

**American Society of Safety Professionals**  
**March 5, 2025**

# **Updates from Kern County Office of Emergency Services**

**Kern County Fire Department:  
Office of Emergency Services (OES)**

- Georgianna Armstrong – Emergency Services Manager
- Jolene Murillo – Assistant Emergency Services Manager

# Alert and Warning – Federal Systems



## Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS)

➤ Federal tool to activate multiple warnings systems



## Emergency Alert System (EAS)

➤ Federal system  
➤ Radio / Television



## Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA)

➤ Cell phones by location

# Alert and Warning – Local

## ReadyKern

- Telephone / Email / Text
- Registration is required at [www.ReadyKern.com](http://www.ReadyKern.com)

## New Features



### Genasys Protect

- Used to identify boundaries by Zones for notifications
- Know your Zone! [protect.genasys.com](http://protect.genasys.com)



### DeafLink

- Alerts in Spanish language and American Sign Language (ASL)



## Mitigation – a Definition

Mitigation:

A risk management strategy that involves taking action to reduce or eliminate long-term risks to people and property.



# Federal Mitigation Grants

1.



Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

2.



Hazards Mitigation Grant Program  
Post Fire

3.



Building Resilient Infrastructure and  
Communities (BRIC)

4.



Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation  
Program



# Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Purpose: Provides funding to rebuild to reduce future natural disaster losses

- Stafford Act Section 404
- Included in Presidential of Major Disaster Declaration

Mitigation projects identified during disaster recovery due to the incident.

## Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire

- Purpose: Reduce risk from wildfire incidents
  - Stafford Act Section 404 and 402
  - Eligibility to apply automatic when FMAG issued (Fire Management Assistance Grant)
- Mitigation projects identified during disaster recovery by project



## Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

Annual grant to fund hazard mitigation projects to reduce risk from natural hazards.

- Purpose: incentivize natural hazard risk reduction to public infrastructure and disadvantaged communities
  - Nature-based solutions, including those to reduce carbon emissions
  - Enhance climate resilience and adaption
  - Adoption and enforcement of latest building codes

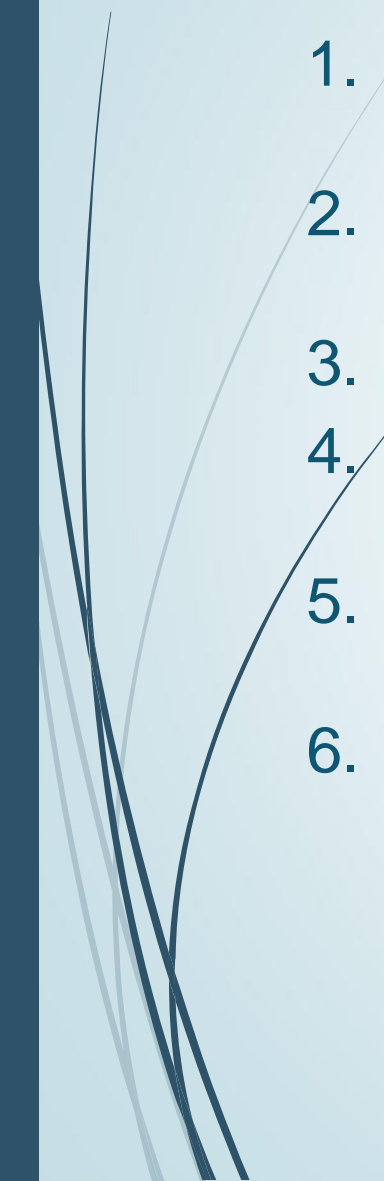
## Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program

Purpose: Plan and implement sustainable cost-effective measures to reduce risk to individuals and property from future natural hazards and reduce federal funding for future disasters

- ❖ Competitive grant program
- ❖ Eligible applicants must have approved LHMP
- ❖ Projects must be included in approved LHMP



# Mitigation – Purpose of the LHMP

- 
1. Identify actions for risk reduction through collaboration
  2. Focus resource on greatest risks and vulnerabilities
  3. Building partnerships
  4. Increasing education and threat and hazard awareness
  5. Communicates priorities to State/Federal officials
  6. Aligning risk reduction with other community objectives

# Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)

- FEMA requirement (mitigation grants eligibility)
- Must follow FEMA-defined plan development process
- Five (5) year update cycle
- Federal & State review and approval required
- Formal adoption by local governing bodies required

## State

If jurisdiction has an approved LHMP that is also referenced in the General Plan, State retains option to fund local cost share for proclaimed disasters.

# Kern LHMP

- Current plan is valid through April 2026
- Eligible participants:
  - County
  - Cities
  - Special Districts
- 69 participating jurisdictions in plan update
- Grant funding received to support the planning process:
  - Federal: \$300,000
  - State: \$100,000 (additional grant – for local match)

## Kern LHMP - Status

- ❖ Request for Proposal (RPF) process completed
- ❖ Vendor recommendation identified by RFP Evaluation Committee
- ❖ Next step: contract negotiation with recommended vendor
- ❖ Current LHMP can be viewed at:  
[www.mitigatehazards.com/county-of-kern](http://www.mitigatehazards.com/county-of-kern)



# Kern LHMP – Plan Structure

- ❖ Risk Assessment
- ❖ Hazard Exposure & Damage Assessments
- ❖ Mitigation Goals
- ❖ Mitigation Strategy
- ❖ Mitigation Action Implementation
- ❖ FEMA and State review and approval required
- ❖ Governing body adoption of approved LHMP



