

Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2011



Photo: Don Gardener

A major landslide destroyed a large section of the Dent Bridge Road. This road is the travel corridor for school busses, mail service and emergency response between the towns of Elk River and Orofino.

Floods and Landslides Result in Disaster Declarations, More Flooding Expected

A wet weather pattern hung over northern and north central Idaho during the first part of April, filling drainage basins throughout the area with more than 200% of normal precipitation. National Weather Service data shows most of this precipitation fell as rain below 6000 feet. This rain combined with melting snow and saturated soils to produce rapid runoff and unstable slopes throughout the area. As a result, saturated soils began to slide and waterways overflowed their boundaries.

As soon as the series of storms passed, local emergency managers and road department officials began to survey the damage. It quickly became apparent that outside assistance would be required to repair the damage. Estimates to return the damaged infrastructure to the condition it was in before the storms rolled through exceeded local road budgets by an average of 250%. Based on the level of damage, six counties declared local disaster declarations and requested the State of Idaho declare a disaster on their behalf.

On April 13 Governor Otter declared a state of emergency in support of Boundary, Bonner, Shoshone, Clearwater, Nez Perce

Floods continued on pg. 3 »

State of Idaho Haz Mat Week 2011

The third annual "Haz Mat Week" was recently hosted on Gowen Field and brought together the seven Idaho Regional Haz Mat Response Teams, EPA, Idaho DEQ, 101st Civil Support Team, Idaho State Police, Idaho Transportation Department, Idaho National Laboratory, the Idaho National Guard, Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, Bureau of Land Management, State Communications, FBI, and Boise Police Department. "Haz Mat Week 2011", sponsored by the seven Idaho Regional Hazardous Materials Response Teams, was an opportunity for first responders from throughout the state to train and prepare together. You could say that we had the "whole team" together in the sense that local, state, and federal players were on Gowen Field in Boise. .

"Haz Mat Week" is designed to help the Regional Haz Mat Response Teams (RRTs) meet their annual competency



Photo: Don Gardener

Mike Kreiter of RRT4 works with RRT members on plugging and patching.

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This spring has been a very busy time as we address Idaho disasters, monitor developments in funding levels, and keep a close eye on international situations. Times like these remind us of the importance of our mission to work in concert with local and national partners in being prepared for all hazards.

This winter has seen record and near record levels of snow in our mountains. During the first part of April we saw the damage that moisture can cause when landslides and floods impacted 6 counties and the Nez Perce Tribe in northern Idaho. Governor Otter showed his support of the impacted areas by declaring a state declaration of emergency, and requesting federal disaster assistance to help in the recovery.

We have been notified of the approval of the federal declaration and will be working closely with FEMA Region X and the impacted jurisdictions to work through the recovery process. Snow pack levels remain very high throughout the state and we are keeping a close watch on further flooding potential.

The national legislative stage has been watched with keen interest as details are worked out for the funding levels of the emergency management and homeland security grants. It appears the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) will keep its funding consistent with 2010 levels, and I see this as a good sign. The State Homeland Security Grant, however, did not fare as well and will see a reduction in fiscal year 2011. I will continue to work with the Idaho Emergency Management Association to keep emergency managers informed and to find collaborative solutions during these tight financial times.

In a closing of a chapter in American history, we all received word that Usama Bin Laden has been killed. Ten years after the tragedy of 9/11, it remains as important as ever to remain vigilant in our mission to protect Idaho and our homeland from any and all hazards. I would like to give my sincere thanks to those who work tirelessly to keep us safe. We will stand together to work through today's and tomorrow's challenges.

Thanks,
Bill

Bill Shawver, Brigadier General, State of Idaho Military Division
Director, Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
Direct Line: 208-422-3001
Administrative Assistant: 208-422-5301



This newsletter is the official newsletter of the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. This quarterly publication is intended for the use of the State of Idaho's emergency management community, legislators, government officials and others who are interested in learning about Idaho's emergency management techniques and procedures.

C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Maj. Gen. Gary Sayler, Adjutant General,
Idaho Military Division

Brig. Gen. Bill Shawver, Director, Idaho
Bureau of Homeland Security
(208) 422-3040

Robert Feeley, editor
(208) 422-3033

Blake Holgate, design editor
(208) 863-8464

and Idaho counties. The Idaho Emergency Operations Center was immediately activated and began coordinating with state and local agencies to execute a rapid damage assessment and to provide direct support to local government. Not long after, the Nez Perce Tribe also requested state assistance and was added to the state declaration. BHS Area Field Officers Jay Baker and Debi Ruppe were dispatched to assist with logistics and coordination of the state response.

