

TOWN OF BRUNSWICK
All-Hazards Mitigation Plan



Historic Brunswick Building

**Town of Brunswick
Selectboard
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July 26, 2005

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Prerequisites

Certificate of Local Adoption

Town of Brunswick

A Resolution Adopting the All-Hazards Mitigation Plan

WHEREAS, the Town of Brunswick has worked with the Northeastern Vermont Development Association to identify hazards, analyze past and potential future losses due to natural and human-caused disasters, and identify strategies for mitigating future losses; and

WHEREAS, the Brunswick All-Hazards Mitigation Plan contains recommendations, potential actions and future projects to mitigate damage from disasters in the Town of Brunswick; and

WHEREAS, a meeting was held by the Brunswick Selectboard to formally approve and adopt the Brunswick All-Hazards Mitigation Plan as an annex to the Northeastern Vermont Development Association's (NVDA) All-Hazards Mitigation Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Brunswick Selectboard adopts The Brunswick All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Annex as well as the associated NVDA All-Hazards Mitigation Plan.

Date

Selectboard Chair

Selectboard Member

Selectboard Member

Selectboard Member

Selectboard Member

Attested to by Town Clerk

Section One - Planning Process

1.1 Introduction and Purpose

This Annex, when used with the appropriate sections of the basic NVDA All-Hazards Plan, is an All-Hazards Mitigation Plan for the Town of Brunswick. The purpose of this plan is to assist the Town of Brunswick to identify all hazards facing the community and identify strategies to begin reducing risks from identified hazards. A Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Grant to the Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA) assisted the Town of Brunswick in preparing this plan.

The impact of expected, but unpredictable natural and human-caused events can be reduced through community planning. The goal of this plan is to provide all-hazards local mitigation strategies that make the communities in northeastern Vermont more disaster resistant.

Hazard Mitigation is any sustained action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards and their effects. Based on the results of previous efforts, FEMA and state agencies have come to recognize that it is less expensive to prevent disasters than to get caught in a repetitive repair cycle after disaster have struck. This plan recognizes that communities have opportunities to identify mitigation strategies and measures during all of the other phases of Emergency Management – Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Hazards cannot be eliminated, but it is possible to determine what they are, where they might be most severe and identify local actions that can be taken to reduce the severity of the hazards.

Hazard mitigation strategies and measures alter the hazard by eliminating or reducing the frequency of occurrence, avert the hazard by redirecting the impact by means of a structure or land treatment, adapt the hazard by modifying structures or standards or avoid the hazard by stopping or limiting development and could include projects such as:

- Flood proofing structures
- Tying down propane/fuel tanks in flood prone areas
- Elevating structures
- Identifying high accident locations
- Monitor and protect drinking water supplies
- Enlarge or upgrade culverts and road standards
- Proactive local planning
- Ensuring that critical facilities are safely located
- Providing public information

1.2 About Brunswick

Population: 107
Median Housing Value: \$80,838
Essex County
Chartered: October 13, 1761
Area: 15,808 Acres
Coordinates (Geographic Center): 71°38'W 44°44'N
Altitude ASL: 1,000 feet
Population Density (persons per square mile):
Tax Rate: \$1.40 ('03)
Equalized Value: \$9,009,510

1.3 Community History and Background¹

The pace of life in rural Brunswick is quiet. There are lots of trees, open spaces, and farms on the Connecticut River. People walk, snowmobile and hunt freely on the vast stretches of open and forestland. The water quality and wildlife habitat are maintained. The Town relies heavily on adjacent communities for services, thus maintaining a relatively low level of property taxes. Brunswick maintains a quality of rural living where neighbors help neighbors, and a real sense of belonging still exists.

Brunswick has 39,321 feet of shoreline, of which 22,275 (56.6%) feet is undeveloped. Brunswick has many opportunities to protect these undeveloped shorelines which add greatly to enhancing water quality, wildlife habitat and the rural nature of the community.

