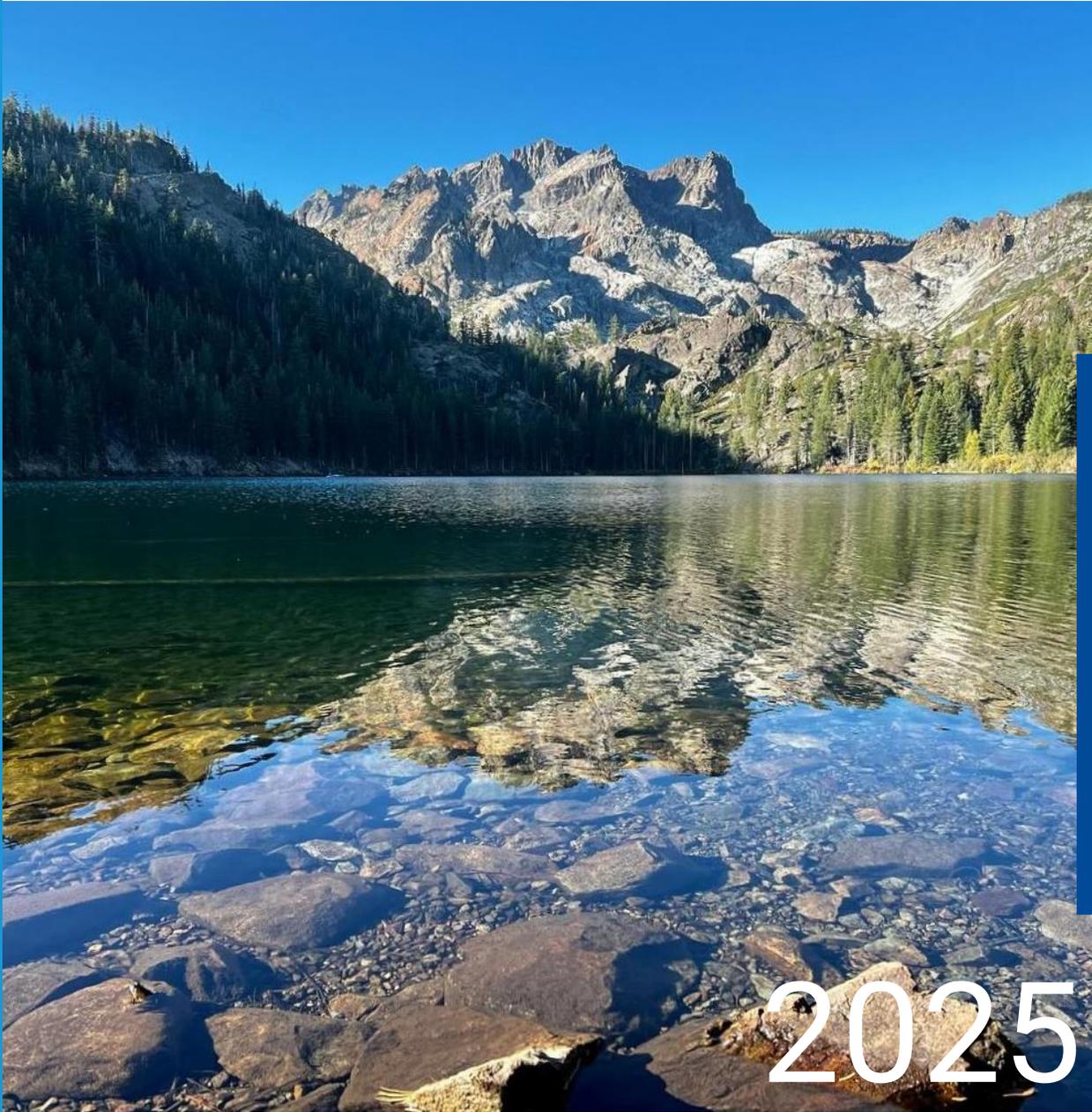


# SIERRA COUNTY



2025

## MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Executive Summary

Public Comment Draft  
July 2025





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



River Canyon (Photo Credit: LeTina Vanetti)

Hazard mitigation involves implementing cost-effective and sustainable measures to minimize the risk to human life, property, and infrastructure from potential hazards. Through mitigation planning, Sierra County and its participating jurisdictions developed a framework to lessen the impacts of natural disasters and create more resilient communities.