As local emergency management conducted rapid assessments it became clear that permanent repair to roads throughout the area were needed, and that these requirements exceeded the capability of the state. On April 15 Idaho requested FEMA Region Ten conduct a joint preliminary damage assessment in the impacted jurisdictions. Those assessments were completed the following week and confirmed that Idaho met the threshold for federal disaster assistance. The threshold for federal disaster assistance is based on a per capita dollar amount, and equals approximately \$1.6 million for the State of Idaho. The damage assessment estimated over \$5 million in damages including emergency measures, debris removal and permanent repair to roads.

With the findings of the damage assessment in hand, Governor Otter requested a Major Disaster Declaration On May 6th. On May 20 Idaho was notified that the President had approve the request for a major disaster declaration, brining federal funding to assist in the recovery efforts.

There is a high level of concern among emergency managers for the level of snowpack remaining in the mountains. All basins throughout the state remain well above 100% of normal, with some basins seeing snow water measurements above 200% of normal. With warmer temperatures on the way this snow will begin to melt into water and make its way into the streams, rivers, lakes and reservoirs of Idaho. Time will tell if this runoff will come off in a measured fashion, but officials are keeping a close eye should more flooding be on the horizon.

Robert Feeley
Public Information Officer
rfeeley@bhs.idaho.gov



Photo: Don Gardener

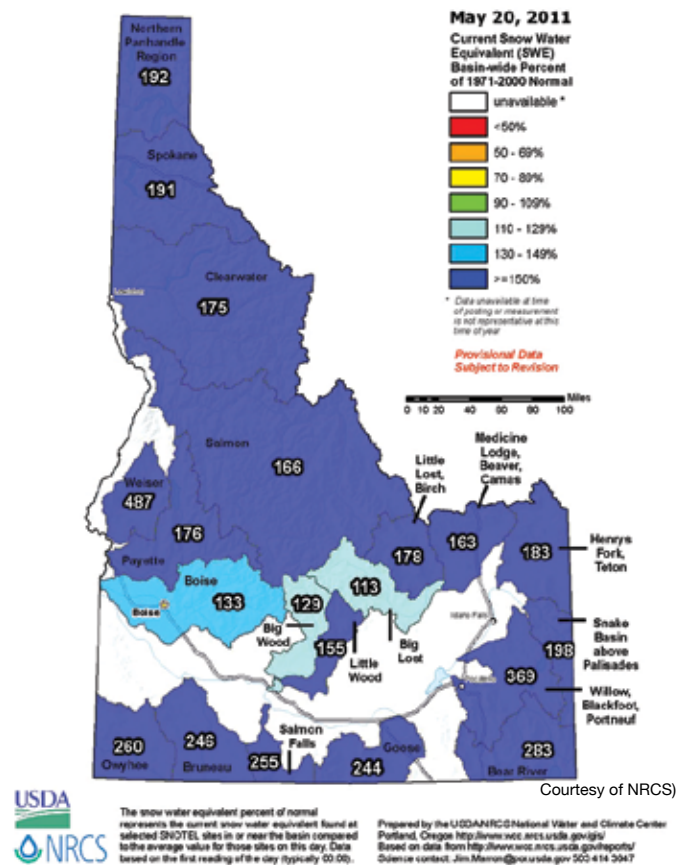
Clearwater County Sheriff Chris Goetz surveys the debris covering the Dent Bridge Road.



Photo: Mel Johnson

Nez Perce County roads were severely damaged by the floodwaters.

Idaho SNOTEL Current Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) % of Normal



Snow water equivalent measurements show all of Idaho is above 100% of normal, with several basins well above 200% of normal.

BHS Says Goodbye to Patrick Frischmuth

Patrick Frischmuth is BHS's longest serving employee, but on June 1st of this year the ride is coming to an end. Patrick was hired by the Bureau of Disaster Services (BDS) 28 years ago, long before there was a Bureau of Homeland Security. He was hired during the administration of Governor John Evans when Darrel Waller was BDS Director, and has served the state of Idaho during the tenure of 6 governors and four Directors. He has seen communications starting with rotary dial phones and mimeograph machines migrate all the way to age of voice over internet protocol (VOIP) and web based emergency management software.