Forest land plays a critical role in supporting the regional timber economy, recreation, and hunting. Timber harvesting is a traditional way of life in Brunswick. Most of the land in town is owned by large landowners. There is increasing concern about clear-cutting throughout Essex County. People worry about the long-term implications of cutting large areas at a much faster rate than it is growing back. The residents of Brunswick support forest practices that follow a long-term sustainable plan and discourage the use of large scale clear-cuts.

State highway 105 in Brunswick is projected as a regional arterial highway designed to link larger communities and move increasing traffic to and through Brunswick. Direct access to Route 105 from private properties should be minimized because of dangerous traffic hazards arising from turning movements on a major artery. The St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad parallels this road as does the Nulhegan River.

State Highway 102 is classified as a regional collector designed to provide access within the region and to adjacent towns of Bloomfield and Maidstone. Route 102 will carry the burden of local traffic arising from activities of residents. This highway parallels the Connecticut River but sits well above the flood plain.

¹ Excerpts from the Brunswick Town Plan 1995

The Town of Brunswick has no local roads and therefore has no need of any type of road building or maintenance equipment. No development should be permitted to alter this status because any change would impose an undue burden upon the taxpayers of the town.

The educational needs of the students from Brunswick are met by an accredited school system outside of the Town of Brunswick. Tuition expenses and transportation is provided by the town. Currently there are approximately 29 students from Brunswick. They attend the Stratford K-12 Public Schools in North Stratford, New Hampshire. The school is also an available shelter for Brunswick and it does have a generator.

In keeping with the rural nature of the town, Brunswick does not contain a library, hospital, sewer treatment facilities, power generating stations, public water supplies or the like. Brunswick is a very rural town and should remain so into the future.

The Town of Brunswick has a new Town Hall across Route 102 from the old historic Town Hall. The old building should be maintained and its historic character preserved. Since there are no town roads, facilities or other buildings, Brunswick does not own any other equipment.

Brunswick is very closely linked to the adjacent communities in both Vermont and New Hampshire. Brunswick supports the adjacent communities by providing labor for their jobs, and by supporting community endeavors such as medical services and schools. In turn, the adjacent communities provide shopping facilities, medical services, fire protection, schools, and so on. Residents rely on each other and maintaining a positive relationship is important. Keeping communication open between communities is critical to maintaining the quiet rural lifestyle that is important to all the residents of the area.

Ambulance services are dispatched out of Colebrook, New Hampshire. The ambulance service sometimes takes a while. Both Colebrook and Lancaster hospitals are used and they have access to DHART (helicopter) services. There is one dry hydrant in town on Paul's Stream. A second smaller bridge in Maidstone, across from Stratford Hollow, NH, will reopen in 2005. Once open, it will improve services for fire and safety issues. Brunswick has some law enforcement available from the Essex County Sheriff's Department.

The Town of Brunswick has always been primarily forested, with no settlement outside of the lowland areas of the Connecticut and Nulhegan River valleys. In early years, this settlement was primarily subsistence farming, but the historical regional decline of agriculture has also happened here. There are four active dairy farms in the Connecticut River Valley, and one commercial vegetable grower. Accessible areas along existing highways have gradually developed as low-density rural residential properties, with most residents commuting to employment elsewhere.

The vast bulk of the forestland in the town is actively managed by the landowners for the production of timber products which are marketed elsewhere. Privately owned forest roads provide a variety of seasonal access potentials to these lands, and there have been many individually owned seasonal/recreational camps located in many areas, particularly on the shores of the various bodies of water in the town. These camps were all originally for hunting and

fishing purposes. With easier seasonal access provided intermittently by forest management activities, some have, in recent years, been used as a seasonal/vacation type of camp.

The Flood Plain District includes lowlands adjacent to the Connecticut and Nulhegan Rivers and lies below the "100 year flood" levels as delineated on the maps of the National Flood Insurance Program. Flood zoning regulations restricts development the district.

Section Two - Risk Assessment

2.1 Identifying Hazards

Brunswick local officials identified several hazards that are addressed in this annex. These were identified through interviewing the Selectboard chairman and the Town Clerk. These two individuals have a thorough knowledge of the community through many years of work and working with the local issues. Reviewing past disasters was helpful in determining the greatest risks to the community.

