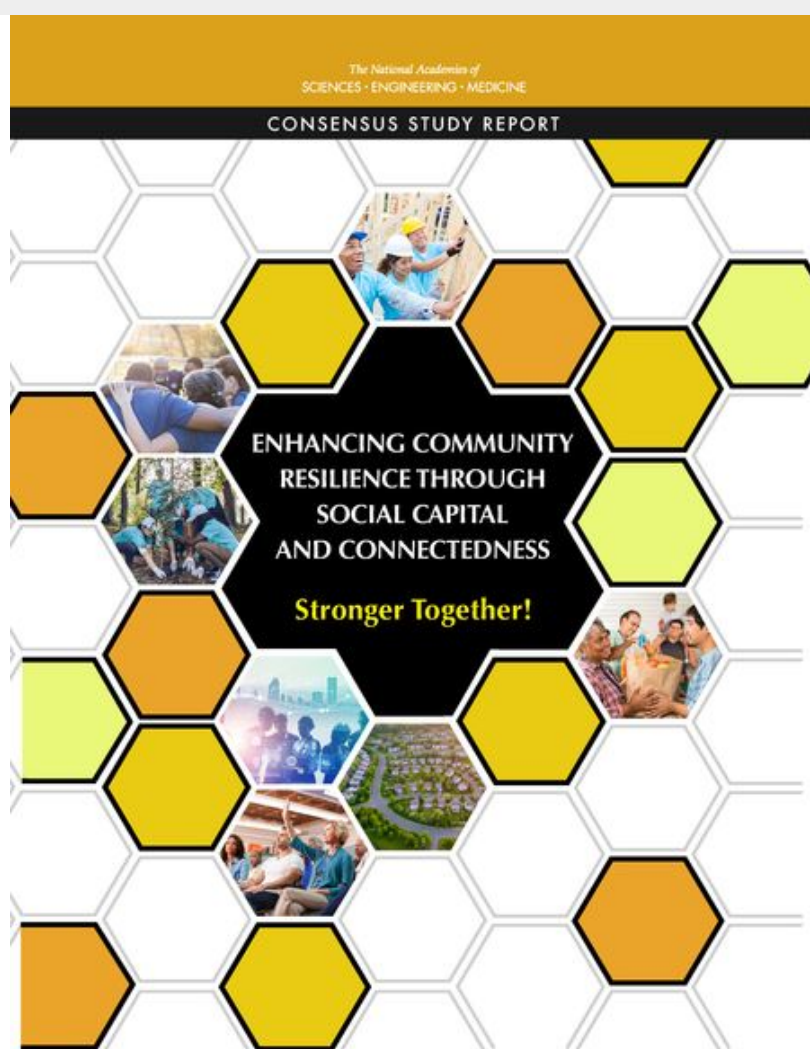
By [RUSS BYNUM](#), [Associated Press](#)
June 30, 2021

SURFSIDE, Florida (AP) — Florida authorities asked the federal government for an additional rescue team to comb the rubble of a collapsed condo tower, underscoring the strenuous nature of the open-ended search for survivors in an area prone to tropical weather.

The possibility that severe weather in coming days could further stretch Florida's search and rescue resources prompted state officials to ask the federal government for the additional team, Kevin Guthrie of the Florida Division of Emergency Management said Tuesday. Already, intermittent bad weather has caused temporary delays in the search.

Continue reading here: <https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-fl-state-wire-surfside-building-collapse-5924a836ff3963cafd79e54228d6e19c>

GOOD READS:



Contributors

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; [Policy and Global Affairs](#); [Committee on Applied Research Topics for Hazard Mitigation and Resilience](#)

Description

Disasters caused by natural hazards and other large-scale emergencies are devastating communities in the United States. These events harm individuals, families, communities, and the entire country, including its economy and the federal budget. This report identifies applied research topics, information, and expertise that can inform action and opportunities within the natural hazard mitigation and resilience fields with the goal of reducing the immense human and financial toll of disasters

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*The **NHMA Members Update!** is a monthly bulletin of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Association offering a snapshot of the latest news, events, activities, and commentary in the realm of hazard mitigation to its members. If you have any questions or believe you are receiving this bulletin in error, please contact us at nathazma@gmail.com to unsubscribe from this list.*

The NHMA is a member supported 501(c)(3) educational & charitable organization composed of mitigation professionals working to promote risk reduction and mitigation and reduce the consequences of natural events, especially among the most vulnerable populations in our communities.

For more information or to become a member of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Association, visit our website at: www.nhma.info/

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