



Hazard Mitigation 3-Day Workshop Series

ODAPM hosted a Hazard Mitigation 3-Day Workshop on August 24th – 26th, 2021, at the Department of Youth and Women's Affairs (DYWA) Conference Room in Tafuna. The 3-day workshop was geared towards participants who have an interest in hazard mitigation, nature-based solutions, benefit-cost analysis, and intend to apply for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and/or Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program.



Talauega E. V. Ale,
Lieutenant Governor

Day 1: Application Development was led by Lima Fiatoa, State Hazard Mitigation Officer. This Workshop included an overview of the FEMA GO grant application system as well as project eligibility and application development.

Day 2: Nature-Based Solutions for Hazard Mitigation

brought together an exemplary panel of speakers to share how climate change and natural hazards are impacting the Territory and how nature-based solutions may be able to mitigate those risks. Nature-based solutions are defined by FEMA as “sustainable planning, design, environmental management, and engineering practices that weave natural features or processes into the built environment to build more resilient communities.” *Article continues on the following page.*

FEMA Awards the Department of Public Works \$3.1 million dollars for Fagaima Flood Mitigation project.

The Department of Public Works will construct a drainage system and reconstruct roads and sidewalks to alleviate flooding from storm events.

This award is part of FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) which was activated after 2018 Tropical Storm Gita, a Presidentially Declared Disaster. American Samoa was eligible to receive \$4.2 million dollars after Gita to implement mitigation strategies.

The other projects awarded were stand-alone generators for ASTCA, ODAPM Hazard Mitigation Outreach, and updates to the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

News from Lima Fiatoa, State Hazard Mitigation Officer

I'm pleased to welcome you to the first edition of American Samoa's [Hazard Mitigation Quarterly](#). This newsletter will feature FEMA updates, grant opportunities, and education about hazard mitigation. We'll distribute the newsletter via email and hard copy and post it to the ODAPM webpage: <https://odapm.as.gov>.



ODAPM Staff with the Lieutenant Governor, Talauega E. V. Ale

For more information please contact:

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Hazard Mitigation Council Identifies Mitigation Actions


RANK	DEPT	PROJECT	LOCATION	COST	SCORE
1	ASDHS - 1	TSUNAMI SIREN SYSTEM	Island wide	\$6,000,000.00	505
2	DPA - 2	RUNWAY SHORELINE PROTECTION	Tafuna	\$5,000,000.00	475
3	DPA - 4	AUNU'U WHARF RECONSTRUCTION	Aunu'u	\$2,500,000.00	425
4	DPA - 3	PORT RESURFACING	Fagatogo	\$25,000,000.00	411
5	DPA - 1	FALEASAO WHARF STRUCTURE	Faleasao	\$25,000,000.00	408
6	ODAPM	LEONE COASTAL	Leone	\$3,000,000.00	407
7	DPA - 5	OFU AIRPORT	Ofu	\$2,500,000.00	404
8	ASCC - 1	ASCC FLOOD DRAINAGE	Malaeimi	\$1,000,000.00	399
9	DPW - 10	#2 Landslide: Rte.6 (Afono,Masefau), Rte.1 (Matuu,Gataivai)	Afono, Masefau, Matu'u and Gataivai	\$4,600,000.00	398
10	DPW - 3	COST U LESS DRAINAGE	Ili'ili	\$5.0M	384

In August 2021, the Hazard Mitigation Council convened several times to review and prioritize 55 potential hazard mitigation projects. The HM Council scored the projects based on multiple characteristics including the number of hazards addressed, the benefit to people, critical facilities impacted, and how the project addressed climate change. The scores ranged from 147 to 505 with estimated project costs between \$100,000 to \$25 million. The top ten projects are shown with their associated cost and score at left.

Hazard Mitigation 3-Day Workshop Series continued

Dr. Victoria Keener, Senior Research Fellow at the East-West Center, presented the Pacific Islands Regional Climate Assessment (PIRCA) Report. The PIRCA Report includes climate trends, projections and impacts to key sectors such as water resources, public health, finance, and cultural resources. For example, the slide to the right indicates the impact of climate change on coastal infrastructure and potential nature-based solutions. Kelley Anderson Tagarino, Extension Specialist for American Samoa, presented the American Samoa Living Shoreline Project. Her presentation illustrated how living shorelines create healthy coastal habitats that reduce waves and storm surge. The eight speakers gave inspiring presentations about the possibilities of utilizing nature-based solutions to mitigate the risks of climate change and natural hazards.

Coastal Infrastructure 



Flooding in Leloaia impacts transportation, safety, and health. (Photo by KVZK-TV)

IMPACT

- More frequent coastal flooding and increased erosion
- More intense tropical cyclones and storm surge – reefs already protect over \$46.5 million in infrastructure in American Samoa

NBS

- Prioritize reef conservation
- Facilitate mangrove restoration
- Stream restoration, vegetative buffers

Day 3: Benefit-Cost Analysis Training was a hands-on training in how to use FEMA’s Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) software. BCA is a method that determines the future risk reduction benefits of hazard mitigation projects and compares those benefits to its costs. FEMA requires a Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 1.0 or greater for their mitigation projects. You can access BCA resources on FEMA’s website at <https://www.fema.gov/sw/grants/guidance-tools/benefit-cost-analysis>.

All Workshop Presentations are available at <https://odapm.as.gov/outreach>.

Two Assessment Projects to Identify Mitigation Projects

American Samoa Watershed Assessment

The United States Army Corps of Engineers received an Emergency Supplemental Appropriation for FY2019 to conduct the American Samoa Watershed Assessment. It is a 30-month long study that began in January 2020 and is expected to be completed in July 2022.