Meeting Date: 8/16/04

Meeting Attendees: Sharon Graham, Brendan Whittaker.

Table 2-A Hazard Inventory and Risk Assessment

Possible Hazard	Likelihood	Impact	Community Vulnerability	Most Vulnerable
Tornado	Low	See below		Power out frequently. Wind shear/micro bursts
Flood	Low	Low	Low	Farm lands**
Flash Flood	Low	Low	Low	Murphy Dam upstream actively ??? planning
Hazardous Materials	Medium	Low	Low	Railroads, roads, 105.
Radiological Incident	Low	Low	Low	Railroad materials
Structure Fire	Low	Low	Low	½-3 years
Power Failure	Med/High	High	Med/High	Residences, end of line/fair*
Winter Storm/Ice	Medium	Medium	Low	Residences, businesses
High Wind	Med/High	Medium	Low/Medium	Trees down, loss of power, timber, roads
Air crash	Low	Low	Low	Site specific
Water Supply Contamination	n/a			Public water supply, rivers.
Hurricane	Low	Low	Low	Power lines, residences
Earthquake	Low	Low	Low	Site specific
Dam Failures (Murphy Dam is exception. Potential problem)	Low	Low	Low	Residences
Drought	Low	Low	Low	Water supply
Chemical or Biological Incident	Low	Low	Low	Site specific. ** Highway and railway related
Highway Incidents	Medium	Low	Low	Site specific – state roads
Wildfire/Forest Fire	Low	Low	Low	Farms, sugar bushes, residences
Landslide	Low	Low	Low	Site specific – 102 near road
School Safety Issues	No. Stratford			Students, teachers, hostage issues
Terrorism	Low	Low	Low	Residents, businesses, local officials

The threats to Brunswick are: hazardous materials, power failures, winter storms/ice, high wind, and highway and railroad accidents.

2.2 Profiling Hazards

2.2.1 Flooding

There has been no FEMA damage in Brunswick in the history of FEMA emergency declarations. There is only one property in town that is in the 100 year flood limit according to the FIRM maps. Ice jams do form on the Connecticut River. The Brunswick Spring Pond that adjoins the Connecticut River was threatened but has been stabilized. There could be severe flooding problems if it were breached. The pond is privately owned and is on file at the Agriculture and Soil Stabilization Office in St. Johnsbury. The Murphy Dam is 30 miles upriver and could be a possible problem if it were to breach. The inundation maps on file at the N.H. Department of Environmental Conservation indicate that there would be fewer than 10 properties affected.

2.2.2 Hazardous Materials

The Selectboard would like information on hazardous materials that travel along Route 105, 102, and the railroad. There is a general concern that a HazMat incident could occur and cause contamination issues for the Nulhegan River and the Connecticut River

2.2.3 Power Failures

Vermont Electric Cooperative is the power supplier for the town. Because Brunswick is so rural and remote, the power outages that do occur take time for workers to get there to fix the problem. Power outages are sporadic but when they occur they can be for long durations (up to 12-15 hours). Many residents have generators, woodstoves and propane for heating/ cooking. Selectmen are proactive with the VEC on reducing outages and durations. There are no special needs groups such as nursing homes, day care centers or Lifeline residents.

2.2.4 Winter Storms/Ice

Winter storms with snow, ice and freezing temperatures in various combinations are fairly commonplace in Brunswick, Vermont. The town is geared to handle most winter emergencies. A potential for emergency exists when such storms also result in loss of electric power, leaving a people without adequate heating capability. Heavy wet snows of early fall and late spring cause most power failures, however, ice storms can also cause power outages. There is one generator available to supply water needs for only about 4-5 households.

2.2.5 High Winds

Violent windstorms (wind shears) occur periodically in Brunswick. Many windstorms result in downed trees, damaged phone and power lines, and crop losses.

2.2.6 Highway Incidents

The most likely places in Brunswick for highway incidents are anywhere on Route 105, mainly due to speed, and at the intersection of Route 102 and the Maidstone Lake Road. Route 105 also has many moose that can cause heavy damage to vehicles.

