

Pender County Planning and Community Development

805 S. Walker Street
PO Box 1519
Burgaw, NC 28425



Phone: 910-259-1202
Fax: 910-259-1295
www.pendercountync.gov

To: Sofia Voulgarakis Hackett, CRS Resource Specialist

From: CRS Coordinator

Date: July 12, 2024

Re: Pender County CRS annual re-certification

CC: Board of County Commissioners
Public Information Officer

On March 15, 2021, Pender County's Board of Commissioners approved the adoption of the 2021 Southeastern North Carolina Hazard Mitigation Plan. Within this plan are mitigation action strategies that the County has identified as important to mitigating our risk to all hazards, including floods. Pender County staff reviews these mitigation action strategies annually and provides a status update on each strategy. The tables below serve as the means of providing a more thorough report on the mitigation strategies related to floodplain management.

Many of the strategies are implemented in an ongoing basis as part of the regulatory or public outreach process. Within the plan, all applicable mitigation strategies are either complete, in progress, or ongoing.

The mitigation action strategies are located within the Hazard Mitigation Plan which can be found on the county's Planning and Community Development website

(<https://pendercountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/310/Southeastern-NC-Regional-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan---2021-PDF>).

Staff provided this report to the Pender County Board of Commissioners and the Public Information Officer for dissemination to local media outlets.

CRS Activity 510 – Annual Progress Report

Pender County Mitigation Action 4	Support the establishment of conservation easements on all flood prone property and impose such easements on all properties acquired with public assistance funds. The county will assist municipalities in working through this process.
Review of Mitigation Action:	Pender County has executed over 30 property acquisitions since Hurricane Matthew in 2016. We are currently working with North Carolina Emergency Management and the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency on more property acquisition projects. Once acquired, these properties are deed restricted as open space in perpetuity.

Pender County Mitigation Action 5	Conduct an annual review of development restrictions in floodplain areas and maintain initiatives to ensure limited residential and commercial development in the floodplains and protection of critical facilities. This effort should include a review of county and municipal zoning, subdivision, and flood damage prevention regulations.
Review of Mitigation Action:	Staff reviews the County’s Unified Development Ordinance and Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance regularly, seeking ways to encourage development outside the Special Flood Hazard Area. Currently, the County enforces a two-foot freeboard within the SFHA and reviews all development proposals within the SFHA.

Pender County Mitigation Action 6	Maintain all properties acquired through HMGP funding or other sources aimed at addressing natural hazard mitigation as open space in perpetuity.
Review of Mitigation Action:	Pender County places deed restrictions on all lots acquired through state or federal flood mitigation grant funding. These buyout properties are maintained as open space in perpetuity. County staff are working to ensure all properties are properly maintained as open space and perform natural floodplain functions.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 7	Adopt and annually update capital improvements plans at the county and municipal level with an emphasis on mitigation for critical facilities including relocation and retrofitting.
Review of Mitigation Action:	The County’s Capital Improvement Plan and Annual Budget was adopted by the Board of Commissioners at their June 17, 2024, meeting.

Pender County Mitigation Action 8	At the staff level, work with the NCDOT to identify and develop resolutions for local and regional drainage issues created by NCDOT facilities, including inspections of channels, retention basins, and, as needed, pursue debris removal.
Review of Mitigation Action:	The Board approved and funded a position focused on improving drainage throughout the county's natural waterways. State and federally funded grant programs have been executed in the past year to stabilize streambanks and remove debris from natural drainage channels. This work has been very popular among citizens and staff continues to seek funding for this type of work.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 9	Apply for all available funding from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and funds to assist with the mitigation of severe repetitive loss properties to relocate structures out of the floodplain.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	Staff is working with North Carolina Emergency Management and the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency to leverage grant funds to improve resilience through the removal of property from floodplains. Staff mails letters to property owners in repetitive loss areas and includes information regarding grants to mitigate their flood risk. Staff is currently seeking out willing landowners to participate in a new round of funding for elevating homes above the 100 year Base Flood Elevation.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 10	Require a finished construction elevation certificate for all new development within the special flood hazard area (SFHA) within both incorporated and unincorporated portions of the County. All elevation certificates should be submitted on an official FEMA elevation certificate. No certificate of occupancy shall be issued for any development within a defined special flood hazard area without the submittal of the required elevation certificate.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	Pender County's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance requires a finished construction elevation certificate be submitted to the Floodplain Administrator prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 11	Continue to comply with NC State Coastal stormwater regulations.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	The County's Unified Development Ordinance continues to conform with state standards.

