TOWN OF SURRY, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026



Surry Mountain Lake, October 2026

PUBLIC COMMENT DRAFT

November 9, 2026

Comments are welcome from November 10 through November 30, 2026. The Surry Select Board will accept comments at its meeting on November 30, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at Surry Town Hall.

Prepared by the Town of Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team

with the Southwest Region Planning Commission

37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, New Hampshire 03431

Funded in part through a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program award administered by New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management under federal disaster declaration DR-4799.

ABOUT THIS PLAN

This plan identifies the natural hazards that affect the Town of Surry, assesses the risk each presents, records what the town already does to reduce that risk, and sets out the actions the town intends to take over the next five years to reduce it further. It is prepared to meet the requirements of 44 CFR Part 201 and the FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide effective April 11, 2025, so that on adoption the town remains eligible to apply for FEMA hazard mitigation assistance.

HOW TO READ IT

Section 1 summarizes the plan and sets out the action plan. The sections that follow give the evidence for those actions — who prepared the plan and how, what the town looks like and what it owns, what could happen to it, what protections are already in place, and how the plan will be kept current.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this plan. Each is spelled out here once rather than at every first use, since many appear first in the action plan and capability tables.

Abbreviation	Meaning
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DR, EM, FM	FEMA declaration types: major disaster (DR), emergency (EM) and fire management assistance (FM)
E911	Enhanced 911, New Hampshire's statewide emergency call system
EMD	Emergency Management Director
EMS	Emergency medical services
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FIS	Flood Insurance Study
GIS	Geographic information system
HMA	Hazard Mitigation Assistance (FEMA grant programs)
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
ICS	Incident Command System
LAC	Local Advisory Committee (Ashuelot River)
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NGVD	National Geodetic Vertical Datum
NHDES	New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
NHDOT	New Hampshire Department of Transportation
NHHSEM	New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management
NHOPD	New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
RSA	New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated
SAU	School Administrative Unit
SFHA	Special Flood Hazard Area
STAPLEE	Social, Technical, Administrative, Political, Legal, Economic and Environmental evaluation criteria
SWRPC	Southwest Region Planning Commission
UNH	University of New Hampshire
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USGS	United States Geological Survey

SECTION 1 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND ACTION PLAN

1.1 PURPOSE

The Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan is the town's standing answer to a practical question: what can be done before the next storm, fire or drought so that it costs the town less? It is not an emergency response plan and does not govern what happens during an incident. It identifies which problems to address first, who is responsible for each, and where the funding may come from.

The plan is updated every five years. The Town of Surry adopted the previous version on January 17, 2022 and FEMA approved it on January 28, 2022. Maintaining an approved plan is a condition of eligibility for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funding for the projects listed in Section 1.2. This update was funded by a $9,187.17 grant from New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for Major Disaster Declaration 4799, with a $3,062.39 town match.[1]

1.2 2026–2031 ACTION PLAN

Thirty-one candidate actions were put to the planning team. At its fourth meeting the team evaluated all of them against the STAPLEE criteria, then applied a single test to decide what entered the plan: does the action address one of the five hazards that score highest in the risk assessment — flooding, tropical storms, long-term utility outage, high wind and wildfire? Those five were written on the board at the start of the exercise and used as the filter throughout. Eighteen actions passed that test and appear in Table 1. The remainder were set aside and are recorded with their scores and the reason at Table 2.[2]

The team was deliberate about keeping the list short. Its own estimate was that the town would complete four or five of these actions over five years, with the rest forming a backlog, and several otherwise sound actions were cut on the reasoning that the town already has the capability or that the work belongs to another body. Three were cut because the town has in fact already done the work — the culvert network has been inventoried, upsized and maintained since the 2013 flood, and a backhoe was purchased for ditch maintenance. Those now appear in the capability assessment at Section 6 rather than as projects.

Two FEMA requirements govern the table. Funding sources must be identified with *details beyond generic terms such as "federal," "state" and/or "local"*. The 2021 plan recorded "Town budget" or "Town budget/grants" against nearly every action, which would not meet the current standard. Timeframes expressed as short, medium or long term *must be defined*; the 2021 plan used them without definition.[3] This plan states timelines as calendar years instead, which removes the need for those definitions and tells a reader when the town actually intends to act.

[1] Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2021, Chapter 9.

[2] Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team Meeting 4, September 23, 2026. Recording and transcript retained in the project record.

[3] FEMA, Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide, FP-206-21-0002, effective April 11, 2025, Element C5-b, p. 25.

The eighteen actions the Town of Surry commits to over the life of this plan, in priority order. STAPLEE denotes Social, Technical, Administrative, Political, Legal, Economic and Environmental criteria, each scored 1–3 for a maximum of 21; it measures how straightforward an action would be to carry out, not how important it is. Priority is Impact × Urgency, each scored 1–3: 6 to 9 is High, 3 to 4 Medium, 1 to 2 Low. Source indicates the origin of the action — PT1, PT3 and PT4 are planning team meetings, Survey is the 2026 resident survey, and 2021 marks an action carried forward from the previous plan.

Table 1. 2026–2031 Action Plan[4]

#	Action	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Party	STAPLEE	Priority	Timeline	Cost and Funding Source	Integration	Source
4	Install priority dry hydrants and restore fire pond capacity — design and construct at high-priority locations, secure easements, and return existing hydrants and ponds to reliable service. The planning team was clear that making the hydrants the town already has work is as much of the task as adding new ones.	Wildfire; Drought; Conflagration	Fire Department; Conservation Commission	16	9 High	2027–2029	Moderate cost; Assistance to Firefighters Grant, FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance, town capital reserve. One dry hydrant setup has already been purchased.	Capital improvement planning; Conservation Commission wetland review	PT1 · 2021
10	Hazard tree, rockfall and roadside tree management program — annual contracted removal of hazard trees and deadfall on priority road segments, developed jointly by the Highway Department and the Select Board. This supplements utility line clearance rather than duplicating it: utilities clear only what threatens their own lines, which leaves hazard trees over town roads uncut.	High wind events and tornadoes; Tropical and post-tropical cyclones; Severe winter weather	Highway Department; Select Board	16	9 High	2027–2029	Moderate cost; a dedicated town budget line item, with NHDOT where state roads are involved. No figure is set — see the note following this table.	Road maintenance program; annual town budget	Survey · PT1 · 2021
1	Genasys public alert enrollment and coverage initiative — outreach to increase sign-ups and establish what proportion of the town the system actually reaches	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director	20	6 High	2027 and recurring	Low cost; existing department budget with NHHSEM support	Town website; annual report	PT1 · 2021

[4]Section 7 explains how the mitigation strategy was developed: how candidate actions were identified (§7.2), evaluated against the STAPLEE criteria (§7.4), prioritized by impact and urgency (§7.5) and selected for the plan (§7.7).

#	Action	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Party	STAPLEE	Priority	Timeline	Cost and Funding Source	Integration	Source
2	Evaluate potential evacuation and transfer point sites — inventory candidate locations, their capabilities and their assets, and establish what requirements apply. This action evaluates sites. It does not designate, equip or commit the town to a shelter, and the planning team was explicit on that point.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director; Fire Chief	14	6 High	2027	Low cost; existing department budget	Emergency Operations Plan	PT1 · 2021
5	Wildfire risk and outdoor burning outreach program — replaces the 2021 fire danger sign with lower-cost public information delivered through the burn permit process and the town website	Wildfire	Fire Department; Fire Warden	20	6 High	2027 and recurring	Low cost; existing department budget, NH Division of Forests and Lands materials	Burn permit process; town website	PT1 · 2021
7	East Surry Road bridge capital reserve — continue building the fund toward eventual replacement. Three bridges serve the town; two have been significantly upgraded in recent years and this is the last. Failure would separate one residence from the rest of the town, so the exposure is loss of access rather than structural danger.	Flooding and erosion; Tropical and post-tropical cyclones	Highway Department; Budget Committee; Select Board	18	6 High	2027–2031	Low cost within this plan period, being annual contributions to the capital reserve fund already established from state bridge money. NHDOT State Aid Bridge and FEMA HMA for eventual construction. No engineering has been carried out and no target amount is set.	Capital improvement planning; capital reserve fund	PT1 · 2021
14	Incident command orientation and tabletop exercise program for the Select Board and key officials, delivered on site by NHHSEM	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director; Select Board; Highway and Fire Departments	21	6 High	2027–2028	Low cost; NHHSEM delivers the course and facilitates exercises at no charge, and the FEMA independent study courses are free	Emergency Operations Plan	PT1 · 2021

#	Action	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Party	STAPLEE	Priority	Timeline	Cost and Funding Source	Integration	Source
15	Participate in the American Red Cross regional shelter inventory — supply Surry's inventory of available facilities, establish what requirements apply to them, and formalize coordination with the Red Cross, neighboring towns and NHHSEM. The Red Cross is re-evaluating shelter locations across the region now, which is what makes this the moment to act.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director	18	6 High	2027	Low cost; existing department budget	Emergency Operations Plan	PT1 · PT4
25	Forest fuels and invasive forest pest outreach — best-practice information for landowners and for timber harvesters on fuel loading, slash left on site, and standing dead timber, delivered through the town website, the newsletter and the burn permit process. Emerald ash borer, hemlock woolly adelgid and hemlock looper are all present or arriving, and the mitigation concern is the fire load that dead standing timber creates.	Wildfire; High wind events and tornadoes	Fire Department; Fire Warden; Conservation Commission	15	6 High	2027–2031	Low cost; existing department budget, NH Division of Forests and Lands, UNH Cooperative Extension. Biological control is not proposed: predator beetles run to roughly $1,000 for four, which does not scale to a town.	Burn permit process; Natural Resources Inventory; town website	PT3 · PT4
28	Continue Firefighter I certification through the New Hampshire Fire Academy and recruit new members	Wildfire; Multiple Hazards	Fire Department	20	6 High	2027–2031, ongoing	Low to moderate cost; Assistance to Firefighters Grant, which the department has won repeatedly and which requires a training program, and the town budget	Fire Department training program	PT1 · 2021
8	Road–stream crossing and bank erosion hotspot review — identify remaining hotspots and develop prioritized stabilization projects	Flooding and erosion; Tropical and post-tropical cyclones	Highway Department; Conservation Commission	18	4 Medium	2028	Low cost for the review; NHDES Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund for treatment	Capital improvement planning	PT1 · 2021

#	Action	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Party	STAPLEE	Priority	Timeline	Cost and Funding Source	Integration	Source
9	Targeted review of road and culvert design standards against recent rainfall intensities and maintenance experience, including the conflicting minimum culvert diameters in the Road Standards Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations	Flooding and erosion	Highway Department; Planning Board	18	4 Medium	2028	Low cost; existing budget	Road Standards Ordinance; Subdivision Regulations; Steep Slopes Ordinance	PT1 · 2021
17	Review zoning provisions for flood-prone areas and amend where appropriate, in conjunction with the new flood maps. The State has offered Surry a floodplain ordinance review, and that review is the mechanism: a comparison of what the town has against what it is expected to have, with amendments following from it.	Flooding and erosion	Planning Board; Select Board; NH Office of Planning and Development	18	4 Medium	2027	Low cost; the State review is offered at no cost to the town	Zoning Ordinance; Floodplain Management Ordinance	Survey · PT4
13	Conservation and land use integration — support conservation of key wetlands and floodplains and bring hazard data into land use decisions	Flooding and erosion; Drought	Planning Board; Conservation Commission	17	4 Medium	2028–2031	Low cost; existing budget, Monadnock Conservancy, land conservation funding	Master Plan; Natural Resources Inventory; Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations	PT1
19	Prioritized culvert replacement and maintenance program — recurring inspection, debris removal and a ranked replacement list	Flooding and erosion	Highway Department	17	4 Medium	2028–2031	Moderate cost; NHDES Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund, Highway Block Grant Aid, town budget	Capital improvement planning	Survey
21	Identify vulnerable gravel and dirt road segments and improve grading, crowning, drainage, ditching and aggregate	Flooding and erosion	Highway Department	17	4 Medium	2028–2031	Moderate cost; Highway Block Grant Aid, town budget	Road maintenance program	Survey
16	Review current zoning and enforcement practices, identify gaps, and enforce consistently in hazard-prone areas	Flooding and erosion; Wildfire; Severe winter weather	Select Board; Planning Board	17	2 Low	2029	Low cost; existing budget	Zoning Ordinance	Survey

#	Action	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Party	STAPLEE	Priority	Timeline	Cost and Funding Source	Integration	Source
26	Identify and improve access routes into wildland areas for fire response, working with conservation landowners	Wildfire	Fire Department; Conservation Commission; landowners	11	2 Low	2029–2031	Unknown cost; town budget, conservation partners	Natural Resources Inventory; conservation land management	PT3

Note on Action 10. No dollar figure is written into the tree management action because the town has not been able to obtain one. An attempt to price a single stretch — from the county line to Wilbur Road — found that contractors will not bid a section of road at a fixed sum; they require each tree to be flagged individually before quoting, and two people flagging hazard trees along the same road will not mark the same trees. The nearby Town of Langdon established a $10,000 annual line item in its highway budget for this work, which is offered here as a reference point rather than as a recommendation. The planning team's view was that the value of the program lies as much in limiting the town's liability as in the trees removed.

Five further candidate actions arise from the floodplain management review at §3.6 and have not yet been put to the planning team: implement the floodplain ordinance's existing requirement to obtain and use available 100-year flood elevation data in unnumbered A zones; adopt the ordinance revisions NH Office of Planning and Development identifies when the new maps are issued; use FEMA's Elevation Certificate form for the as-built elevation data the ordinance already requires; document a substantial damage determination procedure; and reconcile the conflicting minimum culvert diameters in the Road Standards Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations. The last of these is folded into Action 9 above.

FEMA asks for evidence that a range of alternatives was considered, not only that a plan was written. The planning team developed, scored and discussed these thirteen actions and left them out of the five-year plan. They are listed with their scores so that a future planning team can see what was weighed and why, and can revisit any of them if circumstances change.