In 1983 Patrick was hired as the Bureau of Disaster Services Fallout Shelter Analyst where he made preparations for potential Cold War conflicts by surveying and improving fallout shelters throughout the state. At this point in time BDS was located in downtown Boise, prior to its migration to Gowen Field. His next position was as the Warning and Communications Officer where he maintained the high frequency (HF) radios for the state and local jurisdictions throughout the state. With the end of the Cold War, civil defense efforts began to transition to emergency management with a focus on natural hazards as well as the man



Patrick Frischmuth monitoring the radio in the early stages of his career.

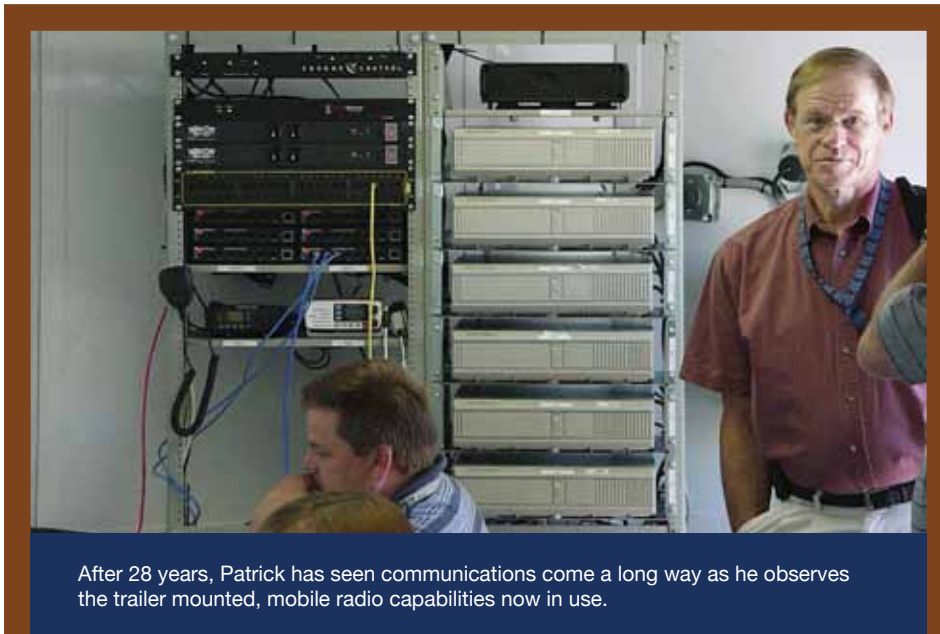
made hazards. With this transition Patrick began his role as Principle Planner for BDS. Subsequent positions included Public Assistance Officer and Mitigation Officer.

In 1997 Idaho saw some of the worst flooding in recent history. Northern and eastern Idaho were hit particularly hard, and twice in one year with winter flooding followed by spring flooding. Both the winter and spring flooding resulted in Presidential

Disaster Declarations. For both of these disasters Patrick was appointed as the State Coordinating Officer and functioned as the chief state representative for the response and recovery in the eighteen impacted counties. As a result of these disasters Patrick began work on a momentous project to divert runoff water from the Silver Valley's Bunker Hill Mine to the Coeur d'Alene River. This complex drainage system project required coordinating eight separate federal grants, including Congressional earmarks from Senator Craig and Representative Chenoweth. Patrick oversaw the efforts to coordinate the multi-agency and multi-year project that included the Army Corps of Engineers, National Resource Conservation Service, Environmental Protection Agency, as well as many more state and local agencies and organizations.

After the attacks of 9/11/2001, the nation renewed its focus on preparing for all hazards that face our country. With the renewed focus came funding in the form of grants to states and local jurisdictions. In these grants Patrick saw an opportunity to make major improvements in the way Idaho approached emergency management. One of his visions included another major project, this one to hook every county in Idaho up

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After 28 years, Patrick has seen communications come a long way as he observes the trailer mounted, mobile radio capabilities now in use.

to a broadband network. Given the large amount of data, voice and video required in today's emergency management profession, Patrick saw this as an opportunity to improve the capabilities of emergency managers at both the state and local level. The project initially sought to extend a 1.5 meg pathway to each of the counties, but as Public Safety Communications and their microwave network became part of the Bureau of Homeland Security, he saw this increase to

a 10 meg connection. As this project nears completion, Patrick will leave his successors to finish his vision.

