# SONOMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPS SUMMARY REPORT (SEPT 1st, 2026)

# COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

# SUMMARY REPORT

**Agenda Date:** 9/1/2026

**To:** Board of Supervisors, County of Sonoma
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Emergency Management; Sonoma Water; Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District; Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District; Occidental County Sanitation District; South Park County Sanitation District; Russian River County Sanitation District
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Jeffrey DuVall, CEM / 565-1152; Brad Sherwood / 526-5370; Misti Arias / 565-7360;
**Vote Requirement:** Majority
**Supervisorial District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**
2026 Sonoma County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

**Recommended Action:**

**Executive Summary:**
The Federal Disaster Management Act of 2000 requires state and local governments to develop and regularly update hazard mitigation plans to meet federal and state planning requirements and as a condition for grant assistance. In 2023, Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) applied for funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and was awarded a grant in 2024 to prepare an update to the 2021 Sonoma County Multi- Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Sonoma County partnered with all nine local incorporated cities and town governments and twelve special districts within the County to prepare the 2026 Sonoma County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP). The MJHMP includes a risk and vulnerability assessment of natural hazards within the County, an assessment of current mitigation capabilities, establishes, by jurisdiction, mitigation priorities and actions for risk reduction, and presents a five- year maintenance plan. The plan complies with federal and state hazard mitigation planning requirements to establish eligibility for funding under FEMA grant programs for all planning partners.

On June 15, 2026, FEMA and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) determined that the draft MJHMP is eligible for final approval pending its adoption by Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and all participating jurisdictions. Staff recommends the Board adopt the 2026 Sonoma County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to increase the County's disaster resiliency and maintain eligibility for federal disaster funding. Sonoma County's ability to apply for and receive future funding from FEMA is dependent on having a current, approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in place, and the County's current plan expires in October 2026.

**Discussion:**
**Background**
Hazard mitigation is defined as any action taken to reduce or alleviate the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage that can result from a disaster. It involves long- and short-term actions often implemented before disasters, but also during and after. Hazard mitigation activities can include planning efforts, policy

changes, programs, studies, improvement projects, and other steps to reduce the impacts of hazards. The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000 promotes proactive, pre-disaster planning. The DMA amended the Robert T. Safford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to require state and local governments to develop hazard mitigation plans (HMPs) as a condition for federal disaster grant assistance. Sonoma County's ability to apply for and receive future funding from FEMA is dependent on having a current, approved HMP in place. Sonoma County's current plan expires in October 2026, and adoption of a new HMP would ensure the County maintains full eligibility. FEMA is responsible for final review and approval of HMPs. CalOES is responsible for initial review of HMPs within the state and coordination of plans between FEMA and the local government.

HMPs are required to be updated every five years in order to continue to be eligible for FEMA hazard mitigation project grant funding (44 CFR §201.6(d)(3)). In 2006, Sonoma County prepared its first hazard mitigation plan in compliance with the DMA and has updated the plan every five years since, most recently in 2021. In 2023, the DEM applied for a $400,000 planning project grant (75% federal, 25% local match) from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to develop the 2026 Sonoma County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) update.

Sonoma County partnered with local cities and special districts to develop the MJHMP and fulfill DMA requirements for all participating planning partners. FEMA encourages multi-jurisdictional planning under its guidance for the DMA, in part because it provides the ability to pool resources and eliminate redundant activities within a planning area that has uniform risk exposure and vulnerabilities. The MJHMP guides and coordinates mitigation activities throughout the planning area and was developed to meet the following objectives:

1) Meet or exceed requirement of the DMA;
2) Enable all planning partners to continue using federal grant funding to reduce risk through mitigation;
3) Meet the needs of each planning partner as well as state and federal requirements;
4) Create a risk assessment of local hazards of concern;
5) Assess each planning partner's mitigation capabilities and capacity to implement mitigation actions;
6) Meet the planning requirements of FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS), allowing eligible planning partners to consider participation in the CRS program; and
7) Coordinate existing plans and programs so that high-priority projects to mitigate possible disaster impacts are funded and implemented.

