**Siskiyou County
Planning Commission Staff Report
May 21, 2025**

## Agenda Item Number 2Amendment of the Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Siskiyou County General Plan (GPA-25-01)

**Applicant:** Siskiyou County
Office of Emergency Services (OES)

**Project Summary** The Siskiyou County Office of Emergency Services is requesting that the Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Siskiyou County General Plan be amended to incorporate the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). Adoption of General Plan Amendment (GPA-25-01) will satisfy AB 2140, which requires that the LHMP be incorporated as part of the General Plan in order for the County to be eligible for cost share reimbursement from the State, following a disaster event.

**Location:** The project encompasses all unincorporated areas of Siskiyou County, California. The project area, which totals approximately 6,322 square miles, is roughly centered on Section 17 of Township 44 North, Range 7 West of the Mount Diablo Meridian.

**General Plan:** (All - County Wide)

**Zoning:** (All - County Wide)

**Exhibits:** A. Draft Resolution PC 2025-010

A Resolution of the Siskiyou County Planning Commission recommending the Board of Supervisors Adopt the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and Amend the Siskiyou County General Plan Seismic Safety and Safety Element to incorporate the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

B. Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

C. General Plan Seismic Safety and Safety Element

## Background

### Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA)

The United States Congress passed the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000 to provide funding assistance to counties for pre- and post- hazard mitigation projects following a disaster. In order to receive federal hazard mitigation funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the County must develop and adopt a FEMA-approve local hazard mitigation plan.

A Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) generally expires five years after its approval. To remain effective, a LHMP must be reviewed and revised at least every five years to ensure that it is up to date and relevant. This update allows jurisdictions to identify and add more mitigation actions, as needed.

The County has been out of compliance with this federal requirement since the last LHMP expired several years ago and is currently not eligible to receive hazard mitigation funding assistance from the federal government. In order to regain eligibility for federal disaster mitigation funding a new LHMP must be adopted.

Siskiyou County Office of Emergency Services (OES) has completed development of a FEMA-approved draft LHMP which is scheduled to go before the Board of Supervisors for possible adoption on June 3, 2025. In April of this year, FEMA, after receiving and reviewing the LHMP, reports the proposed LHMP is approvable pending adoption. In preparation of the LHMP, no inconsistencies with the County’s general plan were identified.

Staff is currently working on a comprehensive General Plan update, including an update to the Safety Element. Staff will be presenting the updated Safety Element later on this year, to coincide with the comprehensive General Plan update process. Staff is not updating the Safety Element at this time. This effort being present to the Planning Commission is specifically for AB 2140 compliance.

### Assembly Bill 2140 of 2006 (AB 2140)

The County is typically responsible for 25% of the cleanup and recovery cost following a disaster event. However, pursuant to AB 2140, the County may be eligible for cost share reimbursement from the State for up to 25% of a disaster recovery project’s total cost, provided that the County has incorporated a FEMA-approved LHMP into its General Plan.

The County has been out of compliance with AB 2140 since the last LHMP expired several years ago and is currently not eligible for state cost share reimbursement. In order to regain eligibility for AB 2140 state cost share reimbursement, the County must incorporate a FEMA-approved LHMP into the Siskiyou County General Plan.

Incorporation of the previous LHMP into the General Plan Seismic Safety and Safety Element was last done on February 19, 2020.

The most recent draft LHMP is scheduled to go before the Board of Supervisors for possible adoption and incorporation into the General Plan on June 3, 2025.

Siskiyou County OES is seeking a recommendation from the Planning Commission to the Board of Supervisors advising adoption and incorporation of the draft LHMP into the General Plan Seismic Safety and Safety Element so that the County can be eligible for federal and state disaster relief and mitigation funding.

## Analysis

1. If the draft LHMP is not adopted by the Board of Supervisors, the County will remain ineligible to receive FEMA disaster mitigation funding.
2. If the draft LHMP is not incorporated into the General Plan Seismic Safety and Safety Element, the County will remain ineligible for AB 2140 cost share reimbursement following a disaster event.

##  Environmental Review

This project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), which states that “A project is exempt from CEQA if: [t]he activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.” The project is exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) because it will only add informational language to the General Plan and will not have any direct or indirect impacts on the environment.

## Comments

A Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Siskiyou Daily News on May 7, 2025. No comments have been received as of the writing of this report.

## Planning Staff Recommendations

* Adopt Resolution PC 2025-010 taking the following actions:
	+ Recommend the Board of Supervisors determine the project to be statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the *“common sense exemption”*; and
	+ Recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve and adopt the February 2025 Siskiyou County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, and
	+ Recommend that the Board of Supervisors incorporate the February 2025 Siskiyou County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update into the Siskiyou County General Plan Seismic Safety and Safety Element.

## Suggested Motion

I move that we adopt Resolution PC 2025-010, a resolution of the Planning Commission of the County of Siskiyou, State of California, recommending that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Determine the Project exempt from CEQA,
2. Adopt the February 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, and
3. Incorporate the February 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update into the Siskiyou County General Plan Seismic Safety and Safety Element.

## Preparation

Prepared by the Siskiyou County Planning Division. J. Phelps. For project specific information or to obtain copies for your review, please contact:

Hailey Lang, Deputy Director of Planning
Siskiyou County Planning Division
806 S. Main Street
Yreka, California 96097