Table 2. Actions Considered and Set Aside

#	Action	STAPLEE	Why it is not in the five-year plan
3	Emergency generator at the school	13	The planning team decided against investing in a specific facility within this plan period, preferring to establish what the town actually needs first. The STAPLEE score was reduced from the drafted 17 on administrative grounds — the project requires coordination among the town, the school district and the charter school — and on legal and economic grounds. Superseded by Actions 2 and 15.
31	Charter School resilience upgrade — scoping study	15	The same facility as Action 3, and removed with it. A legal question about the town's relationship to the school building remains to be sorted out before any project at that site can proceed; that question is noted at Section 6 rather than carried as an action.
30	Designate a cooling and warming location	17	Superseded by Action 15. The team judged that the town will not be in a position to equip and operate such a center within five years, and that the realistic step is to establish what facilities and requirements exist through the regional inventory. A future update can revisit building improvements once that is known.
11	Emergency potable water distribution planning	19	Addresses drought and contamination, neither of which is among the five highest-scoring hazards, so it falls outside the filter the team applied. The team noted that a municipal water supply would change this judgment; Surry has none.

#	Action	STAPLE E	Why it is not in the five-year plan
6	Priority culvert and small structure upgrade program	16	The work has substantially been done. Since the 2013 flood the town has replaced and upsized essentially all of its metal culverts. The planning team's assessment was that the network is in good condition and that a further upgrade program would not address a real problem. Recorded as a capability at Section 6.
18	Culvert inventory and condition assessment	20	The inventory already exists and is maintained. The map in the Select Board's office is updated as culverts are changed, and a spreadsheet is kept current alongside it. Digitizing the map was identified as a possible small project but not as a mitigation action.
20	Roadside ditch and drainage maintenance program	19	An existing capability rather than a new project. The town purchased a backhoe after the previous plan specifically to maintain ditches and culverts with its own staff, and the work is continuous rather than a project with an end. Recorded as a capability at Section 6.
22	Rodgers Pond dam and downstream assessment	18	The concern that prompted this action proved to be historical. The problem was a leak caused by a component that rusted out, since repaired, not overtopping; the Surry Dam Road bridge at the site had been rebuilt before the leak. The town is a one-quarter to one-fifth owner of the dam. New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management advised that the dam be listed in the plan as a precaution, and it is — in the asset inventory at Section 4, which is where it belongs.
24	Municipal cybersecurity and continuity program	19	Cyber attack is rated Low risk and is not a natural hazard. The planning team's position was that the town can and should do this work, but that it does not belong in a hazard mitigation plan.
12	Household and small business hazardous waste education	20	Known and emerging contaminants is rated Low risk. The team also noted that the relevant obligations are already met: wellhead protection notification within the 1,200-foot radius is a scheduled requirement, and the consumer confidence report is certified and distributed annually.
29	Emergency communications redundancy and coverage assessment	19	Retained in this record deliberately. The planning team recognized the gap as real and highly impactful, but concluded that it is not the town's to close — it sits with the regional dispatch center and the mutual aid system, both of which are working on it. The town will participate rather than commit to a project of its own. Satellite communication was raised as a possible future answer.
23	Tree management program for roads and utility corridors	16	Merged into Action 10, which it substantially duplicated.
27	Invasive forest pest response	15	Merged into Action 25. The two address the same chain of cause and effect — pest damage produces standing dead timber, which produces fire load — and are more useful as one action.

SECTION 2 | INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING PROCESS

2.1 PURPOSE, AUTHORITY, AND SCOPE

This plan was prepared under Section 322 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, and meets the local mitigation planning requirements at 44 CFR Part 201.[5] New Hampshire prepares local hazard mitigation plans town by town, so this is a single-jurisdiction plan covering the Town of Surry alone. Its scope is the identification of natural hazards affecting Surry, the vulnerability of existing and future assets to those hazards, and a strategy of actions to reduce the resulting losses before they occur.

The town is not seeking eligibility under FEMA's Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dams grant program. Surry Mountain Dam is the only high-hazard-potential dam in town and it is owned and maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Element G of the Local Mitigation Plan Review Tool is therefore not addressed. Dam-related risk is carried in the flooding profile at Section 5.4 and in the action plan.

2.2 PLANNING TEAM

The Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team was convened by the Emergency Management Director and met four times between July and September 2026. Members participated by attending meetings, completing worksheets between meetings, and reviewing and commenting on draft material. Participation by meeting is recorded in Appendix A, Documentation of the Planning Process, at §A.2.

Table 3. Planning Team Membership

Name	Title	Affiliation
Jason Contrady	Emergency Management Director; Deputy Fire Chief; Deputy Treasurer	Town of Surry
Bruce Smith	Deputy Emergency Management Director; Budget Committee; Surveyor of Timber; Cemetery Trustee	Town of Surry
Josh Brooks	Fire Chief	Town of Surry
John Berglund	Treasurer; Forest Fire Warden; Zoning Board of Adjustment; former Planning Board member; former Fire Chief	Town of Surry
Jay Croteau	Select Board Chair; Zoning Board of Adjustment Chair	Town of Surry
John Davis	Conservation Commission Chair; Health Officer; School Board member; Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee	Town of Surry; Ashuelot River LAC
Wayne Hartz	Town Moderator	Town of Surry
Durwin Clark	Highway Department; Sexton	Town of Surry
Elizabeth Curless	Stakeholder Liaison, Hillsborough and Cheshire Counties	NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Scott Lambertson	Stakeholder Liaison, Hillsborough and Cheshire Counties	NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Henry Underwood	Senior Planner	Southwest Region Planning Commission

[5] 44 CFR § 201.6, interpreted in accordance with FEMA's Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide (2025).

2.3 PLANNING PROCESS AND SCOPE OF WORK

The planning team followed the twelve tasks set out in Exhibit B of the grant agreement with NHHSEM. Table A4 in Appendix A records where each task was carried out and where its product appears in this plan, and also serves the grant's reimbursement process.

2.4 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Neighboring communities, agencies, businesses, academic institutions and nonprofit organizations were given the opportunity to participate. An email announcement of the plan update was distributed through the SWRPC list, which reaches the thirty-four municipalities in the region together with county offices, businesses and academic contacts, and direct invitations were sent to the organizations below.

Table 4. Stakeholder Involvement by FEMA Category

FEMA Stakeholder Category	Organizations Invited	Method
1. Local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation activities	NHHSEM (State Hazard Mitigation Officer and two stakeholder liaisons); NH Geological Survey; NHDES Dam Bureau; NHDES Watershed Management Bureau; NHDES Rivers and Lakes Programs; NH Office of Planning and Development, including the Floodplain Management Program; NHDOT Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance and District 4; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (three contacts, including the Upper Connecticut River Basin Operations Manager); NH Fish and Game; USDA Farm Service Walpole Field Office; Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee; Southwest Region Planning Commission	Direct email; meeting participation by the NHHSEM liaisons
2. Agencies with authority to regulate development	Surry Planning Board; Surry Zoning Board of Adjustment; Surry Conservation Commission; Surry Building Inspector	Planning team membership and direct email
3. Neighboring communities	Keene (City Manager and Emergency Management Director); Gilsum (Select Board, Administrative Assistant, EMD/Fire Chief); Walpole (Town Administrator, EMD/Fire Chief); Westmoreland (Administrative Assistant, EMD); Alstead (Town Administrator, EMD)	Direct email; SWRPC regional announcement
4. Businesses, academia and private organizations	Eversource (Community Relations and Emergency Preparedness); SAU 91; Surry Village Charter School; Keene State College; Greater Monadnock Collaborative Chamber; Monadnock Economic Development Corporation; Dartmouth College; Antioch University New England	Direct email
5. Nonprofit and community-based organizations	Greater Monadnock Public Health Network; Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services; Monadnock Family Services; Monadnock Area Peer Support; Monadnock United Way; Southwestern Community Services; Able NH; Surry Reed Free Library; Monadnock Conservancy; Cheshire County Conservation District; NH Association of Conservation Commissions; Connecticut River Conservancy; The Nature Conservancy	Direct email

2.5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents were engaged during the drafting stage through a written survey, a project page on the town website, a printed flyer and an item in the town email newsletter. Thirty-one residents responded to the survey. Their responses are summarized at Section 2.6 and cited throughout the hazard profiles at Section 5 where plan content responds to what they raised. Nine of the thirty-one candidate actions put to the planning team originated directly from survey responses, and six of those survive into the final action plan at Table 1.

A public meeting requirement was satisfied by the Select Board meeting held on August 10, 2026. A second opportunity, the public review of the complete draft, runs from November 10 through November 30, 2026, and closes with a public meeting on the draft at the Select Board's meeting on November 30, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at Surry Town Hall. The draft is available at the Town Hall, the Surry Reed Free Library, and on the town and Southwest Region Planning Commission websites, and comments can be made by email, by letter, through an online comment form or in person at the November 30 meeting. The plan will record the comments received and how they were addressed once that period closes.

2.6 RESIDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Thirty-one residents responded. Asked which natural hazards concerned them most, respondents placed drought, high winds, severe weather and wildfire at the top; extreme temperatures, flooding and erosion in the middle; and landslide, lightning and radon at the bottom. Among technological and human-caused hazards, long-term utility outage, hazardous materials spills and cyber events drew the most concern.

Asked which assets were most vulnerable, respondents identified infrastructure, roads, electricity and dams, with several naming Surry Mountain Dam specifically. Asked which mitigation strategies they preferred, respondents favored protecting critical facilities and utilities and strengthening emergency services. Open-ended responses repeatedly raised dirt road washouts, culvert maintenance and roadside drainage.

There is a divergence between the hazards residents ranked highest and those the planning team's risk assessment ranks highest. Residents placed drought and wind above flooding; the risk assessment places flooding first. Both readings are defensible, and the difference is informative rather than contradictory. Surry's flood exposure is concentrated in road and culvert infrastructure, which residents experience as a maintenance issue rather than as flooding. The plan carries both, and the Genasys outreach action at Table 1 responds in part to this divergence.

A sharper version of the same divergence emerged at the fourth planning team meeting and is recorded at Section 8. More than half of the survey respondents named roads as the town's most vulnerable or most concerning asset. The planning team, reviewing the road and culvert network at that meeting, judged it to be in good condition after a decade of sustained work and set aside three culvert and drainage actions on that basis. Both positions are held in good faith by people who know the roads. The plan does not resolve the disagreement; it records it, keeps five road-related actions in the strategy, and flags the question for the next update.

2.7 CHANGES SINCE THE 2021 PLAN

This update is not a rewrite. Where hazard risk and community conditions have not materially changed, the 2021 material was reviewed, verified and carried forward. The substantive changes are as follows.

- Two federally declared flood events affected the town, in July 2021 and July 2023, providing local damage records the 2021 plan did not have.
- The risk assessment was revised. The human impact score for flooding was raised, the planning team revised its evaluation of infectious disease downward after five years of experience with COVID-19, and at its fourth meeting the team moved solar storms from medium to low risk and severe winter weather was raised from low to medium risk bringing Surry into line with the State assessment on a hazard that would affect the whole state equally. In each case the hazard itself did not change; the team's assessment of what it means for Surry did.
- Assets are now organized by FEMA community lifeline rather than by the four critical facility categories used in 2021, and are mapped with locations and hazard exposure.
- Vulnerability is now expressed as problem statements tied to named assets rather than as general statements of potential impact.
- The town warning system moved from Code Red to Genasys, the Emergency Operations Plan was updated in 2022, the Master Plan was adopted on June 25, 2025, a Natural Resources Inventory was completed in 2026, and the Zoning Ordinance was revised effective March 13, 2026.
- Preliminary flood hazard products were issued for the town in March 2026. They were used in the planning team's mapping exercise and are reflected in the Past and Potential Hazards map at Appendix B, but they are not yet effective: the Flood Insurance Rate Map in force dates from 2006 and does not reflect them. The town has been advised to expect no change in the mapped extents when the new maps become effective, and the Floodplain Management Ordinance will be reviewed against whatever is issued.

SECTION 3 | COMMUNITY PROFILE AND CHANGES IN DEVELOPMENT

3.1 TOWN OVERVIEW

Surry lies in the northwest corner of Cheshire County in southwest New Hampshire, bounded by Alstead to the north, Gilsum to the east, Keene to the south, and Walpole and Westmoreland to the west. It covers 16.7 square miles, or 10,973 acres. The Ashuelot River runs through the middle of town, entering from Gilsum, turning south along Surry Mountain into the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control impoundment, and continuing south into Keene. The terrain is rolling hills broken by narrow valleys, with elevations from about 500 feet where the river crosses the Keene line to about 1,500 feet at the Walpole border in the northwest.[6]

This geography accounts for much of the town's hazard profile. The river and its floodplain concentrate flood risk along the NH Route 12A corridor. The hills and ledges concentrate wind and tree-fall risk on a small number of road segments. The forest cover that gives the town its character is also the fuel load behind its wildfire exposure. The near-total reliance on private wells makes drought a household water supply problem rather than a municipal one.

3.2 POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Surry's population grew 62 percent between 1970 and 2020, from 507 to 820 residents at the last decennial count. Growth has been uneven: a 29 percent rise in the 1970s, near-stagnation through the 1990s, then renewed growth of 8.8 percent and 12.0 percent in the two most recent decades. Against a land area of 15.7 square miles that is a density of roughly 52 people per square mile; the 16.7 square miles cited at Section 3.1 and in previous plans includes inland water and gives about 50.[7]

Table 5. Population, 1970 to 2025

Year	Population	People Added	Change	Note
1970	507	—	—	
1980	656	149	+29.4%	Housing boom
1990	667	11	+1.7%	
2000	673	6	+0.9%	Slowest decade on record
2010	732	59	+8.8%	
2020	820	88	+12.0%	Highest count on record
2025	830	—	—	NHOPD annual estimate; matches the Select Board's own figure

The New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development prepares population projections for every community in the state. Its current set, published in September 2022 and built forward from the 2020

[6] Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2021, Chapter 2, reviewed and verified by the planning team for this update.

[7] New Hampshire Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, Surry community profile, with residential building permit data from the NH Bureau of Economic Affairs supplied through GRANIT Stats. Decennial figures are from the U.S. Census. Two discrepancies between sources are left as published rather than reconciled silently: NH Employment Security gives Surry's 1990 population as 631 where the Census and the 2021 plan give 667, and it gives a land area of 15.7 square miles plus 0.3 square miles of inland water where the 2021 plan gives 16.7 square miles, or 10,973 acres.