**Overview of the Planning Process and Plan**

The following planning partners submitted letters of intent to participate, and will be covered by the plan upon FEMA approval and adoption by their governing bodies:

1) County of Sonoma
2) City of Cloverdale
3) City of Cotati
4) City of Healdsburg
5) City of Petaluma
6) City of Rohnert Park
7) City of Santa Rosa
8) City of Sebastopol
9) City of Sonoma

10) Town of Windsor
11) Bodega Bay Public Utility District
12) Cloverdale Fire Protection District
13) Gold Ridge Fire Protection District
14) North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District
15) Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District
16) Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District
17) Santa Rosa Junior College
18) Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
19) Sonoma County Fire District
20) Sonoma Valley Fire District
21) Sonoma County Water Agency
22) Timber Cove Fire Protection District

The Department of Emergency Management and the County's consultant (Tetra Tech) facilitated the plan development. The Hazard Mitigation Working Group, comprised of representatives from participating jurisdictions, community-based organizations, private organizations, and other stakeholders, guided development of the plan. Coordination with other local, regional, state or federal stakeholders or agencies involved in hazard mitigation occurred throughout the planning process.

The MJHMP is organized into four parts (the Planning Process, Risk Assessment, Capabilities Assessment and Mitigation Strategy) across two volumes.

1) Volume 1 includes all federally required elements of a disaster mitigation plan that apply to the entire planning area. This includes the description of the planning process, public involvement strategy, goals and objectives, planning area risk assessment and capabilities assessment, and a plan maintenance strategy.
2) Volume 2 includes all federally required jurisdiction-specific elements in annexes for each participating jurisdiction. The Sonoma County annex includes a jurisdiction profile and capability assessment; describes key vulnerabilities determined by the risk assessment; presents the status of the 2021 Sonoma County HMP; and identifies potential County of Sonoma-specific mitigation actions.

**Key Changes from the 2021 Plan**

The following are the most significant changes made between the previous County HMP (2021) and the current (2026) update:

1) The 2021 plan identified severe weather as a hazard of concern. The County, Planning Partnership, and Hazard Mitigation Working Group re-evaluated the definition of severe weather and chose to focus the hazard on extreme wind.
2) The 2026 HMP added both extreme cold and extreme heat as hazard profiles, as Sonoma County's moderate climate is expected to have greater fluctuations in the future. In addition, the County sought to align the HMP with California Assembly Bill 2684, which requires General Plan Safety Elements to address extreme heat by 2028.
3) The 2021 HMP included 14 Planning Partners; the 2026 HMP includes 22 Planning Partners. The 2026 Planning Partnership represented a wide array of County interests, including all incorporated municipalities in the County, eight Fire Protection Districts, utilities, academia, and open space

preservation.

4) In the 2021 HMP, the capability assessment section was presented in Chapter 5, directly after the County Profile. For the 2026 HMP update, the capability assessment was presented immediately before the Mitigation Strategy chapter. The discussion of capabilities in each jurisdictional annex in Volume II has been expanded to include opportunities for integration and risk reduction.

**Outreach**

The planning team developed a public engagement strategy to provide opportunities for participation throughout the planning process and to ensure that planning partners, stakeholders, and community members were informed and engaged. A Hazard Mitigation Working Group (HMWG), consisting of representatives from participating jurisdictions, special districts, community-based organizations, partner agencies, and other stakeholders, guided plan development and met four times throughout the planning process. Meetings were open to the public and included opportunities for public comment. Meeting materials and project updates were made available on the project webpage.

The County maintained a dedicated project webpage in both English and Spanish to provide information on the plan, planning process, upcoming meetings, and opportunities for public participation. Public outreach included an online survey, available in English and Spanish, which received more than 580 responses and helped inform the risk assessment and mitigation strategy. Multiple public meetings were held throughout the County and virtually during both the initial planning phase and the public review period to share information about the plan update, present draft findings and gather feedback. Meeting locations were selected to improve accessibility and included evening, in-person, and virtual options. A total of six dedicated public meetings were held by the County, and participating planning partners conducted additional meetings and engagement activities within their communities.