After 28 years serving Idaho, Patrick is looking forward to taking more time for mountain bike riding, photography, home improvement projects and most importantly spending time with his family. The State of Idaho and its citizens have benefitted immensely from Mr. Frischmuth's long

service and dedication. The Bureau of Homeland Security thanks Patrick for all that he has completed and wishes him an enjoyable and fulfilling retirement.

Robert Feeley
Public Affairs Officer
208-422-3033
rfeeley@bhs.idaho.gov

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requirements for training. A variety of courses were offered including hazardous materials categorization and identification, using field chemistry techniques, air monitoring, environmental sampling, plugging and patching, Haz Mat Safety Officer, and reactive chemicals among others. Region 10 EPA assisted the RRTs by providing instructors and valuable training in several categories. Tom Bergman, from Oklahoma, presented an Advanced CAMEO course, designed for haz mat technicians. The 101st CST provided classrooms and instruction on haz mat analyzers. Courses varied in length from 4, 8, to 16 hours. Several of the more popular courses were repeated to allow access to more RRT members. The FBI and Boise PD Bomb Squad presented courses on IEDs (improvised explosive devices) and trained members to identify various explosive components and formulas.

Approximately 150 participants from the above agencies attended the training, as well as various meetings during the week. For the first time, The Idaho Department of Transportation, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and Region 10 EPA participated and held parallel meetings. The Bureau of Homeland Security Haz Mat Duty Officers, the EPA representatives, and Idaho DEQ conducted a coordination session to improve the response to haz mat emergencies and subsequent cleanup in Idaho.

One of the best attended courses during the week involved several Idaho case studies. These included the major radiation incident in Idaho Falls, various

mercury spills, the last major spill along Highway 12 on the Lochsa River, and an unusual incident involving game birds and bird flu. Multiple speakers presented the cases and took questions from the audience. Many discussions came out of these presentations.

RRT 3 Caldwell/Nampa Fire Department, RRT 4 Boise FD, Idaho State Police response vehicles, and Department of Energy's RAP team vehicle, were displayed on a very rainy afternoon. In addition, for the first time since "Haz Mat Week" started, we had displays by Smith's Detection and RAE systems of equipment that the majority of the Regional Teams utilize.

This year's "Haz Mat Week" was very successful. Each year, additional

agencies participate and the training, networking, and lessons learned are more numerous. All involved are looking forward to planning for next year.

Jeff Rylee
Special Teams Program Manager
208-422-5724
jrylee@bhs.idaho.gov



A member of the EPA team prepares samples for the haz mat responders to identify.



Members from two RRTs and ISP work to identify unknown chemicals during the Haz Cat class given by the EPA.

A State Perspective:

Silver Jackets and Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning (Risk MAP)

PRELUDE

The Idaho Silver Jackets Team works together from a state-centric perspective to promote flood risk management. This includes improving flood risk mapping through FEMA's Risk Map Program.

Active involvement by the Idaho Silver Jackets Team is absolutely critical to the



The Silver Jackets are an interagency organization dedicated to reducing flood risk.

success of Risk MAP at the local level. Although the state has a significant role to play, the real beneficiaries of Risk MAP are the local communities. In order for local communities to benefit, they need to be part of the process. Indeed, people support what they help create and when given proper tools, resources and a common objective, local communities are fully enabled to define their own future—a future with reduced flood risk. To accomplish this, the state Silver Jackets Team needs to rally around the common ideas and goals of promoting flood risk communication and management that make them a team. This article lays out a conceptual

path forward on how the collaborative stakeholders participating in Idaho Silver Jackets are unifying their collective bodies of knowledge and leveraging the Risk MAP program.

WHAT IS RISK MAP?

Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning (Risk MAP) is a program administered by FEMA that seeks to deliver new flood data and products that expand risk awareness and promote mitigation planning that leads to risk reduction actions. Flood hazards are the most costly, damaging, predictable and preventable natural hazard in Idaho. Risk MAP begins with Discovery, which includes hazard identification by the local community and defines the project extent, charter and applicable work products. Next is Resilience, an 18 month process where adaptive non-regulatory risk assessment products are developed for the community. During Resilience, it is important to note that new data is generated for Risk Assessment Products and is used for DFIRM production and associated Risk MAP Projects. Finally, the last phase of Risk MAP is the delivery of a new Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) to the local floodplain managers in the watershed. (See the figure below for the timeline.) The principal Risk MAP actors are FEMA staff and contractors, state and local floodplain managers; but, increased value is realized by involving subject matter experts such as, emergency managers, community planners, GIS specialists, and the Idaho Silver Jackets Team members. The process is funded through Federal Appropriation and National Flood



Insurance Program premiums. The state person coordinating Risk MAP is funded through a Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) project manager grant and this person performs many Risk MAP activities, which vary from state to state, up to and including DFIRM production.