Census, has Surry rising to a peak of about 840 residents around 2030 and then declining to 792 by 2050, a net loss of 3.4 percent over the thirty years. That is very close to the path projected for Cheshire County as a whole, which loses 3.5 percent over the same period, and it runs against the state, which is projected to grow 9 percent. The Surry Master Plan, adopted in June 2025, reaches the same conclusion.

Table 6. Population Projections to 2050

2020 Census	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	Change
820	834	840	837	826	809	792	–3.4%

Projections are not predictions. They rest on assumptions about births, deaths and migration, and the Office of Planning and Development cautions that the longer the forecast, the greater the scope for error. Town figures in particular are derived from the county projection rather than calculated town by town, so they indicate direction rather than fix a number. The annual estimates published since the Census bear the direction out: 828 residents in 2021, 825 in 2023, 829 in 2024 and 830 in 2025, which is essentially flat and within a few residents of the 834 the projection gives for 2025. One point from the planning team bears on vulnerability rather than on numbers: a share of recent arrivals are new to the region and unfamiliar with Northeast winter, wind and wildfire conditions, which is a preparedness gap rather than a population problem.

3.3 DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Development is overwhelmingly single-family residential and dispersed along town and state roads rather than concentrated. Occupancy is predominantly year-round; seasonal housing plays a very small role. New Hampshire Employment Security records 354 housing units in total — 348 single-family, four in two-to-four-unit structures and two mobile homes. Residential building permits issued between 2011 and 2024 total twenty-five, of which twenty-four were single-family and one multi-family, with no manufactured housing permitted in that period. The annual average is 1.8 permits.

Commercial and industrial activity is limited. Two businesses operate as principal uses — Cushing & Sons (water wells) and Surry Sand & Gravel (formerly Bretwood Sand and Gravel, sold to Gemini Industries in 2022) — alongside several businesses sharing a site with a dwelling and a dispersed set of home occupations, of which automotive repair is the most common. Public and institutional uses, comprising the Town Hall, church, fire station, school, library and four cemeteries, are concentrated in the Village. Recreational land is limited in variety but not in area: the Surry Mountain Flood Control Project accounts for 1,688 acres of land and water. Agriculture is a small but visible part of the landscape.

The Zoning Ordinance, first adopted in 1951 and revised effective March 13, 2026, establishes four districts: Village Residential with a one-acre minimum lot size, Rural Residential at two acres, Commercial and Industrial at three acres, and General at two acres. A proposal to increase the minimum lot size from two to five acres was the subject of a public hearing in early 2026 and is not reflected in the current ordinance.

3.4 DEVELOPMENT IN HAZARD AREAS

Most hazards identified in this plan are regional and affect the whole town, so all development lies within a hazard area for those. Flooding is the exception because it is mapped. The 2021 plan recorded four residential structures within a floodplain area and no other structures within the 100-year floodplain. Of the town's mapped assets, the Surry Mountain Recreation Area at 35 Park Drive and the Surry Dam Boat Launch at 75 Park Drive lie within the special flood hazard area and the Surry Mountain Dam inundation area.

Where development can go is itself a form of mitigation, and in Surry the physical constraints are strong. The Master Plan records that approximately 66 percent of the town's area is steep slope, over 20 percent gradient, which makes development at best difficult and expensive; that soils across much of the town do not preclude development but require special construction techniques and attention to drainage; that the aquifer is highly permeable sand and gravel, so spilled pollutants reach the water supply easily; and that the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act applies along the Ashuelot River, including its impoundment at Surry Mountain Lake.[8]

Access is the constraint that bears most directly on hazard response. The Master Plan identifies Webster, Joslin and Mine Ledge Roads as particularly difficult and at times completely inaccessible, and the town's land use policy has for forty years directed residential growth to the roads the town can service efficiently. Building on roads the town cannot reach in a storm adds exposure that no construction standard addresses, which is why the mitigation strategy in Section 7 is weighted toward road, culvert and access work rather than toward building elevation.[9]

3.5 CHANGES IN DEVELOPMENT SINCE 2021

The planning team identified five changes, and a sixth is added here from the building permit record. All were verified by the Select Board at the fourth planning team meeting on September 23, 2026.

Table 7. Changes in Development Since 2021

Change	Effect on Vulnerability
A building permit was issued in approximately late 2024 for Map 6, Lot 4-B, a parcel south of the river, downstream of the dam and within a flood zone. Because no base flood elevation is mapped, the permit was conditioned on the basement slab being placed at ground level with the top of the foundation two feet higher. Construction never began and the permit has since expired. The Select Board expects a reissue to be sought at some point.	Neutral at present, and instructive. No structure was built, so no exposure was added. The episode nonetheless demonstrates the practical consequence of having no base flood elevations on the effective map — the town had to invent a condition in place of a mapped elevation — and that consequence will recur when the permit is sought again.
The State of New Hampshire adopted updated building codes effective July 1, 2026, drawing most components from the 2024 International Code Council editions. The state code applies in Surry without separate town action..	Decreases vulnerability for new construction and substantial improvements, which must be built to a more current standard.
The Surry Master Plan was adopted on June 25, 2025, with emphasis on open space preservation and lower density.	Decreases vulnerability over the long term by steering growth away from sensitive areas, and provides the planning mechanism through which this plan can be integrated.
Population has been essentially flat since the 2020 Census — 828 residents in 2021 and 830 in 2025 on the state's annual	Mixed, and the exposure is about who rather than how many. Numbers have not risen, so little exposure has been added;

[8] Town of Surry Master Plan, adopted June 25, 2025, Chapter 2, Limitations to Development, pp. 18–19. surry.nh.gov

[9] Town of Surry Master Plan, adopted June 25, 2025, Chapter 2, Limitations to Development, Road Access, and the land use policy carried forward from the 1983 and 2001 plans. surry.nh.gov

Change	Effect on Vulnerability
estimates — but includes residents new to the region.	residents unfamiliar with Northeast winter, wind and wildfire conditions are less prepared for them.
Preliminary flood hazard products were issued in March 2026 and appear on the project map. The town has been advised that the new maps will be unchanged from the existing maps.	Neutral at present. The effective FIRM dates from 2006; the town expects no change in mapped extents, but the ordinance will require review against whatever is issued.
Residential development has not accelerated. Twenty-five residential building permits were issued between 2011 and 2024, seven of them in the four years since the 2021 plan — an average of 1.75 a year against a long-run average of 1.8. (NH Bureau of Economic Affairs, via GRANIT Stats.)	Neutral in volume, and useful because it locates the change. What altered vulnerability since the last plan is where a single permit was issued — the flood-zone parcel above — rather than how much was built.

3.6 NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Surry joined the National Flood Insurance Program by town meeting vote on March 16, 2006 and entered the Regular Program on October 31, 2007, as community 330170. The town administers a Floodplain Management Ordinance adopted under RSA 674:16. The New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development reviewed that ordinance in 2015 and confirmed that it complies with NFIP minimum standards; the ordinance has since been resubmitted to that office for review alongside the forthcoming flood maps.[10]

The ordinance assigns administration to "the selectmen or designee." Bruce Smith, a former selectman serving as the Select Board's designee, is the town's named contact for the National Flood Insurance Program and its liaison with the New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development. In practice the Select Board and the Planning Board together verify whether proposed development lies inside or outside the special flood hazard area. The building permit application includes that question, and the town conducts on-site inspections during construction. No variances from the floodplain regulations have been issued. Applicants must supply as-built elevation data for the lowest floor in relation to NGVD, which the Select Board or designee retain for public inspection; the town does not presently use FEMA's Elevation Certificate form for that purpose.

The ordinance defines substantial damage as damage of any origin where the cost of restoring the structure to its condition before the damage would equal or exceed 50 percent of its market value, and substantial improvement as any combination of repairs, reconstruction, alteration or improvement whose cumulative cost equals or exceeds 50 percent of market value, measured from the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor or other structural part. The town confirmed to the state in 2015 that it understands this responsibility, which applies to damage from any cause including fire and wind as well as flood.

Where no base flood elevation is shown on the map, the ordinance requires the Select Board to obtain, review and reasonably use any 100-year flood elevation data available from federal, state or other sources in order to set elevation requirements in unnumbered A zones. Surry's maps carry no base flood elevations, and the town has identified their absence as the principal practical barrier to administering the program. Implementing the provision the ordinance already contains is carried as a candidate mitigation action.

[10] Community Assistance Contact record, Town of Surry, August 6, 2015, and follow-up correspondence from the NH Office of Energy and Planning dated August 12, 2015, provided by the NH Office of Planning and Development. Local detail from correspondence with Bruce Smith, Surry Select Board, July 16, 2026.

The Subdivision Regulations at Section X and the Site Plan Regulations at Section VIII both require review of development in FEMA-designated flood zones, base flood elevation data for proposals exceeding fifty lots or five acres, and adequate drainage to reduce flood hazard exposure.

As of May 2026 the town had three policies in force, all single-family residential, carrying $445,000 in building coverage and $101,000 in contents coverage for a total annual premium of $2,013. Two insured structures are in an A zone and one is in an X zone. Since 1978 the town has recorded one flood loss, closed with a building payment of $8,511. No repetitive loss or severe repetitive loss properties have been identified. The most recent contact with the state floodplain management program was a Community Assistance Contact on August 6, 2015; no Community Assistance Visit is on record.

The town has considered the Community Rating System and does not intend to pursue it at this time. With no buildings identified in flood risk areas and three policies in force, no policyholder would presently benefit materially from a premium discount, and the administrative effort to qualify is judged disproportionate for a town of Surry's size. The town will reconsider if development in flood-prone areas increases.

Table 8. National Flood Insurance Program Compliance

NFIP Compliance Element	Status
Floodplain management criteria adopted	Yes. Floodplain Management Ordinance adopted under RSA 674:16; confirmed compliant by NHOPD in 2015 and currently under review
Latest effective FIRM adopted	Effective FIRM and FIS dated May 23, 2006, on file with the Planning Board. See the note below regarding the citation in the ordinance
Regulations implemented and enforced	Yes. Permit application screens for location relative to the SFHA; on-site inspections conducted; one floodplain permit issued, conditioned on foundation elevation; no variances issued
Designee appointed	Yes. The ordinance designates "the selectmen or designee." Bruce Smith, Select Board designee, serves as the town's named National Flood Insurance Program contact and as its liaison with NHOPD. The Select Board and Planning Board verify SFHA location
Substantial improvement and substantial damage provisions	Yes. Defined at 50 percent of market value for damage of any origin, per the ordinance and the state building code. A written determination procedure is carried as a candidate action

SECTION 4 | ASSETS AND COMMUNITY LIFELINES

FEMA asks communities to identify their assets — the people, structures, systems, resources and activities that matter — and then to establish which are exposed to which hazards and what the consequences would be.[11] The 2021 plan organized this material as four categories of critical facilities. This update uses FEMA's eight community lifelines instead, which is the framework the agency now applies and which makes gaps visible: where Surry has no lifeline asset of a given kind, the table records that, and the absence is itself a finding.

Thirty-five assets are inventoried. Thirty-four of them are mapped; the fire station base radio was identified at the second planning team meeting and has still to be added to the mapped layer. Each appears on the Past and Potential Hazards and Community Lifelines Map at Appendix B, which also carries hazard locations, preliminary flood hazard zones, stream crossing hydraulic vulnerability ratings, bridge condition, the 2014 Class V culvert inventory, dams, wellhead and water supply intake protection areas, and conservation land.

4.1 BASELINE EXPOSURE

Every asset in Surry is exposed to the hazards that affect the town as a whole: high wind, severe winter weather, tropical and post-tropical cyclones, lightning, extreme temperatures, drought and long-term utility outage. That common exposure is stated here once rather than repeated against each asset. The tables in Sections 4.2 and 4.3 record exposure specific to a given asset, whether arising from its location, such as the floodplain, the dam inundation area or a road segment with a history of tree fall, or from its function, such as the absence of standby power or reliance on a single access route.

4.2 COMMUNITY LIFELINES

Table 9. Community Lifelines and the Assets in Each

Lifeline	Assets in Surry	No.	Specific Exposure and Consequence
Safety and Security	Surry Fire Station, 444 NH 12A	1	Serves as the Emergency Operations Center and has standby power. Access can be severed: trees brought down across NH 12A in the March 2023 storm left the station inaccessible from parts of town. Hazardous trees are identified adjacent to the site.
	Surry Town Hall, 1 Village Road	1	Alternate Emergency Operations Center. No standby power, which limits its usefulness in the extended outages when it would be activated.
	Surry Village Charter School, 449 NH 12A	1	Identified as a potential emergency shelter and cooling center. No standby generator, so it cannot reliably serve either function during an extended outage. Carried as candidate action 3.
	Eleven fire pond locations and two dry hydrants	13	The count is of locations where a fire pond has existed, which is not the same as water the department can draft. Access is the binding constraint and it is seasonal: one pond can be driven down to but not back out of once the

[11] FEMA, Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide (2025), Element B2-a, p. 20: "A list of assets without context is not sufficient."

