

Chase County is leading a planning effort to develop a "Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan" which includes the Chase County areas of Enders, Champion, Imperial, Wauneta, Chase County Schools, Wauneta-Palisade Public Schools and the Upper Republican NRD.

In order to be part of the plan, each jurisdiction must qualify by having attended the first public meeting in October and the upcoming public meeting on Jan. 20, according to County Emergency Manager Paul Kunnemann of Imperial.

The plan is being developed by JEO Consulting Group, Inc. of Lincoln, in coordination with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NDNR), Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Hazard mitigation planning is proactive and allows a jurisdiction to take actions before disasters occur to reduce or eliminate future threats.

The hazard mitigation plan is a community-guided document that will identify each participating jurisdiction's vulnerability to natural disasters such as flood, drought, earthquake, wildfire, winter storm, tornado and high wind storm, dam failure, etc.

The plan will set goals for each community, establish mitigation alternatives and prioritize projects for each jurisdiction to help alleviate potential damages to life and property when future disasters occur.

The intent of the upcoming public meeting is to receive public input and comments on the draft plan and acquire community specific information necessary to finish the plan.

The meeting will be held Tuesday, Jan. 20, at 7 p.m. MT at Lied Imperial Public Library, 703 Broadway in Imperial.

The Chase County Plan will be adopted locally by each participating jurisdiction once approved by both NEMA and FEMA. A portion of this project is being funded by a federal cost-share from FEMA as a result of the December, 2006, ice storm.

For more information on this planning effort contact Kunnemann, Chase County Emergency Manager, (308) 882-5304, or email at paullorna@gpcom.net.