

Public Input Wanted as the RBC Updates Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

6/29/2020

Tornadoes, straight-line winds, ice storms, blizzards, flooding, wildland fires and droughts are the kinds of natural disasters most likely to cause widespread economic loss and personal hardship to the White Earth Reservation. Taking steps to minimize the damage from a natural disaster is key to the White Earth Band's multi-hazard mitigation plan (MHMP); and as the tribe works to update the plan, it wants to hear from the public.

Update of the MHMP is under the direction of the White Earth Band's Emergency Management Department in coordination with U-Spatial at the University of Minnesota Duluth to update the Reservation's plan. Update of the plan will include a planning team of representatives from tribal government, divisions, community members, and other key stakeholders such as utility providers.

"Hazard mitigation planning is a central part of our emergency management program," said Ed Snetsinger, White Earth Reservation Emergency Manager. "Understanding the natural hazards that can cause serious impact to our community and taking action to reduce or eliminate the impact of future disasters makes us more resilient. Hazard mitigation helps us to break the cycle of damage and repair caused by things like flooding, ice storms, and severe wind events that can damage property and natural resources, stress our economy, and threaten life safety."

Examples of hazard mitigation include actions include improvement of roads and culverts that experience repetitive flooding; construction of safe rooms at campgrounds, public parks, mobile home parks or schools to protect lives in the event of tornados or severe wind events; burying powerlines that may fail due to heavy snow, ice or wind storms; ensuring timely emergency communication to the public through warning sirens and mass notification systems, and conducting public awareness and education campaigns to help people to be prepared to take safe action before, during, or following a hazard event. Some mitigation activities may be eligible for future FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funding.

As part of the planning process, White Earth Reservation is seeking feedback from residents and businesses from across the White Earth Reservation to incorporate into the plan:

- What are the natural hazards you feel pose the greatest risk to your community?

- Have you experienced a previous disaster event?
- What concerns do you have, and what sorts of mitigation actions or projects do you feel would help to reduce the damages of potential future events for your personal property, your community, or the County as a whole?

Comments, concerns, or questions regarding natural disasters and potential mitigation actions to be included into the plan update process should be submitted to White Earth Reservation Emergency Management.

There will be additional opportunities for public feedback throughout the planning process. A draft of the plan will be made available for public review prior to submission of the plan to the State of Minnesota. Future news releases will be shared with the media to notify the public of these opportunities.

The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) requires counties and tribes to update their plan every 5 years to maintain eligibility for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant programs.

Contact

Ed Snetsinger
White Earth Reservation Emergency Management Director
Phone: 218-935-2488
Email: Ed.Snetsinger@whiteearth-nsn.gov