Lifeline	Assets in Surry	No.	Specific Exposure and Consequence
			ground softens, and the pond on Merriam Road holds water that cannot be approached closely. Winter icing and drought reduce what remains. The effect is heavier reliance on mutual aid tankers and a longer interval before water reaches a fire. Carried as Action 4.
Food, Hydration, Shelter	Beth-el Bible Church, 13 Village Road	1	Potential emergency shelter; the adjacent field is the town's helicopter landing site. Not formally designated as a shelter and standby power is not confirmed.
Health and Medical	None in town	0	The nearest medical facilities are in Keene. This is a genuine absence rather than an omission, and it places weight on mutual aid and on road access remaining open.
Water Systems	Surry Village Water Company, 448 NH 12A	1	Small privately owned closed system serving approximately sixteen houses. Entirely gravity fed, with no electricity involved at any point, so it is not vulnerable to power failure — a resilience asset rather than a weakness, and a correction to the previous plan. It remains exposed to drought and to contamination affecting the source. The remainder of the town is served by private wells.
Energy	No town-owned energy assets	0	Regional transmission lines cross the town from northwest to southeast. Distribution is investor-owned and overhead, and is the single most frequent point of failure in wind and winter storms.
Communications	Cell towers at 663 NH 12 and 34 Valley View	2	Cellular coverage varies between the village and higher elevations, reducing reliability during emergencies. Towers and the lines serving them are exposed to wind and ice.
	Fire station base radio	1	Identified at Meeting 2 as a communications asset but not yet in the mapped layer. Exposed to the town-wide hazards at Section 4.1: lightning, high wind and ice loading can damage the antenna and its mast, and a long-term utility outage leaves the radio dependent on the fire station's standby power. Loss of the base radio cuts the department's link to Southwest Mutual Aid at the moment it is most needed.
Transportation	Surry Highway Garage, 180 Pond Road	1	No standby power. A generator disconnect at the breaker panel was identified at Meeting 2 as a low-cost remedy. The building now has water and sanitary facilities that depend on power, and electric overhead doors that can be operated manually.
	Gilsum Road bridge	1	On an evacuation route. NH Route 12A at Gilsum Road overtopped and closed in July 2021 and July 2023; the state-owned Thompson Brook crossing was undermined in 2023 and its culvert is scheduled for replacement in 2026 or 2027.
Hazardous Materials	None in town	0	Technician-level hazardous materials response is provided by the Keene Fire Department hazmat team, so response time depends on road access from Keene remaining open.

4.3 OTHER CRITICAL FACILITIES AND ASSETS

Twelve further assets are mapped that do not fall within a lifeline category but are important to the character and function of the town.

Table 10. Other Critical Facilities and Assets

Asset	Location	Owner	Specific Exposure and Consequence
Surry Mountain Recreation Area	35 Park Drive	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Within the mapped special flood hazard area and the Surry Mountain Dam inundation area. The recreation area is managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as part of the Surry Mountain flood control project. Flooding could damage park facilities, limit public access and disrupt recreation-related activity.
Surry Dam Boat Launch	75 Park Drive	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Within the mapped special flood hazard area and the dam inundation area.
Surry Mountain Campground	93 Campground Road	Private	Seasonal occupancy in a wooded setting near the reservoir, giving both wildland-urban interface exposure and a transient population unfamiliar with local evacuation routes. Operates a NHDES-regulated public water supply.
Mason Farm	574 Old Walpole Road	Private	Agricultural land is susceptible to crop loss in drought and late spring freeze, and to erosion where it adjoins streams. Old Walpole Road was the location of both recorded wildfires since the last plan, in May 2021 and August 2022.
Reed Farm	1197 NH 12A	Private	Agricultural land adjoining the NH 12A corridor; susceptible to crop loss in drought and late spring freeze and to erosion during flood events.
River access	12, 55 and 282 Gilsum Road	To be confirmed	On the Ashuelot River at Gilsum Road, where the river has overtopped the road twice since 2021.
Surry Reed Free Library	8 Village Road	Town of Surry	No exposure identified beyond the town-wide baseline at Section 4.1.
Historic structure	103 Village Road	To be confirmed	No exposure identified beyond the town-wide baseline at Section 4.1.
Historic structure	71 Surry Dam Road	To be confirmed	On Surry Dam Road, within the area addressed by the dam's emergency action planning. Exposure to be confirmed against the Surry Mountain Dam downstream inundation mapping.
Historic structure	515 East Surry Road	To be confirmed	On East Surry Road, whose bridge over the Ashuelot River is identified as vulnerable to flooding and stream erosion. Exposure to be confirmed against the Surry Mountain Dam downstream inundation mapping.

4.4 POPULATION AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

People are an asset, and some are more exposed than others. Surry's vulnerable populations include older adults, residents who are homebound or medically dependent, households relying on electric heat, and residents living beyond road crossings that fail in flood or storm conditions. The town does not maintain its own register of residents needing assistance. It relies on the statewide E911 special needs registry, to which residents self-report, and on local knowledge held by the fire department and emergency management.

The planning team discussed whether the town should conduct its own survey of residents needing assistance and concluded that such registers are difficult to keep current. This is recorded as a capability gap rather than an action so that the next update revisits it.

4.5 ASSETS OUTSIDE THE PLANNING AREA

Two categories of asset outside the town's control bear on Surry's risk. Surry Mountain Dam, although physically within Surry, is federally owned and operated, so the town depends on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers decisions and on the Corps' flood warning system and communication plan, which is based on gauge readings and includes notification of town officials. Spoons Pond Dam lies in Gilsum, upstream of Surry on the Ashuelot system. Beyond dams, the town relies on regional mutual aid, the Keene Fire Department hazmat team, medical facilities in Keene, and the Greater Monadnock Public Health Network, none of which are town assets and all of which affect outcomes in Surry.

4.6 NOTE ON THE MAPPED VULNERABILITY ATTRIBUTE

The vulnerability field in the mapped asset layer was populated with a placeholder value during map production. The exposure recorded in Sections 4.2 and 4.3 supersedes it, and the attribute table should be updated to match before the map is published with the plan.

SECTION 5 | HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 HOW RISK WAS ASSESSED

The planning team assessed risk using the method New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management applies in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, which the town has used since its 2011 update. Each hazard is scored for impact in three categories — human, property and economic — and those three scores are averaged. The averaged impact score is then multiplied by a probability score. The product is the overall risk score, and the overall risk score determines the risk level. Event detail specific to Surry, as distinct from county-wide or statewide records, comes from the natural hazard events worksheet the planning team compiled and reviewed at its second meeting, and is used throughout this section wherever the record names the town.

Impact Scores

Table 11. Impact Scores

Score	What it means
1	Inconvenience, reduced service or productivity, minor damage, non-life-threatening injuries.
3	Moderate to major damage, temporary closure and reduced service or productivity, numerous injuries, possible deaths.
6	Devastation, significant injuries and deaths, permanent closure or relocation of services, long-term effects.

Probability Scores

Probability expresses the likelihood that the hazard will occur in Surry within the next ten years.

Table 12. Probability Scores

Score	What it means
1 — Low	A 0 to 33 percent chance of occurrence within ten years.
3 — Medium	A 34 to 66 percent chance of occurrence within ten years.
6 — High	A 67 to 100 percent chance of occurrence within ten years.

Risk Levels

Table 13. Risk Levels

Risk level	Overall risk score	How the plan uses it
Low	1 to 6	Monitored. Mitigation actions are generally incidental to actions taken for other hazards.
Medium	7 to 18	Addressed where a specific vulnerability has been identified.
High	19 to 36	Prioritized in the action plan. Every high-risk hazard has at least one action directed at it.

Changing Future Conditions

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, with the North Carolina Institute for Climate Studies, reports three findings for New Hampshire that bear directly on this plan. Average annual

temperature has risen by approximately 3°F since the early twentieth century, and winter warming has been larger than in any other season. Precipitation has increased over the last century, and the highest number of extreme precipitation events occurred in the most recent decade. Mean precipitation and precipitation extremes are both projected to increase, with associated increases in flooding. The New Hampshire Climate Assessment 2021, prepared by the Sustainability Institute at the University of New Hampshire and used as the climate reference in the hazard mitigation plans this commission prepared for Gilsum and Fitzwilliam, reaches the same conclusions on a statewide basis and projects them forward: warmer winters with less total snowfall but a greater share of precipitation falling as rain or as heavy wet snow near the freezing line, more frequent and more intense short-duration rainfall, and longer growing-season dry periods between those rainfalls.[12][13]

For Surry these translate into four expectations, each taken up in the profile it affects: more intense rainfall on the same undersized culverts and stream crossings; warmer winters delivering a larger share of winter precipitation as heavy wet snow and freezing rain rather than dry snow, which is the form that brings down trees and power lines; longer and more severe growing-season drought affecting private wells, agriculture and the fire ponds the fire department relies on for suppression water; and more frequent heat advisories in a town with no designated cooling location.

5.2 HAZARDS IDENTIFIED AND HAZARDS NOT PROFILED

The planning team reviewed the thirteen natural hazards named in the State scope of work for this project against the hazard list carried in the 2021 Surry plan and against the 2023 New Hampshire State Hazard Mitigation Plan. Eleven natural hazards are profiled in full in this section. Two are identified and then set aside with a stated rationale.

The town also carries eleven technological and human-caused hazards in its risk matrix — long-term utility outage, transport accident, mass casualty incident, hazardous materials, cyber attack, aging infrastructure, known and emerging contaminants, radiological, conflagration, terrorism and violence, and dam failure. FEMA requires only natural hazards to be addressed in a local mitigation plan. Surry has scored these since 2011 because they are useful to the town for emergency operations planning, and the plan retains them in the risk summary and, where relevant, in the action plan. They are not profiled individually. Dam failure is the exception in practice: it is discussed in the flooding profile because in Surry the two are the same physical system.

Hazards Identified but Not Profiled

Table 14. Hazards Identified but Not Profiled

Hazard	Why it is not profiled
Avalanche	Surry has no terrain capable of producing an avalanche. Town elevations range from approximately 500 feet at the Keene line to approximately 1,500 feet at the Walpole border, with no open steep slopes at the scale avalanche requires. The 2023 State plan records that Cheshire County has a low risk for avalanche hazards. The planning team scored the hazard zero in every category.
Coastal flooding	Surry is an inland town approximately sixty miles from the Atlantic coast with no tidal water. The

[12] New Hampshire State Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2023 Update, Section 4.5, Meteorological Trends, summarizing NOAA and NCICS state climate summaries and the New Hampshire Climate Assessment 2021. Available at https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/hsem/

[13] New Hampshire Climate Assessment 2021, prepared by the Sustainability Institute at the University of New Hampshire. scholars.unh.edu

Hazard	Why it is not profiled
	2023 State plan states that local risk assessments indicate none of Cheshire County's communities are vulnerable to coastal flooding. Riverine, flash and road flooding are profiled in Section 5.4.

5.3 SUMMARY OF RISK

The table on the following page ranks every hazard the town scores, highest risk first, and sets each one beside the same hazard in the 2023 New Hampshire State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The two assessments share the impact scale and the method but not the probability scale: the State multiplies by 1, 2 or 3 where Surry multiplies by 1, 3 or 6. The scores are not directly comparable. The comparison that matters is the risk level each assessment assigns, and the discussion after the table explains where they differ.

The 2023 State plan is explicit that local assessments may differ from its own and that "local jurisdictions know their communities the best." Divergence is therefore not an error to be corrected, but it should be explained. The five substantial divergences are discussed after the table.

PUBLIC COMMENT WANTED: SEVERE WINTER WEATHER RATING RAISED

In its November 2026 review of this draft, the planning team raised severe winter weather from **low to medium risk**. The probability score was raised from 3 to 6 (high) and the average impact score from 1.67 to 2.33 (human 3, property 3, economic 1), moving the overall score from 5 to 14. The team based the change on:

- **Frequency.** Nineteen severe winter weather events since March 2020, more than for any other hazard in Surry's record.
- **Consequences.** In the March 13–15, 2023 storm, downed lines at the Ledges on NH Route 12A blocked the road, delayed plowing and left the fire station inaccessible from parts of town. It is the only event in this plan that cut off a lifeline facility.
- **Disaster history.** Eleven of the thirty-three federal disaster declarations for Cheshire County since 1973 were for winter storms, second only to flooding.
- **Resident concern.** Severe weather ranked third among natural hazard concerns in the 2026 resident survey.
- **State assessment.** The 2023 State plan rates severe winter weather high, among its top-scoring hazards.

Not every member agreed. One preferred to keep the low rating because winter storms in Surry are usually handled as routine work, and the town has not needed assistance under any of the county's winter declarations, the most recent of which was in 2013.

Do you agree? The Town and planning team are looking for more comments for or against this change by November 30, 2026. Use the online comment form at forms.cloud.microsoft/r/q6vETB8qVd, email hunderwood@swrpc.org, or speak at the Select Board meeting on November 30 at 7:00 p.m. at Surry Town Hall. The full reasoning follows the table below and in Section 5.8.

How to read this table. Each hazard is scored for its impact on people, on property and on the local economy, using 1 for inconvenience and minor damage, 3 for moderate to major damage and possible deaths, and 6 for devastation, with scores between those anchor points where the team judged a hazard to fall between them. The three impact scores are averaged and multiplied by the probability score to give the overall risk, which the bands at §5.1 turn into a risk level. The State assessment uses the same impact scale but a different probability scale, so its numbers are not comparable with Surry's and are not reproduced here; the State's risk level is shown instead, because a level means the same thing in both. All scores not listed at §5.3 as changed by the planning team are carried forward from the 2021 plan as that team set them.

