



PALA BAND RELEASES DETAILS OF UPDATED MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

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PALA, CALIFORNIA – Continuing a culture of disaster preparedness and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) compliance, the Pala Band of Mission Indians is updating its Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. FEMA requires that all Tribes have an approved plan to receive funding pre- and post-disaster for emergency debris removal, roads and bridges, water control facilities, buildings and equipment, utilities and parks and recreation.

According to FEMA's website, "Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from a hazard event."

The Pala Band of Mission Indians has made mitigation a priority on the reservation. All structures (including homes) built by the tribe since March 2006 has met or exceeded California building codes. In addition, new flood control structures were built, including a flood wall behind the housing development on Sycamore Lane, which will protect it from flooding and landslides.

In reference to the mitigation plan, Robert Smith, Tribal Chairman of the Pala Band of Mission Indians explains "It allows us to get the help we need in a disaster situation and also gives us strategies to follow so we can minimize our risk." Smith also stated keeping the plan current is "very beneficial to our people."

The Tribe has worked with the County and Caltrans to move forward projects to build culverts at various creek crossings, including the one on Pala Temecula Road at Pala Creek that was completed in 2006 and have added storm water control structures, such as storm drains and retention basins, in several locations. The Tribe has also built a new fire station and waste water treatment facility and continued brush clearing. In addition, the Tribe provided disaster preparedness kits to all members living on and off the Reservation. Such efforts reflect the Pala Band of Mission Indians' deep commitment to protecting their people, visitors and businesses.

The Pala Emergency Response Committee, which consists of the Tribal Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Pala Fire Chief, Battalion Chief, Security Chief, Assistant Security Chief, Business Manager, Environmental Director, GIS Specialist, Casino Director of Guest Safety and Surveillance, and Casino Director of Risk Management, is managing the mitigation planning update project.

Because public participation is the key element in mitigation planning, two public meetings will be held, one on March 12th and the other in April to gather feedback from tribal members and reservation residents, share risk assessment findings and share mitigation strategies. The four goals of the current plan, which cover areas of life, property, preparedness, response and recovery, are not expected to change. The target date for plan completion is April 24, 2009.

The original mitigation plan was written in March 2006 by Jamie Caplan Consulting LLC; the same firm that was hired to write the updated plan.

The Pala Band of Mission Indians consists of 1,000 members with 600 living on the reservation along the Palomar Mountain range, located along 5,000 square miles of California's desert and approximately 30 miles northeast of San Diego on Interstate 15. Pala Casino, a 185,000 square foot, \$115 million casino, entertainment and dining complex owned by the Pala Band of Mission Indians, opened in April 2001.

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