# Kern LHMP – Primary Hazards

## Natural Hazards

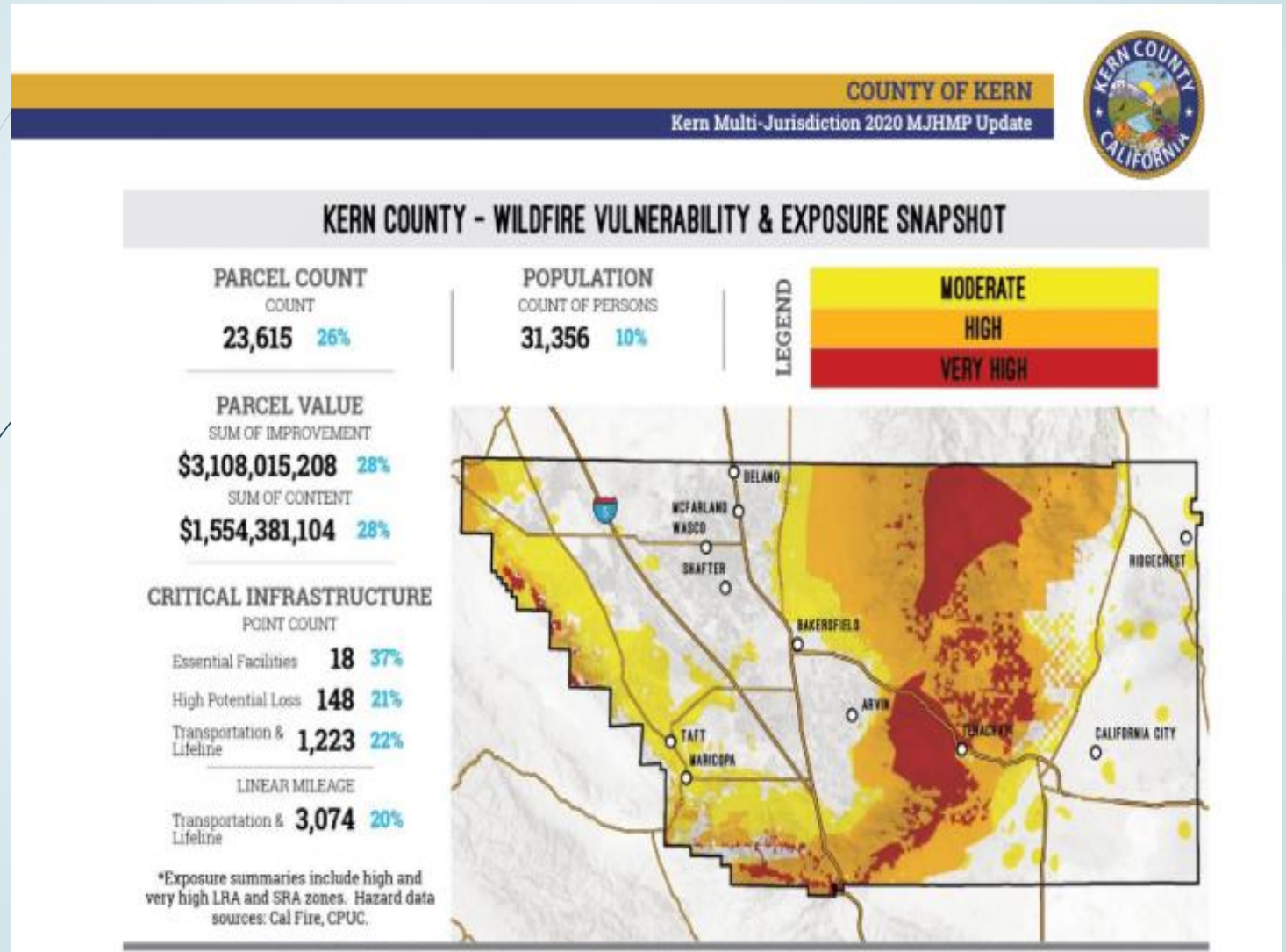
- Severe weather
  - Flood
  - Dam Failure
  - Earthquake
  - Wildfire
  - Drought
  - Slope failure
  - Soil stability
- 



# Kern LHMP - Goals


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1. Enable residents to mitigate impacts of hazards and disasters
  2. Reduce hazard impacts to existing and future development and the natural environment
  3. Reduce hazards impact to existing and future facilities, infrastructure, and high potential loss facilities
  4. Improve multi-jurisdiction coordination to reduce risk through mitigation planning and hazard analysis on a continual basis

# Current Kern LHMP – Sample





## Borel Fire Facts

- Started July 24, 2024 due to fatal auto accident
  - Extreme weather conditions
    - 59,288 acres burned
    - 153 homes destroyed
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# Local Assistance Center (LAC)

- August 10-14, 2024
- Served approximately 300 households
- Participating organizations
  - 13 county departments
  - 8 State agencies
  - 15 Volunteer organizations

Purpose of LAC: Immediate Assistance



# Community Demographics

- California Median Income
  - \$84,097
- Kern County Median Income
  - \$58,824
- Affected census tracts Median Income
  - \$39,540

# Community Demographics

- Population below poverty line: 30.87%
- Population older than 65: 37.81%
- Population w/disability: 25.72%
- Veterans: 11.7%
  - Veteran w/service disability: 35.5%
  - Service disability > 50%: 21.9%

# Non-Government Assistance

- Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VOAD)
  - National
  - State
  - Local

Cooperation

Communication

Coordination

Collaboration



## Community Stakeholder Organizations

- Kern Community Foundation
- United Way
- Catholic Charities
- Red Cross
- Finally Be Free
- KRV-Connect