Table 15. Surry Risk Ranking Compared With the 2023 New Hampshire State Assessment

Hazard	Human	Property	Economic	Average impact	Probability	Overall risk	Risk level	State risk level	How the two assessments compare
Natural Hazards									
Flooding and erosion	6	3	1	3.33	6	20	High	High	Agreement. The highest-ranked hazard in both assessments.
Tropical and post-tropical cyclones	3	3	3	3.00	6	18	Medium	Medium	Agreement on level. Surry places it at the top of the medium band and addresses it in the action plan.
High wind events and tornadoes	1	3	3	2.33	6	14	Medium	High	The State places this higher. Surry addresses it in the action plan through tree and line work.
Wildfire	1	3	3	2.33	6	14	Medium	Low	Surry places this far higher than the State, and gave its reasons at Meeting 4 — see below.
Severe winter weather	3	3	1	2.33	6	14	Medium	High	Surry experiences the same storms as the rest of the state but has less infrastructure and density, so impacts are more isolated and are usually handled as routine work. Raised from low in the planning team's review of the draft — see below.
Drought	1	1	3	1.67	6	10	Medium	Low	Surry places this higher than the State, supported by the 2025 record drought.
Infectious disease	3	1	3	2.33	3	7	Medium	Low	Broad agreement. Lowered from high in 2021 after five years of experience with COVID-19.
Extreme temperatures	3	1	1	1.67	4	7	Medium	Low	Surry places this higher than the State. Scores carried forward from 2021; see the note above the table.
Lightning	1	1	1	1.00	6	6	Low	Low	Agreement. Frequent occurrence, minor consequence.
Earthquake	1	1	1	1.00	2	2	Low	Low	Agreement. Scores carried forward from 2021; see the note above the table.
Solar storms and space	1	1	3	1.67	1	2	Low	Low	Now in agreement. Lowered at Meeting 4 — see

Hazard	Human	Property	Economic	Average impact	Probability	Overall risk	Risk level	State risk level	How the two assessments compare
weather									below.
Landslide	1	1	1	1.00	1	1	Low	Low	Agreement.
Avalanche	—	—	—	—	—	—	No risk	Low	Not profiled. Surry has no terrain that supports avalanche. See §5.2.
Technological and Human-Caused Hazards (retained by the town; not required by FEMA)									
Long-term utility outage (two weeks or more)	6	2	6	4.67	3	14	Medium	Low	Surry places this far higher than the State. Two access roads and overhead distribution throughout.
Transport accident	6	3	3	4.00	3	12	Medium	Medium	Agreement.
Mass casualty incident	6	1	1	2.67	3	8	Medium	Low	Surry places this higher than the State.
Hazardous materials	3	1	3	2.33	3	7	Medium	Low	Broad agreement.
Cyber attack	2	1	3	2.00	3	6	Low	Medium	The State places this higher than Surry.
Aging infrastructure	1	1	3	1.67	3	5	Low	Medium	The State places this higher than Surry.
Known and emerging contaminants	3	1	1	1.67	3	5	Low	High	The State places this far higher. Local rating kept at Meeting 4 — see below.
Radiological	6	3	6	5.00	1	5	Low	Low	Agreement on level, reached by different routes: severe consequence, remote likelihood.
Conflagration	1	1	1	1.00	1	1	Low	Medium	The State places this higher. Score carried forward from 2021; see the note above the table.
Terrorism and violence	6	3	3	4.00	1	4	Low	Medium	The State places this higher than Surry.
Dam failure	1	3	3	2.33	1	2	Low	Low	Agreement. Addressed within the flooding profile.

Where Surry's Assessment Differs from the State's

On five hazards Surry and the State reach visibly different conclusions. The planning team worked through all five at its fourth meeting on September 23, 2026, line by line against a marked-up draft. One rating was lowered to agree with the State and four local ratings were kept. In its review of the draft in November 2026 the team then raised severe winter weather from low to medium. The reasons the team gave for each are set out below.

Solar storms and space weather — lowered to agree with the State. This was the one rating the planning team changed. Surry had placed the hazard in the medium band where the State places it in the low band, and the difference lay entirely in probability: the 2021 plan scored the hazard as highly probable and the figure was carried forward without being examined. The team's view at its fourth meeting was that space weather is not a significant threat to Surry, and that an event of consequence would affect the whole state more or less equally, so a local rating above the State's could not be justified. The probability score was lowered and the hazard now sits in the low band, in agreement with the State.

Severe winter weather — raised from low to medium in the planning team's review of the draft. At its fourth meeting the team kept the low rating, reasoning that winter weather is a real impact the town absorbs within its existing resources: in its own words, it does not overwhelm the resources and the time available. After the draft was circulated, the Emergency Management Director proposed raising the rating, and the team considered the proposal by email in November 2026. The case for the change rests on frequency and on consequences the town has already seen. Surry's own event record contains more severe winter weather events than any other hazard — nineteen since 2020 — and the single documented event in this plan that cut off access to a lifeline facility was the winter storm of March 13 to 15, 2023, when downed lines at the Ledges section of NH Route 12A left the fire station inaccessible from parts of town and delayed plowing. Eleven of the thirty-three federal declarations designating Cheshire County since 1973 were for winter storms, and residents ranked severe weather third among natural hazard concerns in the 2026 survey. The revised scores — human impact 3, property 3, economic 1 and probability 6 — give an overall score of 14, in the medium band. One member preferred to keep the low rating, noting that winter weather has rarely been a serious problem in Surry and that the town has not needed assistance under any of the county's winter declarations, the most recent of which was in 2013. That experience is why the impact scores stay well below the State's, which rates all three at the maximum, and why Surry's rating remains a band below the State's: with less infrastructure and density, impacts here are more isolated and are usually handled as routine work.

Known and emerging contaminants — local rating kept. The State gives this hazard far more weight statewide than Surry gives it locally. Essentially every household in Surry draws on a private well, and the one small community system serves a very small number of users, so there is no municipal distribution network for a contaminant to travel through. The realistic local scenario the planning team described is a truck spill on NH Route 12A or Route 12, which would be localized and would move in one direction rather than reaching the whole town. The team's conclusion was that the hazard is not as great a threat here as it is statewide, and the local rating was kept.

Wildfire — local rating kept. Surry treats wildfire as one of its highest-priority hazards; the State places it in the low band statewide and names Fitzwilliam and Harrisville as the most wildfire-vulnerable communities in Cheshire County. The local view is defended on the record: two fires required suppression within fifteen months, one of them drawing mutual aid from five surrounding communities; eight wildfire hazard points are mapped in town; the town is heavily forested with a wildland–urban interface along nearly every road; and suppression water depends on fire ponds that drought reduces. At its fourth meeting the planning team added the geography that explains it. Surry Mountain is reached across the dam, and the uplands are large acreages that apparatus cannot enter — to reach the mountain a crew walks up or walks down. The electric transmission corridor has created open land running through that ground which a four-wheeler can enter easily and a fire engine cannot, putting ignition sources where suppression is hardest. And the department is on call rather than staffed, relying on neighboring towns for both equipment and manpower. The combination of accessible ignition and inaccessible terrain is what the local rating is measuring, and it is not visible in a statewide index.

Long-term utility outage — local rating kept, and the term defined. Surry places this hazard in its high band; the State places it in the low band statewide. Surry has two roads in and out, overhead distribution along both, and a documented history of lines coming down at the Ledges where roadside vegetation is not maintained. A town of this size with a single fire station and no health care facility experiences a prolonged outage differently from the state as a whole. The planning team asked at its fourth meeting what "long-term" means in this plan, and the two available answers are far apart. *The electric utilities and the State use two weeks* as the threshold for a declaration, and that is the definition this plan adopts for the hazard rating. Residents use a much shorter one: the planning team's view was that most people in Surry, and most of its officials, would call anything beyond a couple of days long-term, and one survey respondent reported five days without power as a significant event. The gap between the two definitions is itself a finding. The mitigation actions in this plan are sized to the residents' definition, because an outage that is not long enough to trigger a declaration is still long enough to empty a well, freeze a house and strand a road.

The 2023 State plan names the communities in Cheshire County whose populations, infrastructure and community lifelines are most vulnerable to each hazard. Surry is not named for any hazard. This is consistent with a small, lightly developed town and it is not a reason to lower any local score, but it is a fair summary of where Surry sits regionally: the town's risk is real, concentrated in a small number of specific places, and modest in absolute terms compared with Keene, Swanzey, Alstead and Jaffrey.

5.4 FLOODING AND EROSION

Flooding is the highest-ranked hazard in Surry. Three kinds matter here. Riverine flooding occurs when the Ashuelot River exceeds its banks, most often where NH Route 12A runs close to the river in the northern part of town. Flash flooding follows intense rainfall on already-saturated ground and moves through the brooks and road drainage rather than the main stem. Road and culvert flooding happens where undersized or aging crossings cannot pass the flow, and it is the form the town encounters most frequently. Erosion is treated with flooding in this plan rather than separately, because in Surry the two arrive together: the recorded damage is overwhelmingly washouts, shoulder failure and bank instability rather than inundation of buildings.

Surry Mountain Dam, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control structure on the Ashuelot River, shapes flood behavior throughout the town. At 88 feet high and 1,800 feet long with a 265-acre impoundment, it is the only high-hazard-potential dam in Surry. Because the dam is federally owned and maintained, the town is not seeking eligibility under FEMA's Rehabilitation of High Hazard Potential Dams grant program, and Element G is therefore not addressed in this plan. Dam-related flood risk is nonetheless carried here and in the action plan. Eight other dams are listed in Surry: Rodgers Pond Dam (D230001), rated low hazard, which the Town of Surry owns jointly with other parties and in which the town holds a minority interest, and seven structures rated non-menace. New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management advised the town to list Rodgers Pond Dam in this plan as a precaution notwithstanding the partial ownership, which is why it appears here and in the asset inventory at Section 4. The planning team established at its fourth meeting that the problem recalled in connection with this dam was a leak, caused by a component that rusted out and since repaired, rather than overtopping; the Surry Dam Road bridge at the same site was rebuilt before the leak occurred. No current condition concern is recorded, and no assessment of the dam is carried as a mitigation action.[14]

Location and Extent

Flooding in Surry concentrates at a short list of known locations. NH Route 12A at Gilsum Road overtops during heavy rainfall and has closed in two of the last five years. Around Shaw's Corner, washouts have occurred on NH Route 12A both north and south of the corner, NHDOT is scheduled to replace a culvert on Gilsum Road just east of the corner in 2027, and farther east on Gilsum Road streams coming off the hill to the north can cross the road surface after storms before reaching the Ashuelot River. Webster Road has experienced repeated washouts and shoulder failures. Lower Pond Road contains undersized drainage that has required closure. The East Surry Road bridge over the Ashuelot River is vulnerable to flooding and stream erosion and is identified as a future capital project. Bank instability along Joslin Road at Merriam Brook was stabilized after past erosion and remains the illustrative case for road and stream interfaces elsewhere in town. Agricultural land adjacent to the streams erodes during flood events. Nine flood hazard points and seven erosion hazard points are mapped in town.[15]

One town asset sits inside the mapped 100-year floodplain: the Surry Mountain Recreation Area at 35 Park Drive, together with the Surry Dam Boat Launch at 75 Park Drive. No other critical facility is mapped within the Special Flood Hazard Area.

The USGS gauge on the Ashuelot River at Gilsum, immediately upstream of Surry, is the best available measure of flood extent for the town. In July 2023 it crested at 11.36 feet with a peak discharge of 7,410 cubic feet per second — the fifth highest crest in a hundred-year period of record, with an estimated annual exceedance probability of 0.2 percent. In July 2021 the same gage rose from about 3 feet to 9.5 feet in a day, with flows increasing from 113 to 2,280 cubic feet per second, comparable

[14] New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Dam Bureau active dam inventory, dam number D230005, May 2026.

[15] Flood terminology and the stage categories used to describe flood extent: National Weather Service Glossary and the National Flood Insurance Program Terminology Index. weather.gov

to the peak recorded after Hurricane Irene in 2011.[16] Rainfall totals in the events that produce this response have ranged from 1 to 3 inches in the initial storms up to roughly 5 inches in localized cells.

Previous Occurrences

Two federal major disaster declarations for flooding have covered Cheshire County since the 2021 plan was approved, and a third regional flash flood event fell within the same summer. A full list of the state and federal disaster declarations affecting Cheshire County since 1953 is retained with the planning record rather than reprinted here.[17]

Table 16. Flood Disaster Declarations Affecting Surry

Date	Declaration	What happened in Surry	Recorded damage
Jul 8–10, 2023	DR-4740-NH	The Ashuelot River overflowed and flooded Gilsum Road between Gilsum and Surry, undermining a state-owned crossing of Thompson Brook. Gilsum Road closed; running water on NH 12A but passable.	Emergency bridge repair required. Culvert slated for replacement in 2026 or 2027.
Jul 29–30, 2021	DR-4624-NH	The Ashuelot River flooded NH Route 12A at Gilsum Road, causing roadway impacts and localized flooding.	$10,000 property damage. Damage to privately owned driveway crossings.
Jul 17–20, 2021	DR-4622-NH	Regional flash flooding across the Monadnock Region; road washouts reported in 14 communities. Greatest impacts were in Jaffrey, Keene, Richmond and Fitzwilliam.	Verified county-wide damages exceeded $2 million.

Probability of Future Events

The planning team rated the probability of flooding as high, a 67 to 100 percent chance of occurrence within the next ten years. The record supports the rating: two federally declared flood events affected the town within a five-year period, and localized road and culvert flooding occurs more often than that without rising to a declaration. Combined with an average impact score of 3.33, flooding carries the highest overall risk score of any hazard in this plan.

Changing conditions push in one direction here. Extreme precipitation events in New Hampshire were most frequent in the most recent decade on record, and both mean and extreme precipitation are projected to increase. Surry's flood exposure is dominated by crossings sized for storms smaller than the ones now arriving; more intense rainfall on the same structures produces more frequent failure at the same locations rather than flooding in new places.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

Surry's flood vulnerability is a transportation and access problem before it is a building problem. The town's exposure runs through its roads, culverts and bridges, and the consequence of failure is isolation rather than inundation.

[16] U.S. Geological Survey gage 01158600, Ashuelot River at Gilsum, NH. Event narratives from the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information Storm Events Database, https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/

[17] Federal declarations from the FEMA disaster declarations summary for New Hampshire, https://www.fema.gov/disaster/declarations. Event detail from the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information Storm Events Database, https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/, as compiled in the Natural Hazard Events worksheet reviewed by the planning team at Meeting 2 on July 22, 2026.

Table 17. Flood Vulnerability by Asset Category

Asset category	What is exposed	Consequence
Community lifelines — transportation	Aging culverts sized for smaller storms; the East Surry Road bridge; the Gilsum Road bridge on the evacuation route; road embankments adjacent to watercourses	Overtopping, washout and scour close key travel routes, temporarily isolate residents, and delay emergency response, school buses and utility access. Repair and capital costs rise with each event.
People	Residents on roads with single access; households beyond failed crossings	Delayed fire, EMS and mutual aid response; restricted access to homes and to neighboring communities during and after events.
Economic assets	Agricultural land adjacent to streams; the highway department's road repair budget	Soil loss and crop damage reduce farm income and future productivity. Unplanned emergency repairs displace programmed highway spending.
Natural, historic and cultural resources	Surry Mountain Recreation Area and the Surry Dam Boat Launch, both within the mapped 100-year floodplain and the dam inundation area; wetlands and floodplain storage	Damage to park facilities and loss of public access. Incremental development in sensitive locations reduces the capacity of wetlands and floodplains to store and slowly release stormwater, increasing downstream runoff and erosion.
Water systems	Private wells and the Surry Village Water Company system	Reduced recharge, contamination risk and localized flooding effects on household water supply.

