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Stoddard County Hazardous Mitigation Plan Approved

JANUARY 09TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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The Bootheel Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission, or BRPC, received word that the Stoddard County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update for 2023 has been approved.

Approval was designated by State Emergency Management Agency, or SEMA, as well as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA. Updates are required every five years for participating communities to be eligible for certain types of FEMA funding. SEMA estimates that every dollar spent on mitigation planning saves \$8 in disaster recovery funds.

The planning process began with a kick-off planning meeting in February 2023. A series of three meetings was held in Bloomfield, Missouri, in the County Commissioners' Chambers. County commissioners, mayors, city clerks, emergency personnel, economic developers and the public were all invited to be part of the update process, voicing their opinions on what mitigation projects should be prioritized with limited resources. A public survey gathered opinions from others throughout the county.

Beau Bishop, Stoddard County Emergency Management Director commented on the importance of the plan.

"Hazard Mitigation planning reduces loss of life and property by minimizing the impact of disasters," Bishop said. "All applicable stakeholders within a community should be represented during this process. BRPC provided a very thorough planning process which ensured that all hazards were considered and discussed, and that all voices were heard. In doing so, they took the lead in completing

a comprehensive Mitigation plan for the citizens of Stoddard County.”

Besides the content of the plan, the process of updating it created an opportunity for BRPC to meet with county and community leaders as well as stakeholders.

Jim Grebing serves as the executive director of BRPC.

“Hosting community meetings allowed members of our staff to meet with community members and hear their needs,” Grebing said of the process. “We look forward to assisting communities with projects they designated themselves to make their communities safer and more resilient to natural hazards.”

Stoddard is the first of six county plans that will be updated in the coming months in the Missouri Bootheel. The plan will serve as a resource to communities for years to come. To access a copy of the plan, go to <https://bootrpc.com>.

Bootheel Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission exists to promote and support the economic development of the region and to guide local units of government in a coordinated effort to develop the region in a way which would best promote public health, safety, general welfare and economic prosperity in accordance with existing and future needs. This is accomplished by providing technical assistance to cities, counties, businesses and other development organizations in the area, and by networking extensively with state and federal resource agencies. BRPC works with Dunklin, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Scott and Stoddard Counties.

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