

## Chapter 3 - The Region's Disaster Resiliency

Sustainability and resiliency in disaster recovery are a collaborative effort of interagency and intergovernmental coordination. Pre-disaster activities focus on integrating resiliency practices into day-to-day operations, while recovery begins at the beginning of a disaster, whether natural or man-made. Coordination is critical to recovery efforts from pre-disaster to full economic recovery. The County Offices of Emergency Management, with assistance from the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, focus on coordination of the immediate needs during and after a disaster.

Planning is always the first step in disaster resiliency. Each County Office of Emergency Management has a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to foster public awareness of any hazard, and encourage public involvement in emergency planning, training, and exercise. The LEPC's partner with local, state, and tribal governments, first responders, and business and industry for planning, prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. In addition to the LEPC, each County Office of Emergency Management has an All-Hazard Mitigation Plan and Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). *Plans can be accessed through the counties' Emergency Management Coordinator or on the county's website.*

- Nez Perce County: [www.co.nezperce.id.us/Departments/EmergencyManagement](http://www.co.nezperce.id.us/Departments/EmergencyManagement)
- Clearwater County: [www.clearwatercounty.org/?EmergencyManagement](http://www.clearwatercounty.org/?EmergencyManagement)
- Lewis County: [www.lewiscountyid.us/Emergency\\_Management](http://www.lewiscountyid.us/Emergency_Management)
- Latah County: [www.latah.id.us/disasterservices](http://www.latah.id.us/disasterservices)
- Idaho County: [www.idahocounty.org/disaster-mangement-menu](http://www.idahocounty.org/disaster-mangement-menu)
- Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security: [www.bhs.idaho.gov](http://www.bhs.idaho.gov)

### The Region's Disasters

North Central Idaho experiences significant impacts from natural hazards including floods, storms, wildland fires, severe weather, and landslides/mudslides. Beyond natural hazards, there are technological hazards including dam failures, extended power outages, pandemic outbreaks, and hazardous materials spills.

Most disastrous incidents in North Central Idaho are flood or fire related. Floods damage roads, farmlands, and structures. Most flooding in the region is caused by spring melt or extreme rainfall associated with a warm regional frontal system. Weather, topography, and fuels (any material that can ignite and burn) contribute to wildland fires in the region.

Severe weather, including wind, hail, and drought also impacts the area. These storms can cause substantial damage to crops, recreation and tourism which can have a disastrous impact on the local economy. Environmental losses include damages to plant and animal species, wildlife habitat and air and water quality.

In March 2017 and again in April 2019, severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides led to federal disaster declarations in the District. The storms of March 2017 (FEMA 4313) impacted Clearwater, Latah and Idaho Counties with a countywide per capita impact of \$196.09, \$11.87, and \$128.97 respectively. The Nez Perce Tribe and Idaho, Latah, and Lewis counties bore the brunt of the April 2019 storms (FEMA 4493). Idaho County was impacted the most, the countywide impact per capita to Idaho County was \$146.86; Latah County - \$7.38, Lewis County - \$6.25 and \$10.39 to the Nez Perce Tribe. Two large fires, both igniting in August 2015, rated fire management assistance declarations. The Clearwater-Municipal Complex Fire (FM-5099) consisted of a group of lightning sparked fires in Clearwater, Idaho and Lewis Counties in northern Idaho. In total, 82,243 acres burned with costs of approximately \$41.5 million. The Tepee Springs Fire (FM-5110) began in Idaho County after a lightning struck. The fire was fully contained by November 5th. In total, the Tepee Springs Fire burned 95,709 acres with costs of approximately \$31.54 million.



Figure 4: Tepee Springs Fire - photo by USGA

### Disaster Planning for Economic Recovery

Each of the five Office of Emergency Management in the region are well versed in planning for natural and man-made hazards, and each have a hazard mitigation plan. In addition, each office has an Emergency Operation Plan in the event of an emergency, and cross jurisdictional boundaries when the assistance is needed.

As the Region II Economic Development District of Idaho, CEDA can assist municipalities in both pre-disaster and post disaster roles. In disaster-impacted communities, economic development organizations such as CEDA lead economic recovery efforts by helping local businesses respond to and recover from disaster. CEDA's role as a conduit to resources for the region is to assist communities and businesses in seeking resources and implementing plans for recovery as well as navigating federal disaster assistance programs.

	Normal Economic Development Roles	Roles in a Disaster, Above Normal Roles
<b>Analyst/Educator</b>	Understand strengths, weaknesses, and comparative advantage of the local economy and business environment; provide quantitative and qualitative information to decision-makers	<i>Pre-Disaster:</i> Seek to understand vulnerabilities and risks to critical industries and businesses within the community
	Keep public officials and the general public informed of costs and benefits of economic development initiatives	<i>Post Disaster:</i> Assist with the assessment of physical damage and business interruption impacts to industries and businesses; assist in the communication of recovery information between local businesses and local government
<b>Visionary/Catalyst</b>	Develop partnerships, both public and private to stimulate future working relationships	<i>Pre-Disaster:</i> Establish an Economic Recovery Group to identify immediate and long-term economic recovery strategies and resources
	Engage key stakeholders in visioning to identify goals, strategies and resources for economic development	<i>Post Disaster:</i> Envision how communities can rebuild and recovery to be stronger and more resilient
	Leverage the investment/involvement of partners and stakeholders	<i>Post Disaster:</i> Create a strategic plan for economic recovery in collaboration with stakeholders and communities
	Invoke enthusiasm and excitement for catalyst projects that can change a community's future	<i>Post Disaster:</i> Connect public/private resources for recovery
<b>Gap Filler</b>	Aid where the private sector cannot meet community or business needs	<i>Post Disaster:</i> Conduct concerted business retention efforts outreach to reconnect business and at-risk companies

	Leverage financing to facilitate enterprise development	<i>Post Disaster:</i> Assist with short and long-term financing and business counseling
<b>Connector/Advocate</b>	Serve as a key liaison between public, private sectors and communities on economic development initiatives	<i>Pre-Disaster:</i> Seek input, support and funding opportunities to support economic initiatives  <i>Post Disaster:</i> Address emergency management plans from a business perspective
	Advocate for the well-being of the community and business	<i>Pre-Disaster:</i> Advocate for mitigation and preparedness efforts
	Coordinate activities, communication and resources between stakeholders to facilitate business partnerships	<i>Post Disaster:</i> Communicate local economic priorities and any needed policy changes to local, state and federal governments