Flood Insurance and Repetitive Loss

Surry participates in the National Flood Insurance Program as community 330170 and joined on October 31, 2007. The effective Flood Insurance Rate Map and Flood Insurance Study are both dated May 23, 2006. As of May 2026 the town had three policies in force, all single-family residential, carrying $445,000 in building coverage and $101,000 in contents coverage for a total annual premium of $2,013. Two of the three insured structures are in an A zone and one is in an X zone. Since 1978 the town has recorded one flood loss, closed with a building payment of $8,511.[18] No repetitive loss or severe repetitive loss properties have been identified in Surry. The 2021 plan recorded four residential structures within a floodplain area.

The town administers the program through its Floodplain Management Ordinance, adopted under RSA 674:16. The ordinance names the administering official as the Select Board or their designee, who review and administer permits and compliance determinations. It defines substantial damage as damage of any origin whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before-damaged condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of market value, and substantial improvement as any combination of repairs, reconstruction, alteration or improvements whose cumulative cost equals or exceeds 50 percent of market value, measured from the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor or other structural part. Applicants must supply as-built elevation data for the lowest floor in relation to NGVD, and the Select Board or designee must maintain that information for public inspection.

Surry's effective maps carry no base flood elevations, and the town has been advised that the forthcoming maps will not add them. The ordinance anticipates this: in unnumbered A zones the Select Board shall obtain, review and reasonably utilize any 100-year flood elevation data available from any federal, state or other source in order to establish elevation requirements. When the town issued its floodplain building permit it improvised a standard — basement slab at ground level and the

[18] FEMA Community Insurance Report and aggregate NFIP data request for the Town of Surry, CID 330170, May 5, 2026.

top of the foundation two feet higher — because no base flood elevation was available. The provision that would have supported that decision was already on the books. Implementing it is carried into the mitigation strategy as an action requiring no town meeting and no new authority.[19]

The town has considered and not pursued the Community Rating System, on the assessment that the areas affected are small enough that no property owner would currently benefit from reduced rates and that qualifying would require substantial effort. Surry has received a Community Assistance Contact, in August 2015, but no Community Assistance Visit. The ordinance is with the New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development for review alongside the forthcoming maps, and any amendments that review identifies are carried into the mitigation strategy.

What Residents Said

Thirty-one residents responded to the 2026 hazard mitigation survey. Flooding and erosion placed in the middle tier of natural hazard concerns, below drought, high winds, severe weather and wildfire. Respondents did, however, identify infrastructure, roads, electricity and dams as the assets they considered most vulnerable, and several named the Surry dam specifically. The gap between the planning team's risk ranking, which places flooding first, and residents' stated concern is itself a finding: the town's flood exposure is concentrated in road and culvert infrastructure that residents experience as a maintenance issue rather than as a flood. Several respondents raised dirt road washouts and culvert upkeep directly, and those comments are carried into the action plan as specific projects.

5.5 TROPICAL AND POST-TROPICAL CYCLONES

Tropical systems reach New Hampshire as tropical storms or as post-tropical remnants rather than as hurricanes at full strength. They arrive in Surry as two separate problems delivered at once: sustained wind and gusts that bring down trees and overhead lines, and heavy rainfall on a watershed that may already be saturated. The wind effects are those described under high wind events; the rainfall effects are those described under flooding. What distinguishes this hazard is that both occur together, so the town's road-clearing capacity and its flood response are called on at the same time.

Location and Extent

The hazard is town-wide. Extent is measured on the Saffir-Simpson scale, which classifies a tropical storm at 39 to 73 miles per hour of maximum sustained wind and a Category 1 hurricane at 74 miles per hour and above. New Hampshire events since 2011 have all been at tropical storm strength or post-tropical. The 2023 State plan records that the 1938 hurricane devastated Cheshire County because the county received a direct hit, and that the county is at more significant risk from hurricane rainfall than from hurricane wind.[20]

Previous Occurrences

[19] Town of Surry Floodplain Management Ordinance, dated July 19, 2004, adopted under RSA 674:16, published at https://surry.nh.gov/forms-and-applications/. The permit account is from the Surry floodplain manager questionnaire response of July 16, 2026, retained in the project record.

[20] Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, NOAA National Hurricane Center. nhc.noaa.gov

Four tropical or post-tropical systems have produced federal declarations or recorded effects in New Hampshire since 1999.[21]

Table 18. Past Tropical and Post-Tropical Events

Event	What happened
Tropical Storm Isaias, August 4, 2020	Scattered tree and branch damage in Cheshire County with localized power outages; fewer than 15 percent of the county lost power. Isolated wind damage occurred in the outer feeder bands and at closest approach. No flooding was reported in Cheshire County. Isaias was the first tropical storm to affect New Hampshire since 2011.
Hurricane Sandy, October 2012 (EM-3360-NH)	Emergency declaration; regional wind and rain impacts.
Hurricane Irene, August 2011 (EM-3333-NH)	Emergency declaration. Peak flows on the Ashuelot at Gilsum following Irene are the benchmark against which the July 2021 flood was measured.
Tropical Storm Floyd, September 1999 (DR-1305-NH)	Major disaster declaration for the state.

Probability of Future Events

The planning team rated probability as high, which with an average impact score of 3.00 produces an overall score of 18 and places this hazard second. The 2023 State plan rates the same hazard 12, using a medium probability. Three tropical systems have reached New Hampshire in the past fifteen years, which supports the local rating rather than the State's, though the town should note that none of the three produced a recorded impact in Surry of the kind the impact score anticipates. Warmer ocean temperatures are expected to make tropical storms more severe, which bears on impact rather than on frequency.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

- Overhead electric distribution along NH Routes 12 and 12A and along Gilsum Road, particularly at the Ledges, where roadside vegetation is not maintained and trees overhang the lines.
- Two roads in and out of town, so a single blocked route materially reduces access.
- The same culverts and stream crossings identified under flooding, reached by a larger rainfall volume than a typical convective storm delivers.
- Emergency response capacity: the fire department is call-based, and a simultaneous wind and flood event competes for the same crews and the same equipment.
- Residents dependent on electricity for well pumps and heating, with no municipal water supply to fall back on.

[21] NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, Storm Events Database, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/. Compiled for the planning team in the Natural Hazard Events worksheet reviewed at Meeting 2 on July 22, 2026.

What Residents Said

No respondent to the 2026 survey named tropical storms as such, but the two concerns respondents raised most often about this kind of event were high winds and loss of power, and both were among the leading natural hazard concerns reported. One respondent described going five days without power. In Surry a tropical system arrives as wind and rain on the same trees, lines and culverts that the high wind and utility outage profiles address, which is why the actions responsive to those concerns — tree and line management, Genasys enrollment, and generator capability at town facilities — serve this hazard too.

5.6 HIGH WIND EVENTS AND TORNADOES

High wind in Surry means severe thunderstorm wind, downburst and straight-line wind rather than tornadoes. The consequence is consistent across events: trees come down, they bring overhead lines with them, roads close, and power and communications are lost together.

Location and Extent

The hazard is town-wide, but its consequences concentrate along the roads where overhead distribution runs beneath mature trees. Six high wind hazard points are mapped in town. The National Weather Service classifies a thunderstorm as severe at gusts of 58 miles per hour or greater. Tornado extent is measured on the Enhanced Fujita scale. The 2023 State plan records fourteen tornadic events in Cheshire County between August 27, 1959 and July 3, 1997, of which five were F2 and the remainder F1 or less, and no tornadic activity in the county since 1997. The State nonetheless considers the risk of tornadoes in Cheshire County to be high.[22]

Previous Occurrences

On July 5, 2020 a severe thunderstorm produced 50 mile per hour winds and brought multiple trees down in the Surry area. The National Weather Service event narrative names Surry specifically. The impact record notes that responders could not make radio contact with Southwest Mutual Aid during the event.[23] Planning team members recalled staging on Gilsum Road for an extended period waiting for the utility to de-energize a downed line before the road could be cleared.

Probability of Future Events

Probability was rated high. With an average impact score of 2.33 the overall score is 14, in the medium band. The State rates the same hazard 15, which is high on its own scale, so the State places it one band higher. Severe thunderstorm wind occurs in Surry more often than once a decade, and the rating reflects frequency of occurrence rather than severity of any single event.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

The July 2020 event shows what this hazard typically does in Surry. Trees fall across NH Route 12A or Gilsum Road; the lines come down with them; the road cannot be cleared until the utility arrives; and

[22] Severe thunderstorm wind criteria and the Enhanced Fujita scale: NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory, Severe Weather 101, Damaging Winds. nssl.noaa.gov

[23] NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information Storm Events Database, event narrative for Cheshire County, July 5, 2020.

during that window the fire department loses both the road and, on that occasion, its radio link to mutual aid. Three vulnerabilities compound.

- Communications. The fire station base radio and the mutual aid link are the town's connection to outside help. A documented loss of radio contact during a wind event is a specific, addressable vulnerability rather than a general one, and it is carried into the action plan.
- Vegetation management along overhead lines, especially at the Ledges section of NH Route 12A between Alstead and Keene, where the planning team reports the roadside is not maintained.
- Single-access roads and long private driveways, where a single fallen tree isolates a household and the town has no obligation or equipment to clear private ways.

What Residents Said

High winds ranked second among natural hazard concerns in the 2026 resident survey, behind drought. Respondents identified electricity and roads as the assets they considered most vulnerable, which matches the recorded pattern of impacts.

5.7 WILDFIRE

Surry is a heavily forested town in which almost every residence sits within or adjacent to woodland. Wildfire here means brush, grass and forest fire reaching structures or requiring suppression beyond the town's own capacity, rather than the large landscape fire of the western United States. The town has had two such fires requiring suppression since the last plan was approved.

Location and Extent

Eight wildfire hazard points are mapped in Surry, distributed across the forested uplands and along the wildland-urban interface that follows nearly every road. Fire size is measured on the standard class scale: Class A is a quarter acre or less, Class B is between a quarter acre and ten acres, and Class C is ten to one hundred acres. Both recorded Surry fires were Class A or B. The 2023 State plan notes that significant debris remains in Cheshire County forests from past ice storms, which raises fuel loading across the region.[24]

Previous Occurrences

Two fires in Surry required suppression since the 2021 plan was approved. Both are recorded in the fire department's account given at Meeting 2; neither produced a disaster declaration.[25]

Table 19. Recorded Wildfires in Surry

Date	Class	What happened
Aug 19, 2022	Class A	A fire of approximately 100 by 100 feet, about 700 feet uphill behind a residence on Old Walpole Road. The fire was the result of a rekindled permitted burn. A pond on site allowed crews to establish a water supply and wet the area down thoroughly.
May 19, 2021	Class B	A fire at 916 Old Walpole Road. Mutual aid was requested from five surrounding

[24]Fire size classes and local wildfire risk: Wildfire Risk to Communities, USDA Forest Service. wildfirerisk.org

[25]Surry Fire Department account recorded at Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team Meeting 2, July 22, 2026, and compiled in the Natural Hazard Events worksheet. Federal fire management assistance declarations from https://www.fema.gov/disaster/declarations.

Date	Class	What happened
		communities to assist with suppression. No injuries or damage to structures were reported.
Apr 21–23, 2016	FM-5123-NH	The Stoddard Fire, a fire management assistance declaration in the region rather than in Surry, is the most recent federal fire declaration affecting the area.

Probability of Future Events

Probability was rated high, producing an overall score of 14. The 2023 State plan rates wildfire 2, its lowest score, and names Fitzwilliam and Harrisville rather than Surry as the county's most wildfire-vulnerable communities. This is the largest divergence in the plan, and the planning team kept it. Two fires in fifteen months, one requiring five-town mutual aid, is a rate of occurrence that supports a high probability rating for a town of this size, and the connection between drought and fire danger discussed in Section 5.9 is a local mechanism the statewide score does not capture. Warmer, drier growing seasons are expected to extend the period each year in which fuels will carry fire.

Invasive insects and plants point the same way. The planning team confirmed they are present in Surry, and they raise fuel loading by killing standing timber and by adding understory growth that carries fire from the ground into the canopy. The State plan separately records that significant debris remains in Cheshire County forests from past ice storms. In a town that is almost entirely wooded, forest health and wildfire risk are the same subject.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

- Suppression water supply. The town relies on eleven fire pond locations and two dry hydrants, at 781 Old Walpole Road and 48 Surry Dam Road. Two separate constraints apply and the plan should not conflate them. The first is volume: the planning team identified several of the Gilsum Road ponds as likely to hold insufficient water in drought — precisely the conditions in which a wildfire is most likely. The second is access, and it is the one the team emphasized at its fourth meeting. A mapped pond is not a usable water source if apparatus cannot reach it and get back out. One pond can be driven down to but not out of once the ground softens; the pond on Merriam Road holds water that cannot be approached closely; and even the town's newest installation has given trouble. Winter adds ice thick enough to need chopping before drafting can begin. Together these make suppression water the single most consequential wildfire vulnerability in town.
- Access. Residences at the end of long private driveways, several on slopes now regulated under the Steep Slopes Ordinance, may not admit an engine.
- Mutual aid dependence. A Class B fire already exceeded the town's independent capacity in 2021.
- Fuel loading from storm debris, which the State plan identifies as a continuing county-wide condition.
- Permitted burning as an ignition source. The 2022 fire was a rekindled permitted burn, which is an ignition pathway the town can influence directly through its burn permit practice.

What Residents Said

Wildfire ranked fourth among natural hazard concerns in the 2026 resident survey, above flooding. Resident concern, the planning team's rating and the event record all agree on this hazard, and they all diverge from the State assessment together.

5.8 SEVERE WINTER WEATHER

Severe winter weather covers heavy snow, ice storms, blizzards, snow squalls and the extended cold that follows them. It is the most frequently recorded hazard in Surry's event history and it produced the single documented event in this plan that left a lifeline facility inaccessible. It is rated medium risk, with an overall score of 14.