ASSEMBLING A COMPREHENSIVE FLOOD RISK PORTFOLIO

A considerable amount of highly valuable flood hazard mapping data is printed on paper and repositied in several different locations. This is a problem for several reasons; most notably, because the data printed on paper needs to be consolidated into digital form (preferably GIS enabled) in order to be useable in the modern mapping age. GIS professionals lovingly refer to the collection and unification of knowledge as having "one version of the truth". Specific datasets are dam breach inundation maps, detailed flood hazard studies, no-rise certifications, ecological studies and other similar artifacts. These should be considered as a collective body of knowledge and consolidated into a digital "flood

hazard portfolio". Risk MAP has a process for this consolidation where data is inventoried, incorporated and repositied in the Flood Risk Report and subsequent maps, including the DFIRM. A very basic flood hazard portfolio is rolled up in the Risk MAP Business Plan as an appendix; however, the portfolio can be made more comprehensive with local floodplain manager input. Progress toward this ultimate goal of a comprehensive flood risk portfolio is attainable through Risk MAP.

TECHNICAL OBSTACLES AND SOLUTION

The Idaho Silver Jackets Team partnered with the Idaho LiDAR Consortium to create a LiDAR technical specification that meets the needs of FEMA, USGS and several other team members. This is a first for Idaho. The specification is absolutely necessary because the LiDAR will be used for multiple applications and, therefore, needed to meet the mapping needs of multiple users. Elevation data is highly useful, it can be used to: map floodplains, find untaxed structures, measure geotechnical deformations in the earth, model fire fuels, describe vegetation, locate High kV transmission line corridors, map urban landscapes, and more. Many agencies buy, share and utilize LiDAR data for various purposes and should have a reliable format. The technical specification is currently distributed to Idaho Silver Jackets Team members. The state has asked for a letter stating whether the specification complies with the team members' collection policy or if specifications need to be adjusted. The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security recently signed a letter indicating our LiDAR collection policy conforms with this standard.

MANY OBSTACLES OVERCOME BY A SIMPLE CONVERSATION

We all agree that standard policies and procedures differ among agencies and standard operating procedures are not necessarily written to satisfy all agency missions; but that is exactly what we need to address for the benefit of local communities through interagency coordination.

By combining and aligning efforts under the Idaho Silver Jackets Team and Risk MAP, Federal, state, and local governments are in a better position to manage their flood risks given the limited resources available. To maximize our collective efforts, three critical activities should be discussed as part of ongoing Idaho Silver Jackets Team dialog:

- 1) State prioritization of watersheds, The state uses a Coordinated Needs Management Strategy (CNMS) database to prioritize Risk MAP projects. A CNMS is an inventory of stream segments that are 'unstudied', 'invalid study' and/or 'unknown'. Simply put, these are places where a flood hazards need to be remapped.
- 2) Identification and development of consistent standards for the data generated by various Idaho Silver Jackets team members, The state develops the RiskMap business plan, including LiDAR acquisition and project prioritization, while working with the team to encourage input, build value and reinforce partnerships. The reality is that throughout the Risk MAP process, team members contribute to the collective body of flood hazard knowledge. This is accomplished at the basic level by identifying and developing consistent standards for data generated

by team members that meets the needs of multiple Idaho Silver Jackets team member missions, tasks and objectives.

- 3) Flood risk communication, with and among local communities, with the goal of creating a more palpable understanding of the flood risk. Ultimately, the data generated by the Idaho Silver Jackets team, at the standards generated by the SJ team, needs to be delivered to the Floodplain Manager in a useable condition, so the local government can use the data to manage its floodplain: therefore, communicating flood risk. Collaboration through the Idaho Silver Jackets team maximizes flood risk communication, creating a more palpable understanding of the risk and better serves Idaho's communities.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Emergency management coordinators need to be actively involved in the Risk Map program. The community relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders are a key part of this process. Mitigation planning, emergency planning, and continuity of operations planning all require an in depth knowledge of community hazards and risk. Coordination and collaboration with local experts, stakeholders, and the Idaho Silver Jackets Team will improve the quality of information available to develop flood maps and it will ultimately improve the community's understanding of their flood risk.