2.3 Vulnerability: Overview

In terms of vulnerability, Brunswick officials rated these potential hazards as their most likely threats: [Hazardous Materials, Winter Storm/Ice and Power Outages](#). Mitigation strategies are

identified for the highest priority projects in Section Three. Only those hazards that were identified as the highest risks to the town were profiled. While other types of hazards may cause smaller problems for the community, they pose a lower risk.

2.4 Identifying Structures

It is difficult to estimate the total number of structures in the 100-year limit of the FIRM identified floodplain as those maps do not accurately match up to the E911 maps that are based on the structures' geographical location (latitude and longitude). However, it can be estimated that there is one structure in or near the flood areas depicted on the NFIP maps. The inundation maps for the area that would be flooded if the Murphy Dam were to breach would have no more than five structures to the possible flood area.

2.5 Estimating Potential Losses

Potential losses can be lessened through mitigation of potential hazards. For flooding issues the FIRM maps are not compatible with the GIS maps containing contour, rivers, roads and structures and it is not possible to estimate the amount of potential loss at this time. It is recommended that the NFIP maps be redone using the Vermont Geographic Information System standards based on orthophoto mapping. The Median Housing Value (MHV) for Brunswick in 2003 was \$80,838. The Equalized Value for all properties in Brunswick in 2003 was \$9,009,510. If one percent (1%) of all properties in Brunswick Town were damaged, the value would be assessed at \$9,010.

2.6 Analyzing Development Trends

Brunswick is not considered a rapidly growing community. The town has zoning regulations in place to guard against future development in inappropriate locations such as flood prone areas. Development strategies are reviewed by the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment. All buildings being improved in or near frequently flooded areas are required to elevate or provide additional mitigation measures.

Population Increase 2000 - 2003

Town	Estimated Pop 2003	Census Pop 2000	Increase
Brunswick	107	107	0%

Section Three - Mitigation Strategy

Hazard Mitigation Strategies and Measures **avoid** the hazard by stopping or limiting new exposures in known hazard areas, **alter** the hazard by eliminating or reducing the frequency of occurrence, **avert** the hazard by redirecting the impact by means of a structure or land treatment, **adapt** to the hazard by modifying structures or standards and could include tools or projects such as:

- **Town Plan** - this document contains goals and objectives for community growth, health, safety and welfare for public and private interests.
- **Zoning Status** – This is a snapshot of the current zoning tools in effect. Note the progress listed above for some communities.
- **NFIP** – National Flood Hazard Insurance Program.
- **C & S = Highway Codes and Standards** – Most all Vermont communities have adopted the Vermont Transportation Agencies recommended Highway Codes and Standards. This is perhaps the one most beneficial mitigation program in Vermont and the NVDA region. By adopting these codes, all maintenance and new construction on roads, highways, bridges and culverts must be enhanced to meet the new standards to withstand large flood events. Brunswick has not adopted these standards as they have no town roads.
- **VTRC** – Brunswick does not have a Vermont Red Cross Shelter Pre-Agreement. When a Pre-Agreement is in effect, local representatives are trained to open a shelter if needed. This will allow for a more efficient use of the VT Red Cross if and when needed.
- **Emergency Operation Plan (EOP)** – Brunswick is in the process of having its EOP updated to include all-hazards through a Homeland Security Grant to the NVDA. This plan will be substantially completed by July 2005 and will include this Plan as its risk assessment to all-hazards.
- **Rapid Response Plan (RRP)** – Brunswick has updated its RRP as of November 2, 2004.

Table 3-A Development Tools

Town	Town Plan	Zoning	NFIP	Flood Regs	Subdivision	Codes&S	Culvert Inv.	VRC	Maps FIRM
Brunswick	YES	YES	YES	YES	N	N	N	N	y

3.1 Regional Hazard Mitigation Goals

- Reduce the loss of life and injury resulting from all hazards.
- Mitigate financial losses incurred by municipal, residential, industrial, agricultural and commercial establishments due to disasters.
- Reduce the damage to public infrastructure resulting from all hazards.
- Recognize the connections between land use, storm-water road design and maintenance and the effects from disasters.
- Ensure that mitigation measures are compatible with the natural features of community rivers, streams and other surface waters; historic resources; character of neighborhoods; and the capacity of the community to implement them.
- Encourage all-hazard mitigation planning as a part of the municipal planning process.