Location and Extent

The hazard is town-wide, with snowfall totals varying significantly by elevation across Surry's 500 to 1,500 foot range. Extent is measured by snowfall total, snowfall rate, ice accretion and visibility. Recorded events since 2020 range from squalls producing under an inch with quarter-mile visibility to storms delivering 12 to 24 inches at rates of 3 to 4 inches per hour, and ice accretion of a quarter to a third of an inch on power lines and tree branches.[26]

Previous Occurrences

Nineteen severe winter weather events affecting the region were recorded between March 2020 and January 2026 — more than for any other hazard in this plan. No federal disaster declaration was issued for any of them. Over the longer record, eleven of the thirty-three federal declarations designating Cheshire County since 1973 were for winter storms — snow, ice or severe winter storm — second only to flooding; the most recent was DR-4105 in February 2013 (Appendix D). The five most consequential are set out below; the full list is retained in the project record. The Surry-specific detail in the March 2023 entry comes from the planning team's own account at Meeting 2 rather than from the national record, which carries only the regional snowfall and outage totals.[27]

Table 20. Principal Severe Winter Weather Events

Date	Extent	Impacts
Jan 25–26, 2026	12 to 16 inches, with snowfall rates of 1 to 2 inches per hour.	Hazardous travel conditions and traffic accidents.
Mar 23, 2024	4 to 13 inches, with ice accretion of approximately 0.25 to 0.33 inches on power lines and tree branches.	Ice accumulation contributed to power outages, tree damage and transportation impacts.
Mar 13–15, 2023	9 inches in the valleys to more than 30 inches at higher elevations. Statewide power outages peaked around 80,000.	The most consequential winter event in the record. At the Ledges section of NH Route 12A, heavy wet snow brought down power lines and blocked traffic between Alstead and Keene for an extended period. The closure delayed plowing to parts of town. At one point the fire station was inaccessible from other parts of town. A town

[26] Snowfall, ice accretion and visibility terminology: National Weather Service Glossary. Regional storm severity is classified by the Regional Snowfall Index, NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. ncei.noaa.gov

[27] NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, Storm Events Database, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/. Compiled for the planning team in the Natural Hazard Events worksheet reviewed at Meeting 2 on July 22, 2026. Local impact detail from Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team Meeting 2, July 22, 2026. Recording and transcript retained in the project record.

Date	Extent	Impacts
		truck nearly became stuck attempting to turn around, and a 16-inch tree lying across the road was judged too dangerous for town crews to cut. The planning team described this as one of the largest impacts to the town in the last five years.
Dec 16–17, 2022	4 inches near Keene to 18 inches in the Monadnocks. Approximately 50,000 power outages statewide.	Heavy wet snow caused significant power outages.
Dec 17, 2020	12 to 24 inches with snowfall rates of 3 to 4 inches per hour.	Major travel impacts, tree damage and widespread power outages.

Probability of Future Events

Probability is rated high. The events recorded under Previous Occurrences, including significant storms in March 2023 and March 2024, place severe winter weather in the 67 to 100 percent band. The average impact score is 2.33, giving an overall risk of 14, which is medium. Human impact is scored 3 because road closures delay definitive medical care, power outages put heating at risk and winter storms increase motor vehicle collisions. Property impact is scored 3 because frozen pipes can burst in unprepared buildings. Economic impact is scored 1 because the town's plowing, tree clearance and mutual aid keep disruption short. The planning team raised these scores in its review of the draft in November 2026; the 2021 plan rated the hazard low.

The March 2023 storm sets the upper bound of what the town has actually had to absorb, and the planning team's account of it at Meeting 2 is the clearest statement of the hazard's consequence here. Trees came down in multiple areas and blocked NH Route 12, at one point the fire station was inaccessible from parts of town, and a town truck nearly became stuck attempting to turn around on an unfrozen shoulder. A tree lying across the road was judged too dangerous to cut because of the lines under tension beneath it. Even so, the town cleared the event with its own equipment and mutual aid, which is the basis on which the impact score rests.[28]

Changing conditions cut both ways and are taken up in the action plan rather than in the score. Warmer winters reduce total snowfall, but they shift a larger share of winter precipitation toward heavy wet snow and freezing rain near the freezing line, which is the form that brings down trees and overhead lines. The March 2023 and March 2024 events were both of that kind. What this plan records as the winter vulnerability is not snow itself but trees falling onto roads and lines, which is why the mitigation response sits in the tree management and line clearance actions.

A second change compounds the first. Invasive insects and plants are present in Surry, and their bearing on this hazard is indirect but real: a tree weakened by infestation is more likely to come down under heavy wet snow or ice loading than a healthy one. Targeted removal of diseased or infested stock in the road corridor is carried into the mitigation strategy as a natural systems action.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

[28] Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team Meeting 2, July 22, 2026. Recording and transcript retained in the project record.

- The Ledges section of NH Route 12A between Alstead and Keene. Roadside vegetation is not maintained, overhead lines run beneath mature trees, and the road is one of only two routes into town. Every serious winter impact in the record involves this location.
- Access to the fire station, which the March 2023 event demonstrated can be lost.
- The highway department's capacity to sustain plowing through a multi-day event when roads are simultaneously blocked by trees and lines the department is not permitted to clear.
- Households dependent on electricity for heat and for well pumps, during the season when loss of heat is most dangerous.
- Snow loading on town building roofs, including the fire station, Town Hall and highway garage.

What Residents Said

Severe weather ranked third among natural hazard concerns in the 2026 resident survey, behind drought and high winds. Residents identified electricity and roads as the assets they considered most vulnerable, and those are the assets winter storms most often put out of service. The revised medium rating brings the risk score into line with resident concern and the event record.

5.9 DROUGHT

Drought is the hazard residents of Surry named first. In a town where essentially every household draws water from a private well and the fire department draws suppression water from ponds, a dry summer affects every household directly.

Location and Extent

Drought is a town-wide and region-wide hazard. Extent is measured on the U.S. Drought Monitor scale, which runs from D0, abnormally dry, through D1 moderate, D2 severe, D3 extreme, to D4 exceptional drought. Cheshire County has reached D3 twice since the last plan was approved.[29]

Previous Occurrences

No federal disaster declarations for drought have been issued since the last plan update, but two USDA natural disaster designations have applied and the 2025 event was among the most severe on record in New Hampshire.

Table 21. Recent Drought Periods

Period	Extent in Cheshire County	Impacts
Sep–Dec 2025	September: 63 percent D2 and 37 percent D1, with nearly 83 percent of the state at D2 or worse and 33 percent at D3. Improved to D0 by the end of November, returning to D1 across 85 percent of the county by the end of December.	The driest July to September period on record, with record warmth. Widespread agricultural losses, dry wells, critically low streamflows, elevated wildfire danger and reduced hydropower generation. A USDA natural disaster declaration was issued and New Hampshire reopened its Emergency Drought Assistance Program after more than 250 dry wells were reported statewide. Limited snowpack moisture then prevented meaningful groundwater recharge, carrying drought into 2026.
Aug–Sep 2022	Deteriorated from 94 percent D1 to 54	Voluntary water restrictions, agricultural stress and declining

[29] U.S. Drought Monitor, https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/, county-level records for Cheshire County, New Hampshire.

Period	Extent in Cheshire County	Impacts
	percent D2 and 39 percent D1 during August, then largely relieved in September by 5 to 7 inches of rainfall.	streamflows. Cheshire County remained under a USDA drought disaster designation for lingering long-term impacts.
Sep–Oct 2020	D2 to D3, with D3 covering approximately 22 percent of New Hampshire at the end of September.	Record-low streamflows, widespread water restrictions affecting roughly 400,000 residents statewide, numerous dry wells and significant agricultural losses. $100,000 in property damage and $500,000 in crop damage were recorded in Cheshire County.

Local recollection at the second planning team meeting added detail that the regional record does not carry. Members recalled dug wells going dry, and at least one farm that avoided loss only because it had irrigation in place. Members also described the particular character of the 2025 into 2026 winter: a dry snowpack, no meaningful spring rain to be absorbed, and consequently no recharge, which carried the drought forward and raised fire danger into the 2026 season. No resident is recorded as having contacted the town about a failed well, and the town keeps no log of private well failures.[30]

The town has no systematic record of private well failure, which is the principal drought impact in a town on groundwater. Establishing one — even a simple log kept at the town office — is a low-cost action carried into the mitigation strategy.

Probability of Future Events

Probability was rated high, producing an overall score of 10. The 2023 State plan rates drought 4. The local rating is supported by the record: three significant droughts in six years, one of them the driest such period on the New Hampshire instrumental record. Longer and more severe droughts are expected as temperatures rise, and warmer winters that deliver less snowpack reduce the spring recharge on which shallow wells depend.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

- People and water systems. Essentially all of Surry's 354 housing units depend on private wells; the Surry Village Water Company at 448 NH Route 12A serves a small area. There is no municipal interconnection to fall back on and no alternative supply within the town.
- Fire suppression. Eleven fire pond locations and two dry hydrants constitute the town's water supply for firefighting, and fewer are usable at any given moment than that count suggests, because several cannot be reached by apparatus for much of the year. Drought reduces what remains at the moment wildfire risk is highest. This interaction between two separately scored hazards is the most important single finding in Surry's risk assessment.
- Economic assets. The town's farms, including Crescendo Acres Farm, and Woodard's Sugarhouse all depend on water and on growing-season conditions. Maple production is sensitive to the temperature cycle as well as to moisture.
- Natural resources. Low streamflow on the Ashuelot and its tributaries affects fish populations and aquatic habitat, an impact the planning team raised directly.

[30] Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team Meeting 2, July 22, 2026. Recording and transcript retained in the project record.

What Residents Said

Drought ranked first among natural hazard concerns in the 2026 resident survey. That is an unusual result for a New Hampshire town and it is a direct reflection of universal private well dependence. The plan treats it as a real concern, and the drought-related actions in the mitigation strategy come largely from survey responses.

5.10 INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Infectious disease was scored high in the 2021 plan, drafted during the COVID-19 emergency. The planning team reduced it to medium in this update, reflecting the end of the federal emergency and the experience of how the pandemic actually affected a town of this size.

Location and Extent

The hazard is town-wide and is measured by case counts, hospitalization and mortality rather than by a physical scale. Vector-borne disease is a related concern: the State plan identifies potential increased exposure to vector-borne disease as a consequence of a warming climate.[31]

Previous Occurrences

The COVID-19 pandemic was covered by two federal declarations, DR-4516-NH and EM-3445-NH, running from January 20, 2020 to May 11, 2023. Surry recorded 197 total cases through May 11, 2023.[32] No other infectious disease event has been recorded in Surry since the last plan update.

Probability of Future Events

Probability was rated medium, a 34 to 66 percent chance within ten years, producing an overall score of 7. The State rates the hazard 4. The two are broadly consistent.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

- No health care facility is located in Surry. Medical care and patient movement are delivered from Keene and, for critical patients, by air from the landing site at the Beth-el Bible Church field.
- Surry Village Charter School serves 94 pupils in kindergarten through grade eight; closure displaces families and removes a potential shelter from service.
- Town Meeting in March concentrates a substantial share of the adult population in a single building, and is the principal in-person civic event of the year.

5.11 EXTREME TEMPERATURES

Extreme temperature covers both extreme heat and extreme cold. The event record since the last plan update contains far more heat events than cold events, and the planning team observed the same trend independently. The operational concern in Surry, however, remains extreme cold combined with a power outage.

[31] Reportable Infectious Diseases in New Hampshire, NH Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services. dhhs.nh.gov

[32] New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services data portal, cumulative case counts by municipality through May 11, 2023.

Location and Extent

The hazard is town-wide, though heat is felt more acutely in the valley and cold more acutely at elevation. The National Weather Service issues a Heat Advisory when the heat index is expected to reach approximately 95°F, and an Extreme Heat Warning at approximately 105°F. Cold is measured by air temperature and by wind chill.[33]

Previous Occurrences

Eleven advisory-level heat or cold events affecting Cheshire County were recorded between July 2020 and July 2026.[34]

Table 22. Recorded Extreme Temperature Events

Date	Type and extent	Notes
Jul 14, 2026	Heat Advisory; heat index around 100°F	Warm overnight temperatures increased cumulative heat stress.
Jul 1–3, 2026	Extreme Heat Warning; heat index 105–110°F	Overnight lows in the upper 60s to low 70s prevented cooling, greatly increasing the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
Jun 11–12, 2026	Heat Advisory; heat index up to 97°F	Two consecutive afternoons.
Jun 19, 2025	Heat Advisory; heat index 95–100°F	First heat advisory of the season.
Jun 18–20, 2024	Heat Advisory; heat index 95–105°F	Multiple consecutive days with unusually warm overnight lows.
Sep 6–7, 2023	Heat Advisory; heat index 95–100°F	Unusually late-season heat wave after Labor Day.
May 18, 2023	Frost and freeze; 32°F to mid-20s, with 25°F recorded in Keene	Some orchards reported up to 90 percent flower mortality. One of the coldest freezes this late in spring in over thirty years. Planning team members recalled apple trees in parts of Surry bearing no fruit that year.
Feb 3, 2023	Extreme cold and wind chill; wind chills approaching −40°F, −38°F at Dillant-Hopkins Airport, gusts over 35 mph	Arctic outbreak producing life-threatening wind chills.
Jul 20–21, 2022	Heat Advisory; heat index 95–100°F	Dangerous conditions for outdoor workers and households without air conditioning.
Aug 12–13, 2021	Heat Advisory; heat index 95–100°F	Tropical humidity with warm overnight temperatures.
Jul 19–20, 2020	Heat Advisory; heat index in the mid-90s	Little overnight relief.