By Ryan McDaniel, Cooperating Technical Partner Coordinator, Idaho Department of Water Resources (Ryan.McDaniel@idwr.idaho.gov) and Dave Jackson, CFM State Hazard Mitigation Officer (djackson@bhs.idaho.gov)

WHOLE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING

As an emergency manager, planner, or responder, by now I'm sure that you have heard something about "Whole of Community" planning. Is this just the new buzz word, the latest craze, or is this a definitive paradigm shift in the way we approach emergency planning?

Actually it is all of the above. From the gospel of FEMA Director Craig Fugate, "Whole of Community is not revolutionary but simply emergency management 101. It is survivor-centric, focusing on their needs, not what policies do. Emergency management must adapt to how the survivor functions, communicates, and processes the information; must address parts of the community that are under-served because not everybody fits one model (planning for real, not easy); and must involve volunteer and community groups, faith-based organizations, private-sector entities, and people must team together".

Engaging the Whole Community approach is identified in Step-1 of the planning process outlined in the FEMA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101.

volunteer organizations, recreational organizations, and individual neighborhoods.

Community-based planning is to look beyond the traditional government centric approach to emergency management and embracing a philosophy and operational posture that leverages, and serves, the Whole Community. Leveraging the full fabric of the community will produce more effective emergency management outcomes and improve resilience. Building community resilience in this manner requires emergency managers to actively engage with and comprehensively plan for the needs of the whole community, reassess emergency management practices to support local needs, and work to strengthen the institutions and networks that work well in communities every day. The key here is to build on existing structures.

It takes all aspects of a community (volunteer, faith and community-based organizations, the private sector, and the public, including survivors themselves), not just the government, to effectively prepare/protect/respond/recover from a disaster. It



(From the FEMA CPG-101 - Steps in the planning process)

Forming a Collaborative Planning Team involves two key processes:

1. Identify Core Planning Team. The core planning team should include the following: the emergency manager and/or homeland security manager; hazard mitigation experts; subject matter experts to provide expertise on disability, access and functional needs, elderly, children, and household pets and service animals for the emergency planning process. Previously, these areas were being addresses through stand-alone solutions. The revised CPG 101 takes the lessons learned from these other processes and integrates them into the core planning process and guidance. *Note: Planners must ensure that operational planning involves the jurisdictions entire emergency management and homeland security team.

2. Engage the Whole Community in Planning. Planning that is for the whole community and involves the whole community is crucial to the success of any plan. Communities can be jurisdiction based such as towns, cities, and counties or they can be social organization-based such as faith-based organizations,

is critical that we work together to enable communities to develop collective/mutually supporting local capabilities to withstand the potential initial impacts of these events, respond quickly, and recover in a way that sustains or improves the community's overall well-being.

Determining how to effectively engage the community in the planning process is one of the biggest challenges faced by planners. This challenge may be built on misperceptions about a community's interest in participating in the planning process, security concerns about sharing plans or involving organizations that are not government entities, or simply not understanding how to adequately define the role of the community in the planning process. I speak from experience. During the last update to the Idaho Emergency Operations Plan (IDEOP), one of my goals was to remove the "For Official Use Only" (FOUO) security statement. Houston, we have a problem...due to this security constraint the IDEOP was so secret, nobody knew it existed! The revised IDEOP currently does not contain any FOUO and is now widely available on-line to anyone that has internet access.

There are many ways to leverage the community's capabilities

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Preparedness Fairs Help Educate Idahoans

As spring slowly moves over Idaho, citizens are gathering and preparing and educating themselves about Idaho hazards through community Preparedness Fairs. Disasters happen when we are least expecting them and planning is important. We've had a heavy snow falls this year, with much of it still in the mountains as we go into May and prepare for and experience spring flooding. Through education and information sharing the citizens of Idaho create family emergency plans, gather supplies for preparedness kits, and become knowledgeable on hazards specific to Idaho and the region they live in.

The Middleton Preparedness Fair took place on April 11, 2011 with an approximate attendance of 800 local citizens. Individuals and families came to the local High School and received information on preparing their homes for earthquakes, floods, and fires. There were vendors providing information on food storage systems, emergency food preparation, and growing organic foods. The American Red Cross of Idaho attended and provided information on developing a 72 hour kit and CPR. The Canyon County Sheriff's office attended and brought their Mobile Command Center for citizens to walk through.