### HAZARD MITIGATION OVERVIEW

Sierra County has updated its hazard mitigation plan (HMP) to continue its commitment to reducing risk of natural hazards for the residents, assets, and community lifelines within the County. This update aims to safeguard the people and essential services provided throughout the planning area.

While the prior plan focused only on the County, this update is a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan (MJHMP) that includes annexes for jurisdictions throughout the County to address their specific capabilities, vulnerabilities, and mitigation opportunities. The Sierra County MJHMP the foundation for a long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repetitive damage. This plan aligns with federal and state hazard mitigation planning regulations and



requirements to ensure eligibility for pre- and post-disaster mitigation funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for all jurisdictions that participated as Planning Partners:

- Unincorporated Sierra County
- City of Loyalton
- Alleghany County Water District
- Downieville Fire Protection District
- Downieville Public Utility District
- Pliocene Ridge Community Services District
- Sierra City Fire Protection District
- Sierra County Fire Protection District #1
- Sierra County Waterworks Calpine District No. 1
- Sierra-Plumas Joint Unified School District
- Sierraville Public Utility District

## BUILDING THE PLANNING TEAMS

Sierra County brought together a diverse and inclusive group of individuals to participate, develop, and implement the MJHMP. A Core Planning Team, Steering Committee, and Planning Partnership oversaw the planning process and were responsible for coordinating, overseeing, and executing the planning process.



### CORE PLANNING TEAM

The Core Planning Team was made up of key personnel from the County and disciple leads from the County’s contract consultant, Black & Veatch.



### STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee consisted of a variety of personnel from County departments and agencies, local jurisdictions, and stakeholders that guided the County and participating jurisdictions through the process of updating the MJHMP.



### PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

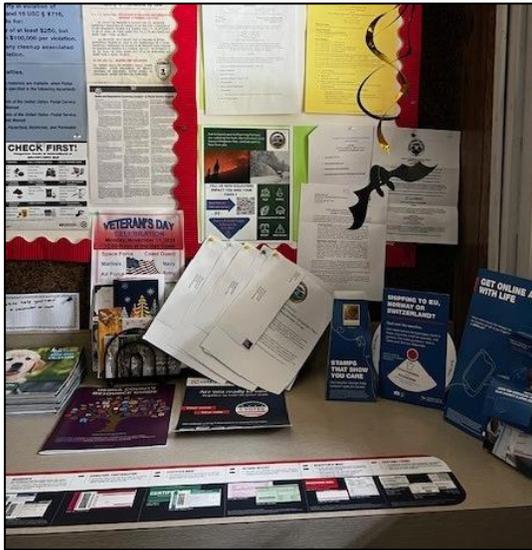
The Planning Partnership included jurisdictional representatives seeking DMA 2000 compliance. They participated throughout the process, reviewed information, provided input, informed the risk assessment, developed mitigation strategies, and adopted the MJHMP.

## OUTREACH STRATEGY

The Core Planning Team (CPT) implemented a multimedia public involvement strategy that was approved by the Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee (HMSC). The strategy included a community hazard mitigation awareness survey; a project web page; and multiple print media distributed on post office bulletin boards and other local gathering places throughout the County (Figure ES-1). Additionally, the HMSC helped amplify public outreach efforts to their networks.



Figure ES-1. Public Survey Distribution at Local Post Office Bulletin Boards and Inserted in Commodities Bags



(Photo Credit: LeTina Vanetti)

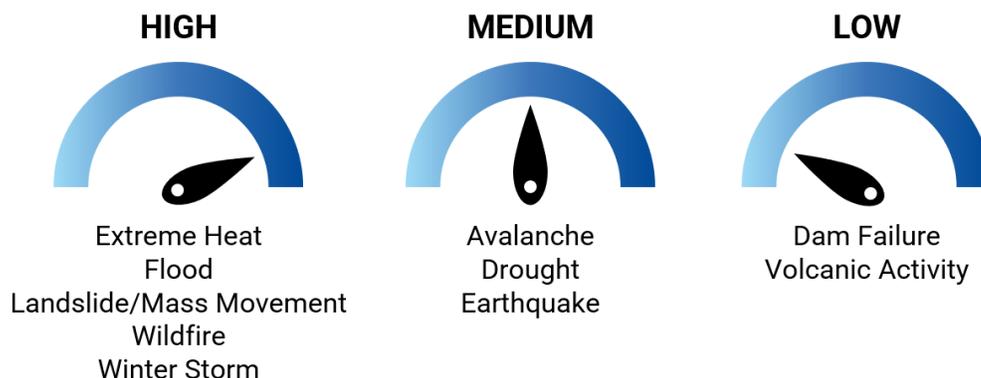
## RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment is the process of measuring the potential loss of life resulting from natural hazards, as well as personal injury, property damage, and environmental damage. The assessment determines a community’s overall vulnerability to hazard events. The HMSC used the risk assessment to gauge the potential impacts of natural hazards identified as “hazards of concern” for this plan.

