

Sample 3.2:**Excerpt from The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan****15.1 Tribal Pre-Disaster Capability Assessment**

Throughout the United States, the importance of disaster prevention and hazard mitigation has been increasingly recognized in recent years, shifting from the previous emphasis on the other components of emergency management: preparedness, response, and recovery. This change in federal policy and understanding should now “trickle down,” to be reflected correspondingly in the Washoe Tribe’s governmental, legal, fiscal, departmental and programmatic policies, such that they increasingly incorporate and prioritize hazard mitigation measures. As this HMP was produced in cooperation with key political and departmental players both within the Tribe and outside local agencies, the process of creating it has been a first step towards bringing about that internal change in understanding and policy framework.

Because the Tribe uses federal funding for many of its housing, development, and other projects, most of these developments must comply with National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) requirements. For example, everything funded through an Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG), the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NHASDA), or the Bureau of Indian Affairs Home Improvement Program (HIP) must be NEPA-compliant. Washoe Housing Authority (WHA) projects must also follow federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations. The aforementioned projects constitute the majority of the Tribe’s development. Additionally, all developments on Tribal land must comply with the Tribe’s Development Planning System, described in detail below, which has requirements similar to those of NEPA. These federal and tribal laws and regulations ensure the structural, electrical, and utility system integrity and safety of development on Tribal lands.

The Washoe Tribe has several mechanisms already in place that reduce the risk associated with hazard events; however, there are areas where the Tribe should increase its emphasis on mitigation in general to reflect the new federal policy shift. The Tribe’s current “hazard mitigation capability” relies on Tribal law, development policies, land use and other plans, budget allocations, personnel, training, and public outreach. Some of the Tribe’s capabilities can also be strengthened by support from federal, State, and local government agencies. All of these are addressed in this chapter.

To determine what capabilities the Tribe has and to identify areas to improve implementation of hazard mitigation measures, the Emergency Management Coordinator conducted special one-on-one meetings with the Tribe’s senior planner, general counsel, financial director, Washoe Housing Authority (WHA) staff, and the director of the Washoe Development Group (WDG). The information they provided is included in tables and paragraphs in the corresponding sections below.