Latah County Disaster Services in partnership with several local and state government agencies and non profit organizations hosted the "Are you Prepared?" fair March 26, 2011. Over 886 Latah County citizens attended the fair, learning about water and food storage, car seat safety, home and personal safety, and alternative energy ideas. Kids and parents also met Smokey the Bear and tour a Life Flight helicopter.

Community Preparedness Fairs are a great opportunity for parents to begin a dialogue with their children about the importance of having a plan and knowing what is expected of each family member in the event of a natural disaster. This discussion should include a meeting place for all individuals living in the home in case they are separated. The designation of an out of state relative or friend as an emergency contact; often times out of state contacts can be easier to contact because they may not be affected by the disaster.

Preparedness Fairs provide an opportunity for citizens to become educated about the resources that their local city or county can provide in the event of a disaster. In many rural areas of Idaho resources may be limited and citizens can be expected to have the resources to sustain themselves for 72 hours or longer, with not just food and water, but also first aid supplies.

Preparedness starts with each of us in our homes, offices, and cars. Learning how to prepare and getting great ideas can be as simple as taking a few hours and attending our city or county sponsored Emergency Preparedness Fairs.

Heidi Novich
Citizen Corps Coordinator
hnovich@bhs.idaho.gov
208-422-3015



Photos: Sandy Rollins



The Middleton Preparedness Fair took place on April 11, 2011 with an approximate attendance of 800 local citizens.



Photo: Tammy Lowell

Latah County Disaster Services recently hosted the "Are you Prepared?" fair with Smokey Bear in attendance.

and knowledge in the planning process. Although often viewed as a challenge, engaging the community can be successfully accomplished when approached correctly. The foundation for community-based planning is “knowing the community”. A keen understanding of the actual population and its needs will have a profound effect on the success or failure of any plan. Understanding the requirements of those with access and functional needs will directly affect Mass Care planning and pre-determined courses of action. Additionally, the number of children in a community will affect the ways in which schools are used as a resource, in-turn defining some of the requirements for reunification planning. Engaging the community will increase the likelihood that people follow protective action measures during a crisis because they better understand how plans address their needs. Likewise, Idaho is mainly an agricultural state and taking into account the perceptions and fears of some populations, such as migrant workers, may increase a plan’s effectiveness.

The private sector is a critical component in community engagement. Not only are they often the primary providers of critical services to the public, they also possess knowledge and resources to supplement and enhance preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. Most often, private sector and government missions overlap; joint planning and early coordination ensures effective sharing of information and resources and can help facilitate the establishment of common goals and objectives. Private sector engagement presents unique challenges. The private sector plays a critical role in any disaster, and it is important to ensure they are active participants in the planning process, including involvement in jurisdictional training and exercise programs. An effective outreach program is critical in developing and maintaining these partnerships.

Finally, it is critical to include civic leaders, members of the public, and representatives of community-based organizations in the planning process. They may serve as an important resource for validating assumptions about public needs, capabilities, and reactions. Because many planning assumptions and response activities can directly impact the public, involving the whole community during the planning phase is essential. This involvement should continue during plan validation and implementation. Potential roles include support to planning teams, public outreach, and establishing Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). Planners can obtain assistance for including the whole community in the planning process from local Citizen Corps Councils, as well as the Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC). Pre-established partnerships and relationships are important for leveraging subject matter expertise and resources during a disaster.

Remember, disasters begin and end locally. After the response is over, it is the local community that lives with the decisions made during an incident. Therefore, communities should have a say in how a disaster response occurs. How we decide to engage the whole community in our planning and leverage the social infrastructure to help meet community needs will require new and innovative approaches and may be the difference between success and failure. And as responsible planners we know that “Failure is not an Option”.

Phil Lang
Response and Recovery Plans Specialist
(208) 422-3029
plang@bhs.idaho.gov

Virtual Tour Project Aids Fremont County in Pre-planning, Training, Response, and Documentation.

Keith Richey the Fremont County Emergency Management Coordinator has been working on a Virtual Tour project for preplanning, training, and event response at high priority facilities in his county.

The true virtual tour is interactive; you can move your view in a full 360 degree motion, zoom in/out and move from room-to-room. This allows you to pre-plan and train as if you were actually at the facility.

