

# STATE OF COLORADO

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## Colorado Water Conservation Board

### Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

Bill Ritter, Jr.  
Governor

FROM: Tom Browning, Acting Deputy Director  
Cristina Martinez, Watershed & Flood Protection Staff

Mike King  
DNR Executive Director

DATE: September 2, 2010

Jennifer L. Gimbel  
CWCB Director

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item 15, September 13-15, 2010 Board Meeting**  
**Watershed & Flood Protection Section – Approval of State Flood Plan**

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### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Board approve the 2010 “Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan for Colorado” and authorize staff to forward it to the Colorado Division of Emergency Management for inclusion in the Colorado Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, which will ultimately be submitted to FEMA.

### **Background**

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires states to conduct mitigation planning for natural disasters that may affect the state. In 2000, a new Mitigation Planning section was added to the requirements, which emphasized the need for state and local coordination on mitigation planning and implementation, as well as continuing the requirement for a state mitigation plan as a condition of federal disaster assistance. It requires the State’s natural hazard mitigation plan to be updated every three years.

The State received FEMA approval on its Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP) in 2004. The plan addressed several different natural hazards, including floods. Additional information on flood hazards was included as an Annex to the plan, known as the Colorado Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan (Flood Plan). It described in detail the process for flood planning in the state as well as long-term flood mitigation opportunities. Information on agency responsibilities and existing flood mitigation programs, local flood mitigation plans, and contacts for local government outreach and assistance are also included in the Flood Plan.

### **Summary of Update**

The 2010 Flood Plan summarizes the State’s vulnerability to flooding and outlines strategies to manage and reduce the impact of flood hazards. The main components of the Flood Plan include a detailed vulnerability assessment and mitigation strategy. Included is a description of the process used to prepare the Flood Plan and a profile of the flood hazards in Colorado, including the nature of impacts and probability of occurrence. The vulnerability assessment discusses the past and potential impacts to Colorado’s citizenry, economy, environment and state assets. The

vulnerability assessment is covered in detail in Sections 3.3-3.5. The mitigation strategy outlines the goals of the Plan and specific action items intended to meet those goals. Many of these mitigation actions are ongoing and can occur during and in between flood events. A capability assessment describes the State's plans, policies and procedures in place that already help manage and reduce flood impacts. Information on agency responsibilities and existing flood mitigation programs, local flood mitigation plans and contacts for local government outreach and assistance are also included. The Flood Plan describes funding sources that can be used to implement local mitigation projects and plans, and describes the process for implementation, monitoring and evaluating the overall Flood Plan.

The NHMP itself will be updated by the Colorado Division of Emergency Management (CDEM), and the Flood Plan will be incorporated as an annex to the NHMP.

Staff contracted with AMEC to assist with preparation of the 2010 Flood Plan. Updates were coordinated with the assistance of members of the Colorado Flood Task Force, CDEM mitigation staff, and FEMA.

Please access the draft 2010 Flood Plan on the home page of the CWCB website at [www.cwcb.state.co.us](http://www.cwcb.state.co.us).

## **Agenda Item 15 - State Flood Plan September 14, 2010**

- Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000 requires states to conduct mitigation planning
- The DMA requires States to update natural hazard plans every three years
  - Flood plan is one component of the overall hazard plan
- Addresses both flood planning and long-term mitigation opportunities
- 2010 Flood Plan key points:
  - AMEC prepared the 2010 Flood Plan;
  - Flood Plan update was guided by CWCB staff and numerous stakeholders;
  - Formal adoption by State is required to conform to federal requirements;
  - Documents flood planning process;
  - Assesses flood risks statewide
    - Utilizes FEMA HAZUS tool to estimate potential flood losses and related impacts
    - Categorizes communities based on flood threat and potential loss
  - Lists agency responsibilities and existing flood-related programs;
  - Outlines flood mitigation strategy for Colorado;
  - Discusses local flood mitigation planning coordination;
  - Outlines strategies to manage and reduce the impact of floods;
- The Mitigation Goals in the 2010 Flood Plan (Section 4.4) are:
  - Reduce flood impacts to Colorado's economy, people, state assets, and environment;
  - Promote awareness and education of flood hazards and watershed protection;
  - Promote the development of hazard mitigation plans with multiple objectives;
  - Coordinate and provide technical assistance for State and local planning efforts;
  - Continue to update and develop floodplain maps for risk assessment, planning and awareness applications; and
  - Promote and encourage the adoption of model codes and higher standards that emphasize hazard mitigation.
- The overall Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP) for Colorado will be updated by the Colorado Division of Emergency Management (includes Flood Plan, Drought Plan, etc.)
- The 2010 Flood Plan update will be included in the NHMP, and ultimately submitted to FEMA