

PRESS RELEASE

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Mitigation Planning Saves Homes from Wildfire On The La Jolla Indian Reservation: A FEMA-Approved Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan Gives Tribes Access to FEMA Dollars

November 2, 2007: In 2004, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved the La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians' Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, written by Jamie Caplan Consulting LLC. La Jolla's mitigation plan identified hazards such as wildfire and flooding as risks to the reservation. The plan recommended mitigating those risks through activities that included removing flammable materials near homes and purchasing a generator. The Tribe received mitigation dollars to purchase a generator that was used to power water lines during the recent Poomacha Wildfire. In effect, incorporating the recommendations of the mitigation plan enabled the Tribe to save nearly half of the homes on the Reservation.

Today, the Tribe's FEMA-approved mitigation plan is enabling them to receive FEMA funding to help rebuild their reservation. FEMA provides funding in the following categories: Category A: Emergency Debris Removal, Category B: Emergency Protective Measures, Category C: Roads and Bridges, Category D: Water Control Facilities, Category E: Buildings and Equipment, Category F: Utilities and Category G: Parks, Recreational. Tribes without mitigation plans are ineligible for pre- and post-disaster mitigation project funding from FEMA. In addition, these Tribes are ineligible for certain non-emergency Public Assistance funding (Categories C-G). The La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians is receiving all forms of Federal funding to rebuild their reservation following the Poomacha Wildfire because of their FEMA-approved mitigation plan.

Hazard Mitigation Planning is the process of determining how to reduce or eliminate the loss of life and property damage that results from all kinds of disasters. It is a collaborative effort whereby hazards are identified, vulnerability to the hazards is assessed, and consensus is reached on how to minimize or eliminate the effects of the hazards. The La Jolla mitigation plan protected tribal homes and reduced the impact of physical, social and economic damage incurred as a result of the recent wildfires.

Jamie Caplan Consulting LLC wrote La Jolla's Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. We also write Emergency Evacuation and Preparedness Plans and NIMS- (National Incident Management System) compliant plans. Let us work with your Tribe; together, we can save lives and property and help your sovereign nation receive federal funding.