Additional outreach included presentations and engagement at community events, emergency preparedness activities, stakeholder meetings, and through social media, newsletters, and partner networks. The draft MJHMP was released for public review and comment from October 20 through November 21, 2025. Comments received during the public comment period were reviewed and incorporated, as appropriate, before the plan was submitted to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and FEMA for review.

**FEMA Review**

The draft Sonoma County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update was submitted to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) on January 20, 2026, for review. Following coordination between the County, participating planning partners, Cal OES, and the consultant team to address review comments, Cal OES approved the draft plan and forwarded it to FEMA for final review. On June 15, 2026, FEMA issued an Approvable Pending Adoption (APA) determination, indicating that the plan meets all applicable federal hazard mitigation planning requirements pending formal adoption by the participating jurisdictions.

Formal adoption documentation must be submitted to FEMA Region IX by at least one participating jurisdiction within one calendar year of the date of FEMA's APA letter, after which FEMA will issue final approval of the plan. Participating jurisdictions are encouraged to adopt the approved plan within one year of FEMA's Approvable Pending Adoption (APA) letter. Jurisdictions adopting after one year must validate that

their portion of the plan remains current, or update it as needed, before FEMA can approve their adoption. Participating jurisdictions have been provided adoption guidance and supporting materials and are coordinating adoption through their respective governing bodies.

**Incorporation into the General Plan**
The Sonoma County General Plan Safety Element incorporates the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan by reference. Adoption of the 2026 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) will replace the previously adopted 2021 MJHMP and provide the County with the most current assessment of hazard risks, vulnerabilities, capabilities, and mitigation strategies. The updated MJHMP will continue to inform future updates to the General Plan Safety Element and other County planning efforts, ensuring consistency between hazard mitigation planning and broader land use, resilience, and emergency management objectives.

Incorporation of the adopted MJHMP into the General Plan Safety Element also supports compliance with Assembly Bill 2140 (AB 2140), helping maintain the County's eligibility for enhanced state cost-share funding under the California Disaster Assistance Act following a gubernatorially declared disaster.

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**
Adoption of the MJHMP is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 (feasibility and planning studies) and Section 15061(b)(3) (common sense exemption), each on a separate and independent basis. The MJHMP identifies hazard risk and offers a mitigation strategy of possible future actions the County and planning partners may take to reduce hazard risk depending on funding and staffing availability. The plan is intended to help inform the County and its planning partners in future decisions about mitigation. Adoption of the MJHMP is exempt from CEQA under Guidelines Section 15262 because adoption of the MJHMP is not a commitment to any mitigation action, and is not a decision to approve, adopt, or fund any of the potential mitigation actions identified. Environmental factors were considered in preparation and are considered throughout the document. For similar reasons, adoption of the MJHMP is also exempt from CEQA pursuant to the common sense exemption, because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that adoption of the MJHMP may have a significant effect on the environment.

Some of the mitigation actions may be implemented through regulatory mechanisms and some through education programs, interagency coordination, or public participation. The County of Sonoma may not be the lead agency for the actions that constitute a project subject to CEQA.

**Strategic Plan:**
N/A

**Racial Equity:**

**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**
Yes A racial equity analysis was completed and is referenced in Attachment 2.

**Prior Board Actions:**
08/20/2024: Authorize the Director of Emergency Management to receive the Federal Emergency Management Agency Award FEMA-4683-DR-CA in the amount of $319,998 for the development of the Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
12/07/2021: Resolution adopting the 2021 Sonoma County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and

determining that the plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 and Section 15061(b)(3).

**FISCAL SUMMARY**
**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**
N/A

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**
N/A

**Attachments:**

1) Concurrent Resolution - Board of Supervisors, Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Sonoma Water and County Sanitation Districts
2) Equity Analysis
3) 2026 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Volume I
4) 2026 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Volume II
5) Plan de Mitigación de Riesgos Volumen I
6) Plan de Mitigación de Riesgos Volumen II
7) PowerPoint Presentation

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**
N/A