



2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Fact Sheet and FAQs

What is Hazard Mitigation?

Hazard mitigation is the sustained effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening or eliminating the impacts of natural disasters, climate hazards, and human-caused threats. It creates safer communities and helps maintain quality of life. Effective hazard mitigation requires an understanding of all risks and a sustained investment in long-term community well-being through the implementation of short- and long-term strategies before the next disaster.

What is the State Hazard Mitigation Plan?

The State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP or Plan) is California's primary hazard mitigation guidance document. It provides an analysis of the State's historical and current hazards, describes the State's hazard mitigation goals and objectives, and details the State's hazard mitigation strategies and actions. The Plan represents the State's commitment to a comprehensive mitigation strategy to reduce or eliminate potential risks and impacts of disasters, reducing loss of life and property, promoting faster disaster recovery, and creating a more resilient California.

The SHMP is updated on a five-year cycle as required by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and allows the State to access critical Federal funding. California published its first SHMP in 2004. Subsequent Plans were released in 2007, 2010, and 2013. The current [SHMP was released in 2018](#) and expires in September 2023. This 2023 SHMP update will replace the 2018 SHMP upon approval by FEMA and adoption by the State.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recognized California as one of the few states in the country to earn the designation as an ["Enhanced" State](#). "Enhanced" status acknowledges the coordinated and proactive efforts the State is taking to reduce losses from hazards, protect life and property, and create safer and more resilient communities.

Why is the SHMP Important?

In addition to setting the mitigation goals, strategy, and actions for the State to reduce the loss of life, property, and the environment from disasters, the SHMP also serves as a resource for local planners developing their own hazard mitigation plans. The SHMP is a critical starting point for locals seeking to understand the risks they face in their jurisdictions and how to address them.



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The SHMP is also essential for securing federal Stafford Act disaster funding. Plans that are approved by FEMA ensure funding eligibility for:

- [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program \(HMGP\)](#)
- [HMGP Post-Fire \(HMGP-PF\)](#)
- [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\)](#)
- [Flood Mitigation Assistance \(FMA\)](#)
- [Fire Management Assistance Grants \(FMAG\)](#)
- [Public Assistance Grants, Categories C-G](#)

What has Changed in the 2023 SHMP from Previous Plans?

Readability:

The SHMP is historically a lengthy document – the 2018 SHMP is just under 1,100 pages, and the 2023 SHMP is almost 2,000 pages. While the SHMP is an important document with wide applications across the State, the length of the Plan and complex or technical content matter may deter potential stakeholders from utilizing the SHMP to support their efforts.

To address this, the 2023 SHMP includes several strategies to increase the usability of, accessibility of, and ability to socialize the Plan. Such strategies include but are not limited to: writing in plain language, using visualizations, separating highly technical information into appendices, and including a detailed glossary. Additionally, the 2023 SHMP is split into two volumes. Volume 1 is the core plan that provides crucial information utilizing plain language that emphasizes readability. Volume 2 consists of multiple technical appendices, data tables, and a glossary that support and expand upon the information in Volume 1.

Equity and Climate Impacts:

FEMA also released a new [State Mitigation Planning Policy Guide](#) in 2022. This guide identified the need to include equity and climate considerations in mitigation planning. California has always been a leader in incorporating these considerations into the SHMP, with climate first being addressed in the 2007 SHMP and equity first being integrated in the 2018 SHMP. The 2023 SHMP continues to highlight these critical areas throughout the entirety of the Plan.



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Hazards of Interest:

The 2018 SHMP profiled 30 hazards. Due to legislative mandates, emerging hazards since the development of the 2018 SHMP, and reorganization, the 2023 SHMP profiles 34 hazards. The 2018 SHMP organized hazards by placing “the big three” – earthquake, flood, and fire – at the top of the risk assessment, with related hazards embedded within and additional hazards organized into a standalone chapter. The 2023 SHMP breaks the hazards into two parts: Natural Hazards of Interest and Other Hazards of Interest. The hazards listed in Natural Hazards of Interest are organized by the hazard impact rating analysis scores, which factored in both qualitative and quantitative data. The hazards listed in Other Hazards of Interest are also organized by the hazard impact rating analysis scores, but greater weight was given to the qualitative factors due to less robust quantitative data for some of these hazards.

Additional details on the changes between the 2018 SHMP and the 2023 SHMP are available in Chapter 1.4: “The Updated Plan–What is Different?” and Appendix E: “Differences from Previous Plan” of the 2023 SHMP.

Can I Give Feedback on the Draft 2023 SHMP?

Yes! California welcomes input from the public in developing the SHMP. The Public Review Period to provide feedback on the draft 2023 SHMP will be open from *Tuesday, February 7, 2023, to Friday, March 24, 2023*. The draft SHMP is available on the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) [Hazard Mitigation Planning webpage](#). Also on the webpage is a [survey](#) to submit comments, feedback, and edits on specific sections of the draft 2023 SHMP. For any issues accessing the webpage, the draft documents, or the survey, please contact SHMP@CalOES.ca.gov. A member of the Cal OES team will be happy to assist.

When will the Final 2023 SHMP be Available?

After the Public Review Period, Cal OES will review the feedback and update the Plan. When complete, Cal OES will submit the 2023 SHMP to FEMA for approval. Once approved, the final 2023 SHMP will be adopted by the State and published by the end of September 2023.