Risk assessment models for hazards of concern were based on current data and technologies. The assessment of each hazard of concern includes discussion of the following:

- Hazard identification and profile.
- The exposure of population, property, and the environment to the hazards.
- The estimated cost of potential damage, where applicable.

Based on the risk assessment, the hazards of concern were ranked for the risk they pose to the planning area. Countywide results are as follows:





In addition to assessing the hazards of concern, this plan provides a review of “hazards of interest.” The MHSC determined that these other hazards, though not required to be evaluated under federal guidelines for hazard mitigation plans, are important to recognize qualitatively in this plan. Hazard profiles, without quantitative risk assessments, are provided for the following hazards of interest:

- Cybersecurity
- Mass Gatherings
- Transportation Hazards
- Wildlife & Human Interactions

## CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

A robust assessment of mitigation capabilities was completed by each participating jurisdiction to identify gaps that may need to be addressed so mitigation actions can be successfully implemented. The following capability types were analyzed:

- Planning and Regulatory
- Development and Permitting
- Administrative and Technical
- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Compliance
- Public Outreach
- Fiscal
- Participation in Other Programs
- Adaptive Capacity

## MITIGATION STRATEGY

The HMSC reviewed and updated the mitigation goals from the prior plan to reflect the current focus of Sierra County and its participating jurisdictions. The HMSC determined the following goals for this MJHMP:

- Goal 1. Protect lives and reduce hazard-related injuries.
- Goal 2. Minimize or reduce current and future changing conditions that may cause damage from natural hazards to property, including critical facilities and the environment.
- Goal 3. Develop and implement long-term, cost-effective mitigation projects that foster resilience for the whole community.
- Goal 4. Maintain, enhance, and restore the natural environment’s capacity to deal with the impacts of natural hazard events.
- Goal 5. Improve emergency management preparedness, collaboration, and outreach within the planning area.



Mitigation actions presented in this plan are designed to reduce or eliminate losses resulting from natural hazard events. The development process resulted in the identification of more than 50 mitigation actions for implementation by individual Planning Partners, as presented in the jurisdictional annexes in Volume 2 of this MJHMP. Several of these actions are within the current capabilities of each jurisdiction, resulting



in a high priority for implementation over the next 5 years. Additionally, the HMSC and Planning Partners identified three Countywide actions benefitting the whole Planning Partnership, as listed in Table ES-1.

Table ES-1. Countywide Mitigation Actions

Action Number	Description	Implementation Priority	Grant Pursuit Priority
CW-1	Continue to maintain a website that will house the multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan and any amendments to it adopted during the next 5-year period to provide the Planning Partners and the public with ongoing access to the plan and its implementation.	High	Low
CW-2	Continue to leverage/support/enhance ongoing, regional public education and awareness programs, such as Firewise Communities, Fire Safe Council, Heath Fairs, Everbridge, Genasys, and other community notifications and events, as methods to educate the public on risk, risk reduction, and community resilience.	High	Low
CW-3	Provide notification through links on the website or email distribution for available grant funding opportunities to the Planning Partnership.	High	Low

## IMPLEMENTING, ADOPTING AND MAINTAINING THE PLAN

Implementing the mitigation actions in this MJHMP will take time and resources over its 5-year performance period. The CPT developed an implementation and maintenance strategy that includes the following:

- Monitoring mitigation action implementation.
- Progress reporting.
- A strategy for continued public involvement.
- Plan integration with other relevant plans and programs.

This MJHMP is designed with an adaptive management approach that can evolve along with funding sources and state and federal mandates. Sierra County and its Planning Partners will assume responsibility for adopting the recommendations of this plan and committing resources toward implementation. The framework established by this plan will enable the Planning Partnership to pursue FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant funding for feasible, eligible, cost-effective actions. The Planning Partnership developed this plan with extensive opportunities for public involvement and input. Public support of the mitigation actions identified in this MJHMP will ensure its success.