The objective of this assessment is to conduct a comprehensive and strategic evaluations and analyses that include diverse political, geographic, physical, institutional, technical, and stakeholder considerations.

The intent of the watershed assessment is to provide recommendations for actions that can be taken to solve the identified problems, and the product may take the form of a watershed management plan, watershed assessment, river basin assessment, comprehensive plan, or watershed study. Recommendations for

improvements can include suggested strategies, policies (new policies, or revisions to existing policies), programs for local or state agencies and multi-agency partnerships, or federal and non-federal programs or projects. Such recommendations should provide a strategic roadmap that identifies the sequencing of priorities, where federal authorities and appropriations are available, and where new ones are needed.

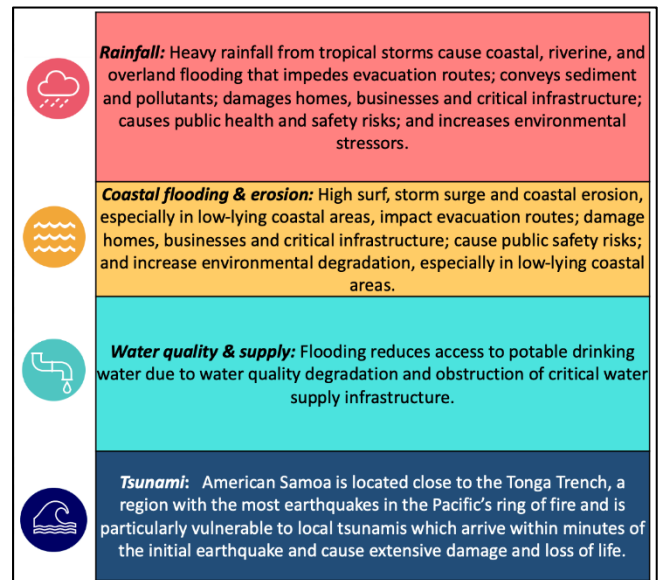
Local stakeholders that have participated or contributed to the watershed assessment is Office of Disaster Assistance and Petroleum Management (ODAPM), the Department of Public Works, AS-EPA, Coral Reef Advisory Group (CRAG), Department of Commerce (DOC), American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA), and National Park Service.

American Samoa Coastal Resilience Assessment

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in partnership with NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management has been working to complete Regional Coastal Resilience Assessments for all U.S. coastlines, including American Samoa. NFWF has developed preliminary models to identify 1) where community assets are exposed to flooding threats and 2) areas important for fish and wildlife species of conservation concern. These data will eventually be combined to identify Resilience Hubs, or areas throughout American Samoa where restoration projects have potential to provide benefits to both local communities and species. Results will be publicly available through the Coastal Resilience Evaluation and Siting Tool (resilientcoasts.org).

Participating local agencies are ODAPM-Mitigation, American Samoa Community College (ASCC), DOC – Coastal Zone Management, CRAG, Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources (DMWR).

Hazard Mitigation Plan Goal: Reduce the risk of all natural hazards (identified and unidentified) to the Territory, thus, alleviating loss of life and property to insure the well-being of the people of American Samoa.



Problems within American Samoa Watersheds

FEMA Grant Opportunities

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

FEMA released the BRIC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) on August 9, 2021. The application period is open until January 28, 2022. FEMA has made \$1 Billion dollars available nationwide. For details regarding applying for BRIC funding contact Lima Fiatoa, ODAPM.

American Samoa applied for BRIC funding last year for Hazard Mitigation Outreach, Building Code Upgrades and Management Costs. These projects are pending FEMA review.

American Samoa is eligible for BRIC funding because the Hazard Mitigation Plan is current.

Mitigation Outreach

ODAPM visited schools in Manu'a to teach children about hazard mitigation. The children received Mitigator Bags and made posters showing where to build safely. These visits were a part of ODAPM's Hazard Mitigation Outreach Initiative for 2021.



Students at Olosega Elementary School in Ofu, Manu'a

Hazard Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to life and property from hazard events. It is an on-going process that occurs before, during, and after disasters and serves to break the cycle of disaster damage and reconstruction.

Territorial Hazard Mitigation Council (HM Council)

The Hazard Mitigation Council, first established in 2002, is appointed by the Governor and acts as an authority of the American Samoa Hazard Mitigation Plan. They ensure policies and projects are implemented which are adequate to mitigate risk to life and property from natural hazards. For more information about the authority of the HM Council visit: <https://odapm.as.gov/hm-council>.



HM Council at a Meeting on August 19, 2021

- Talauega E. V. Ale, Governor's Authorized Representative, Office of the Governor
- Mauga Tasi Asuega, Secretary, Samoan Affairs
- Tuigamoa Tavai, Senator, FONO
- Ape Mike Asifoa, House Representative, FONO
- Petti Matila, Director, Department of Commerce
- Chris King, Director, Department of Port Administration
- Faleosina Voigt, Director, Department of Public Works
- Fa'amao Asalele, Director, AS-Environmental Protection Agency
- Tuimalo Elvis Zodiacal, Officer, Historic Preservation Office
- Wallon Young, CEO, American Samoa Power Authority
- Chuck Leota, CEO, American Samoa Telecommunications Authority
- Lisa Tuato'o, Director, Office of Disaster Assistance and Petroleum Management
- Samana Ve'ave'a, Director, American Samoa Department of Homeland Security
- Ella Gurr, President, Chamber of Commerce

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