3.2 Community Preparedness Goals

Overall, Brunswick is working to decrease its risk to flooding, water supply contamination and hazardous material incidents through proactive planning, policies and mitigation actions.

- Review this plan with essential town government and responders from neighboring communities.

3.3 Existing Hazard Mitigation Programs

Brunswick has been proactive in planning its future as well as protecting its citizens from potential disasters.

3.3.1 Emergency Management Planning

Brunswick has recently updated their Rapid Response Plan.

3.3.2 Codes and Standards

Brunswick has not adopted the recommended Highway Codes and Standards that require regular upgrades on bridges, highways, ditching and culverts to avoid flood damage because they have no town roads.

3.3.3 Local Planning and Zoning, NFIP

Brunswick has adopted a Town Plan and Zoning. They are a member of the National Flood Insurance Program. All development in or near the identified flood areas must conform to zoning standards.

3.3.4 Protection of Town Records

The Town office has a vault to protect public records from fire, damage or theft/vandalism.

3.3.5 School Drills

The K-12 Stratford, N.H. school that Brunswick students attend practices regular evacuation drills.

3.4 Preparedness Tools

Public Awareness, Training, Education

- Conduct Emergency Drills involving all elements of the community to practice procedures associated with a simulated varies incidents.
- Use this plan for Hazard Identification and Mapping.

Public Protection

- Designate shelters.
- Emergency communications and information systems (NOAA weather receivers, Emergency Alert System (EAS)) are at the Command Center.
- Update Hazard Vulnerability Assessments as needed.

- Review and modify evacuation and sheltering plans based on the results of drills and exercises or procedures implemented in an actual incident.
- American Red Cross chapter may be contacted to assist with community education programs.
- Maintain current Rapid Response Plans and the Emergency Management Operations Plans.
- Regularly scheduled maintenance programs are ongoing (culvert survey & replacement, ditching along roadways, cutting vegetation to allow visibility at intersections).
- The town is proactive in preparing for potential disasters.
- Emergency response and management staff attend professional training sessions.

Financial and Tax Incentives.

- Use State and Federal funding for mitigation projects and activities.

Hazard Control and Protective Works.

- Utilize regular maintenance programs (culvert survey & replacement, ditching along roadways, cutting vegetation to allow visibility at intersections).

Insurance Programs.

- Participate in NFIP.

Land Use Planning/Management: Flood.

- Brunswick has a municipal plan and local zoning. They have established Flood Hazard Areas through the NFIP.

Protection/Retrofit of Infrastructure and Critical Facilities.

- A map of Critical Facilities is attached.

3.5 Analysis of Mitigation Actions

Priority Actions:

Local officials in Brunswick have identified several mitigation actions to be included in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Table 3-B, Implementation Strategy contains these actions, along with the responsible agency, the funding source, and implementation timeframe.

The Brunswick local officials have prioritized the actions using the STAPLE+E criteria, a planning tool used to evaluate alternative actions. The following table explains the STAPLE+E criteria.

S – Social	Mitigation actions are acceptable to the community if they do not adversely affect a particular segment of the population, do not cause relocation of lower income people, and if they are compatible with the community’s social and cultural views.
T – Technical	Mitigation actions are technically most effective if they provide long-term reduction of losses and have minimal secondary adverse impacts.
A – Administrative	Mitigation actions are easier to implement if the jurisdiction has the necessary staffing and funding.
P – Political	Mitigation actions can truly be successful if all stakeholders have been offered an opportunity to participate in the planning process and if there is public support for the action.
L – Legal	It is critical that the jurisdiction or implementing agency have the legal authority to implement and enforce a mitigation action.
E – Economic	Budget constraints can significantly deter the implementation of mitigation actions. Hence, it is important to evaluate whether an action is cost-effective, as determined by a cost benefit review, and possible to fund.
E – Environmental	Sustainable mitigation actions that do not have an adverse effect on the environment, that comply with Federal, State, and local environmental regulations, and that are consistent with the community’s environmental goals, have mitigation benefits while being environmentally sound.