Creating a virtual tour in preparation for an Active Shooter event allows officers that are not familiar with a school to see the layout of the building and how the rooms are arranged

before they ever enter. Some large metropolitan SWAT teams have started to incorporate this into their team line-up with the second or third officer in the line navigating the team through the building using an iPad or iPhone.

When Keith started this project he had no idea of how much time would be involved. Initially he had planned on taking all of the photographs himself. After he broke his foot at a fire in August, he ended up hiring someone to take the pictures. He is now convinced that this is really the only way to do it.

On average it takes 4-6 hours to shoot all of the pictures needed for an average-sized school.

Taking the pictures is not a simple point and click process like we have become used to with digital cameras; it requires a higher-end camera (Keith uses a Nikon D90) and the photographer must be familiar with the concepts of shutter speeds, exposures, etc. Total cost for the all of the equipment/software needed to create a high-quality tour is around \$5,000.00.

Equipped with a fisheye lens, the camera is mounted on a rotator on top of a tripod and a minimum of four pictures are taken, one at every 90 degrees. Using different software programs the picture is then HD edited, stitched together, uploaded to a server and then combined with all of the other elements to create a full tour. It takes up to an hour to process a single panorama and the schools that he has been creating tours of have taken up to 80 hours to complete from start to finish.

Fremont County has or is in the process of creating virtual tours for the following:

- Ten school district buildings
- Juvenile Corrections Center in St Anthony, around 20 buildings
- All county-owned buildings/property
- Big Bend repeater site
- Tier II Facilities
- Bridges downstream from reservoirs that are in the inundation area

Other applications/projects the virtual tours are being used & considered for include:

- Fire scene/investigations
- Hazardous material incidents
- Crime scenes
- Search warrant documentation
- Motor vehicle collision investigations
- Document flooding and damage assessments

Fremont County sees this as the beginning of a new level of documentation for their critical infrastructure. This project provides them with; a time machine to show exactly how things were at a given time in the past, gives responders the tools they need to preplan response activities and then respond knowing what they will encounter, and allows the county to record how things are during an event. As each facility is completed the capabilities of their virtual time machine expands, and they can refer back to what was happening at that specific time and location. As Fremont County completes more facilities, Keith is sure that the needed projects and uses will continue to grow and expand.

Keith has created a link for you to follow enabling you to take

the tour of South Fremont High School that he has created with this project: <http://www.vpix.net/index.php?tour=2479>

Here are some still shots of the program on the high school project. On each view you can zoom in and out, pan up or down and left or right, using your mouse or the grey arrows. To go to a new area or view in the program, just click on the red arrows in the display. To go to a specific room click on the red dot in that room on the index. The index also shows you the view or direction you are looking.

Mike Clements
North East Area Field Officer
208-745-8641
mclements@bhs.idaho.gov



**Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
4040 W. Guard Street
Boise, Idaho 83705**

PROJECT UPDATE, PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS

The ice shield upgrade project that was completed in the summer of 2010 at Sedgewick Peak was put to the ultimate test this winter and has already demonstrated why these upgrades are so important. As reflected in a previous article, Kendall Andersen, Jeremy Hodge, Public Safety Communications (PSC) Technicians, with the assistance of the Idaho Transportation Department designed and installed the new ice shield at Sedgewick Peak in order to safeguard the site from the large amounts of snow and ice that typically fall from the tower during the long winter months. Consequently, the winter of 2010 - 2011 has been a good test of the new ice shield canopy that is anchored to a massive concrete base at the site. As shown in the attached pictures, this communications site experiences above average snow accumulation as well as extreme arctic conditions during the winter. The ice shield protects the facility itself as well as a myriad of electronic equipment and components within the building. The ultimate goal is to keep these items safe and to make certain first responders have the reliability necessary to serve the public during emergencies or incidents. PSC's Region three Technical Coordinator, Kendall Andersen said, "In my twenty years with PSC, this is the worst ice conditions that I have encountered in the month of April in South Eastern Idaho." Additionally, PSC Technician Jeremy Hodge commented, "Like I always say, it's not just a job, it's an adventure." In short, this project illustrates the importance of PSC's on-going requirements to refresh, upgrade and continuously improve our critical communications infrastructure.

Jim Brede, Project Manager
Public Safety Communications
208-288-4000
jbrede@bhs.idaho.gov



Photos: Kendall Anderson

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