<p>Pender County Mitigation Strategy 13</p>	<p>Maintain a map information service involving the following: (1) Provide information relating to Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) to all inquirers, including providing information on whether a given property is located within a flood hazard area, (2) Provide information regarding the flood insurance purchase requirement on the county's website, (3) Maintain historical and current FIRM's, (4) Locally advertise annually in the local newspaper, (5) Provide information to inquirers about local floodplain management requirements, (6) Include in the county's newsletter (all property owners) and on the county's website a letter on flood insurance, (7) Notify property owners within a flood prone area that they are subject to flooding.</p>
<p>Review of Mitigation Strategy:</p>	<p>The County continues to provide these services in person and online. The Planning Department has one Certified Floodplain Manager on staff who is able to provide assistance to citizens with floodplain development and/or flood insurance related questions. The Department continues to train more staff members and encourage staff to seek certifications related to floodplain management. In the past year the County has hired a Resilience Planner to assist with these duties. This position will also obtain their Certified Floodplain Manager certification.</p>

<p>Pender County Mitigation Strategy 14</p>	<p>Make information regarding hazards and development regulations within the floodplains available through the following: (1) The County Planning Director will ensure that the local library maintains information relating to flooding and flood protection, (2) The County will provide a link on their website to FEMA resources addressing flooding and flood protection, and (3) materials will be made available at county administration buildings.</p>
<p>Review of Mitigation Strategy:</p>	<p>Pender County's libraries and administrative buildings maintain several documents related to flood protection and prevention as part of our creditable activities under CRS. The Planning Department's Flood Mitigation website houses links to FEMA resources for the public's use.</p>

<p>Pender County Mitigation Strategy 15</p>	<p>Provide comprehensive services regarding planning and development activities within the defined SFHA. These services will include (1) Providing site specific flood and flood-related information on an as needed basis, (2) Building inspections department will maintain a list of contractors with experience in floodproofing and retrofit techniques, (3) Building inspections department will maintain materials providing an overview of how to select a qualified contractor, (4) Make site visits upon request to review occurrences of flooding, drainage, and sewer problems--if applicable, inspector should provide one-on-one advice to the property owner, (5) Provide advice and assistance regarding CRS Activity 530, (6) Advertise the availability of services annually within the local newspaper, and (7) Maintain a log of all individuals assisted through these services, including site visits.</p>
<p>Review of Mitigation Strategy:</p>	<p>The County's Planning Department provides site specific information regarding floodplain development on a regular basis, including during site visits. These services are advertised annually to common users such as lenders, insurance agencies, and real estate agencies but also available to the general public. A staff member was hired in FY21-22 who has been tasked with improving drainage in the natural waterways of the County. This staff member regularly conducts site visits seeking to resolve drainage issues. A Resilience Planner was hired within the last year who also provides these services and routinely provides flood related information, advice and assistance to property owners and the public.</p>

<p>Pender County Mitigation Strategy 16</p>	<p>Work with local real estate agencies to ensure that agents are informing clients when property for sale is located within an SFHA. The County will provide these agencies with brochures documenting the concerns relating to development located within flood prone areas.</p>
<p>Review of Mitigation Strategy:</p>	<p>Staff sends an annual letter to common users reminding them of the County's ability to provide information regarding flood maps and floodplain development regulations. Those common users include real estate agencies, lenders, banks and insurance agencies.</p>

<p>Pender County Mitigation Strategy 18</p>	<p>Post educational information on the county's website addressing the hazards associated with wildfires, hail, tsunamis, tornados, hurricanes, flooding, and storm surge, as well as other hazards outlined in Section 3 of this plan.</p>
<p>Review of Mitigation Strategy:</p>	<p>The Southeastern North Carolina Hazard Mitigation Plan is available on the County's website. This plan includes an analysis of each of the hazards listed above.</p>

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 23	Continue to support the NC Office of Dam Safety's efforts to monitor and inspect all dams throughout the state. The county will rely on this agency to ensure that all dam facilities, both public and private, are properly maintained and stable.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	Staff support the NC Office of Dam Safety's efforts as requested.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 24	Request Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) funding for the elevation/floodproofing of repetitive loss properties.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	Pender County continues to seek funding for repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss structures through the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant program.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 28	Continue to seek funding sources for the elevation or retrofitting of existing sewer lift stations in an effort to reduce or eliminate the impacts from flooding.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	Staff continue to seek funding to mitigate flood risk for critical facilities, including lift stations.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 30	Consider developing innovative approaches to floodplain management including density tradeoffs, cluster development regulations, and additional opportunities for land donation and dedication.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	Staff regularly reviews and considers new approaches to zoning and development incentives that encourage development outside the Special Flood Hazard Area. Pender County Planning Dept. was recently awarded a grant for developing a Preferred Development Guide for developers which will encourage innovative approaches to floodplain development.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 33	Consider the data and recommendations outlined in this plan when preparing updates to Capital Improvements Plans. All recommendations regarding capital expenditures will focus on siting all infrastructure and public facilities outside of the Flood Hazard Area.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	When new capital expenditures are considered, staff work to best site any proposed structures outside the Special Flood Hazard Area, if applicable.

Pender County Mitigation Strategy 34	Work with NC Office of Recovery and Resilience (NCORR) to identify homes in flood prone areas for potential funding through CDBG programs for mitigation and disaster recovery.
Review of Mitigation Strategy:	Staff have continued to work with NCORR to identify flood prone areas where CDBG funding could be used. Staff also encourage citizens to apply for existing CDBG grant funding when applicable.