3.6 Implementation of Mitigation Actions

A potential hazardous material incident and power outages are the two main threats to Brunswick. Local officials are proactive in preparing for the hazards for which they are most vulnerable. Their highest priority concern is the health safety and welfare of the local citizens and businesses.

The mitigation action determined to have the highest priority was the most cost effective alternative to the community. Readiness and timeliness of project was also important.

The evaluating of the STAPLEE criteria is takes into consideration the best available information, any engineering evaluations, and best judgment. The action listed in Table 3-B is important to community, cost effective and feasibility to the community.

Table 3-B Mitigation Projects by Priority

Project/Priority	Mitigation Action	Who is Responsible	Time Frame and Potential Funding	Initial Implementation Steps
Need small home - sized generator for town office/hall to qualify for shelter	To provide emergency shelter in the event that other access points across the CT. River are inaccessible.	Selectboard	2005/6 – Homeland Security funds, HMGP funds.	Seek likely grant sources and appoint a lead contact to secure funds for a small generator.

Section Four - Plan Maintenance Process

4.1 Initial Approval Process

Opportunities for public comment will include a warned adoption to review the plan prior to final adoption. After local review and comment, the draft local annex is presented to the State Hazard Mitigation Committee through the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) for review and comment. The SHMO will issue a recommendation for forwarding the plan to the FEMA Region I. After receipt of comments from FEMA Region I staff, final changes will be made and the resulting document adopted by the Brunswick Selectboard. The final plan will be returned to FEMA Region I for formal approval.

4.2 Routine Plan Maintenance

The Hazard Mitigation Plan is dynamic and changing. To ensure that the plan remains current it is important that it be updated periodically. The plan shall be updated every five years, pending ongoing financial resources, in accordance with the following procedure:

- 4.2.1 The Brunswick Selectboard will either act as the review committee or appoint a review committee.
- 4.2.2 The committee will discuss the process to determine if the evaluation criteria is still appropriate or modifications or additions are needed to the mitigation strategies based on changing conditions since the last update occurred. Data needs will be reviewed, data sources identified and responsibility for collecting information will be assigned to members.
- 4.2.3 A draft report will be prepared based on the evaluation criteria and in conformance with the FEMA Region I Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Crosswalk document.
- 4.2.4 The Selectboard will have the opportunity to review the draft report. Consensus will be reached on changes to the draft.
- 4.2.5 Changes will be incorporated into the document.
- 4.2.6 The plan will be reviewed by Vermont Emergency Management (SHMO) staff and then FEMA Region I staff.
- 4.2.7 VEM and FEMA comments will be incorporated into the plan.
- 4.2.8 The Selectboard will warn the plan for approval at its regular meeting.
- 4.2.9 The Selectboard will incorporate any community comments into the plan.

4.2.10 The Selectboard will finalize and adopt the plan and distribute to interested persons.

4.3 Programs, Initiatives and Project Review

Although the plan will be reviewed, pending ongoing financial resources, in its entirety every five years the town may review and update its programs, initiatives and projects more often based on the above procedure as changing needs and priorities arise.

4.4 Post-Disaster Review Procedures

Should a declared disaster occur, a special review will occur in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Within six (6) months of a declared emergency event, the town will initiate a post-disaster review and assessment.
2. This post-disaster review and assessment will document the facts of the event and assess whether existing Hazard Modification Plans effectively addressed the hazard.
3. A draft report After Action Report of the assessment will be distributed to the Review/ Update Committee.
4. A meeting of the committee will be convened by the Selectboard to make a determination whether the plan needs to be amended. If the committee determines that NO modification of the plan is needed. Then the report is distributed to interested parties.
5. If the committee determines that modification of the plan IS needed, then the committee drafts an amended plan based on the recommendations and forwards it to the Selectboard for public input.
6. The Selectboard adopts the amended plan.

Section Five - MAPS

Map A - Local Areas of Concern Map and Essential Facilities Map