Probability of Future Events

The worksheet records a probability score of 4, a value the 1, 3 and 6 scale does not formally permit. It comes from the 2021 plan, where the planning team recorded it and where it was never questioned, and this update leaves it as recorded. Against an average impact of 1.67 it produces an overall score of 7, which the risk bands place in the medium range. The 2021 plan printed “Low” against that same figure, which was inconsistent with its own key, so the rating here rests on the score the previous team assigned rather than on any new judgment. The event record supports it: eleven advisory-level

[33] National Weather Service Heat Index, and the criteria for heat and wind chill watches and warnings. weather.gov

[34] NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, Storm Events Database, Cheshire County, New Hampshire, https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/. Compiled for the planning team in the Natural Hazard Events worksheet reviewed at Meeting 2 on July 22, 2026. National Weather Service advisory and warning criteria from https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-ww.

events in six years. Winter warming in New Hampshire has been larger than warming in any other season, and heat advisories are expected to become more frequent while extreme cold becomes less so. Should the planning team wish to revisit the probability score, a 3 would give an overall of 5 and a low rating, while a 6 would give 10 and keep the hazard medium.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

- Extreme cold with a concurrent power outage is the scenario the planning team identified as most consequential: loss of heat and frozen pipes in homes and in town buildings, with well pumps also out of service.
- Agriculture is exposed to late freezes as much as to heat. The May 2023 event destroyed most of the apple crop in the lower parts of the region.
- Older residents, people living alone and outdoor workers carry the heat risk. Surry has no designated cooling location and no air-conditioned public building identified for that purpose.

5.12 LIGHTNING

Lightning occurs in Surry every summer and has produced no recorded damage since the last plan update. It is scored as a frequent hazard with minor consequence: probability high, average impact 1.00, overall risk 6.

No lightning-related disaster declaration or recorded damage event exists for Surry since the 2021 plan. The 2023 State plan names Keene and Jaffrey as the Cheshire County communities most affected by this hazard and records no new county-specific data. Extent is conventionally described by strike density and by peak current, neither of which is measured locally.[35]

Vulnerability is concentrated in unprotected electronics and in the town's two cell towers, at 663 NH Route 12 and 34 Valley View, and the fire station base radio. A lightning-caused structure or forest fire is the pathway by which this hazard produces a serious consequence, and it is addressed under wildfire and conflagration rather than here. Surge protection at town facilities is inexpensive and is carried into the mitigation strategy as a low-cost action.

5.13 EARTHQUAKE

No earthquake of magnitude greater than 4.0 has occurred in New Hampshire since the last plan update, and no disaster declaration has followed. New Hampshire lies in a zone of moderate seismic vulnerability; the 2023 State plan records no new loss data for Cheshire County and names Keene and the Town of Sullivan as the communities most vulnerable in the county. Extent is measured by moment magnitude and by the Modified Mercalli intensity scale.[36]

Surry scores the hazard 2 overall, which is low. The impact scores and the probability of 2 are carried forward unchanged from the 2021 plan, which scored between the anchor points of its scale where a hazard sat between two defined levels. The State assessment also rates earthquake risk low. Vulnerability is concentrated in older unreinforced masonry construction, including the town's

[35] Lightning science and the measures used to describe lightning extent: NOAA National Weather Service. noaa.gov

[36] Seismic hazard and New Hampshire geology: NH Department of Environmental Services, Geology. Earthquake extent is reported by moment magnitude and by the Modified Mercalli intensity scale. des.nh.gov

historic structures, and in Surry Mountain Dam, which is designed, inspected and maintained to federal standards by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. No specific earthquake mitigation action is proposed, which is consistent with a low-risk rating.

5.14 SOLAR STORMS AND SPACE WEATHER

Solar storms are disturbances in the near-Earth space environment produced by solar flares and coronal mass ejections. They matter to a town because they can degrade the satellite navigation, high-frequency radio and electric grid systems that emergency response depends on. Surry has recorded no local damage from any space weather event.

Location and Extent

Space weather is global; there is no location within Surry that is more or less exposed. NOAA measures extent on three five-point scales: G1 to G5 for geomagnetic storms, R1 to R5 for radio blackouts, and S1 to S5 for solar radiation storms. A G5 is the most extreme geomagnetic classification.[37]

Previous Occurrences

Four space weather events of note occurred between 2022 and 2024.[38]

Table 23. Recent Space Weather Events

Date	Scale	Effects
May 10–11, 2024	G5	The first extreme geomagnetic storm since 2003. NOAA reported potential for widespread grid voltage issues, satellite operational problems and navigation degradation, with aurora visible at unusually low latitudes. No local infrastructure damage was documented in Surry.
Mar 23–24, 2023	G3	Strong geomagnetic storm; intermittent satellite navigation issues and high-frequency radio disruption possible. No direct impacts to Surry were documented.
Oct 2022	G2	Moderate geomagnetic storm; potential for minor GPS and high-frequency communication degradation.
Apr 2022	R3	Strong radio blackout associated with an X-class solar flare, capable of wide-area high-frequency radio blackout for approximately an hour on the sunlit side of Earth.

Probability of Future Events

The 2021 plan rated probability high, producing an overall score of 10 against the State's 2. Four notable events in three years does support a high frequency of occurrence. Whether it supports a high probability of occurrence with consequences in Surry is a different question, and the planning team took it up at its fourth meeting. The conclusion was that it does not: no space weather event has produced a documented impact in Surry, and a hazard that affects the whole state about equally gives a small town no reason to rate itself above the State assessment. The probability score is lowered from 6 to 1 and the overall score from 10 to 2, which places the hazard in the low band and in

[37] NOAA Space Weather Scales, NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center. swpc.noaa.gov

[38] NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center scales and event records, https://www.swpc.noaa.gov/noaa-scales-explanation, as compiled in the Natural Hazard Events worksheet reviewed at Meeting 2 on July 22, 2026.

agreement with the State. Solar activity follows an approximately eleven-year cycle and the recent events fall near solar maximum, so the next update should revisit the rating rather than assume it.

Vulnerability and Potential Impacts

The town's exposure is indirect and consists entirely of dependence on systems it does not own. High-frequency and very-high-frequency radio is the fire department's link to Southwest Mutual Aid, and a radio blackout would reproduce the communications failure recorded during the July 2020 wind event by a different mechanism. GPS supports highway department and emergency response navigation. The electric grid is regional, and a severe geomagnetic event affecting transformers would present to Surry as the long-term utility outage hazard rather than as a space weather event. The practical mitigation is the same in all three cases: redundant communications and local generation capacity.

5.15 LANDSLIDE

No landslide has been recorded in Surry, and no disaster declaration for landslide has affected the town. The 2023 State plan observes that some land formations along the Connecticut River are conducive to landslide activity and names Chesterfield and Westmoreland as the most vulnerable Cheshire County communities. Surry does not front the Connecticut River. The hazard scores 1, the lowest score in the plan.

Extent for landslide cannot be characterized using standard scientific metrics in Surry. The town holds no quantitative data on acres affected, volume displaced or measured dimensions, because activity has been limited to localized soil and slope instability at road shoulders and stream banks, and no post-event surveying or geotechnical assessment has been carried out to quantify size or severity.[39]

Nine subsidence points are mapped in Surry. These represent localized soil and slope instability, predominantly at road shoulders and stream banks, and they are addressed in this plan as erosion under Section 5.4 rather than as landslide. The distinction matters for the action plan: the mitigation is culvert and bank work, not slope stabilization.

Surry's Steep Slopes Ordinance, adopted in 2011 and revised in March 2026, establishes an overlay district on slopes of 15 percent or greater averaged over any 100-foot segment, and requiring engineered erosion, drainage and foundation analysis before building, road, driveway or septic construction is permitted on those slopes. It is a capability directed at this hazard and at the erosion component of flooding, and it is recorded in the capability assessment in Section 6.

NOTE ON ORDERING AND NUMBERING

Profiles are ordered by overall risk score, highest first, so that the reader meets the hazards in the same order the action plan addresses them. Hazards with the same score follow the order of Table 15. Section numbering runs 5.4 through 5.15 for the twelve profiled hazards.

[39] Landslide Hazards Program, U.S. Geological Survey. usgs.gov

SECTION 6 | EXISTING CAPABILITIES

6.1 HOW CAPABILITIES WERE ASSESSED

Existing capabilities are the authorities, policies, programs and resources already in place that support the town's mitigation strategy. They are distinguished from mitigation actions by a simple test the planning team used: a capability is something the town has already created and now maintains, while an action is something new the town proposes to create. The fire station, the highway department and Surry Mountain Dam are capabilities. Installing dry hydrants at new locations is an action.

The planning team reviewed the capability list at its third meeting, working from the table carried forward from the 2021 plan together with the FEMA capability inventory worksheet. Each capability is recorded under one of four types, assigned to the body responsible for it, rated for effectiveness, and accompanied by a note on how the town could expand or improve it. The team rated the town radio and town road and bridge maintenance directly at that meeting. The remaining ratings were drafted by SWRPC from what the team said across its four meetings and circulated to the planning team with the review draft on October 21, 2026, for confirmation or amendment. No changes to the ratings were requested. Thirty-eight capabilities are documented: sixteen planning and regulatory, sixteen administrative and technical, and six financial and outreach. Fifteen are rated good, eighteen average and five poor. One is new since the 2021 plan, the Natural Resources Inventory completed in 2026, and the Steep Slopes Ordinance in place since 2011 was revised in March 2026. Seven entries carried forward from 2021 are not carried as listed: four were removed, two at Meeting 3 and two by the planning team in its review of the draft; two were replaced by entries that describe what the town actually has; and one was relocated to stand as its own instrument. Those seven are set out at §6.6..

Effectiveness Ratings

The ratings are set against the definitions below, by the planning team directly where noted at §6.1 and otherwise confirmed by the team in its review of the draft. The team was asked, for each capability, whether it does what the town needs it to do — not whether it exists, and not whether it is well drafted. A rating of poor therefore records a capability the town relies on that is not currently meeting the need, which is what makes it a candidate for the mitigation strategy. Where the rating differs from the one carried in the 2021 plan, the reason is recorded at §6.6.

Table 24. Capability Effectiveness Ratings

Rating	Definition used
Good	The capability is meeting or exceeding the town's expectations of it.
Average	The capability is meeting most of the town's expectations.
Poor	The capability needs improvement.

Types of Capabilities

- Planning and regulatory — ordinances, regulations, codes and adopted plans.
- Administrative and technical — staff, boards, departments, and the skills and data they hold.

- Financial — budgets, funds and access to outside funding.
- Education and outreach — the means by which the town informs and warns residents.

A note on what the town controls. Several of the capabilities Surry relies on most are not the town's to change. The New Hampshire building code is set by the state and applies in every municipality. The Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act is state law. Surry Mountain Dam and its flood warning system are operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Fire and emergency medical dispatch runs on frequencies licensed and managed by Southwestern New Hampshire District Fire Mutual Aid. The Surry Village Charter School's emergency operations plan is enforced by the Department of Education. They are listed because they protect the town, and the column describing how each could be expanded notes where the town has no control.

6.2 PLANNING AND REGULATORY CAPABILITIES

Table 25. Planning and Regulatory Capabilities

Capability	Responsible party	Effectiveness	How the town could expand or improve it
Zoning Ordinance — adopted 1951, current revision effective March 13, 2026	Planning Board; Select Board	Poor	Four districts with minimum lot sizes of one to three acres, and septic setbacks of 100 feet from very poorly drained soils or jurisdictional wetlands and 75 feet from poorly drained soils. The ordinance carries no floodplain, steep slope, stormwater, erosion control or wellhead protection provisions; those sit in separate instruments. One definition in this ordinance has a practical consequence: because of the way it defines what counts as development requiring review, the town had no ground on which to refuse the building permit in the flood zone discussed at Meeting 3, even though the parcel sits downstream of the dam. Amending that definition would give the Planning Board the authority it lacked, and it is a change of wording rather than a change of policy.
Floodplain Management Ordinance — dated July 19, 2004, adopted under RSA 674:16	Select Board or designee	Average	Names the administering official, defines substantial damage and substantial improvement at the 50 percent threshold, requires as-built elevation data, and obliges the Select Board to obtain and reasonably utilize available 100-year flood elevation data where the maps carry none. That last provision has not been used and is the single most available improvement. The ordinance is with the Office of Planning and Development for review alongside the forthcoming maps; it currently cites a 1980 flood hazard boundary map and a 2004 preliminary map rather than the effective map of May 23, 2006. The town is working with the NH Office of Planning and Development, which currently holds the ordinance for review in conjunction with the forthcoming maps, to confirm whether the map citation requires amendment to reference the effective map.
Steep Slopes Ordinance — adopted March 8, 2011; revised March 13, 2026	Planning Board; Select Board	Good	Revised since the last plan. Establishes an overlay district on slopes of 15 percent or greater averaged over any 100-foot segment, and requires engineered erosion, drainage and foundation analysis, with culvert capacity designed to a 10-year, 24-hour storm. Additional review by the town and NHDES is triggered at four or more lots. Enforcement is by inspection with 48 hours' notice and a penalty of up to $100 per day under RSA 676:17. The design storm standard is the most modern in any town instrument and is the obvious candidate for extension to all road and culvert work.
Road Standards Ordinance — revised March 12, 2020	Highway Department; Select Board	Average	Requires a minimum 15-inch pipe, storm drainage capable of handling two inches per hour, maximum ditch velocities of 3 feet per second in earth or grass and 8 feet per second stone-lined, and 1:2 side slopes. Improvement here is a matter of harmonizing with the other two culvert standards rather than of writing anything new.
Subdivision Regulations — adopted 2002, amended 2006 and 2008	Planning Board	Average	Section VII.E requires a stormwater management and erosion control plan where critical areas including steep slopes, wetlands and floodplains are disturbed. Section VII.A.2 sets a 12-inch minimum pipe and prohibits water running across a street surface. Section X requires review of development in mapped flood zones. The planning team noted at Meeting 3 that little new road construction occurs through subdivision, which limits how much improvement here would change outcomes.
Site Plan Regulations — adopted 2002, amended 2006	Planning Board	Average	Requires a stormwater and erosion control plan where cumulative disturbance exceeds 20,000 square feet, base flood elevation data for larger proposals in flood zones, and grading that minimizes alteration of drainage toward abutting properties.

Capability	Responsible party	Effectiveness	How the town could expand or improve it
Driveway Regulations — amended January 2024	Select Board	Average	Relevant because privately owned driveway crossings were damaged in the July 2021 flood. The regulations were last amended in January 2024; their drainage provisions for driveway crossings are a candidate for review at the next update.
Earth Excavation Regulations — 2021	Planning Board	Average	Governs excavation and reclamation, which bears on slope stability and sediment.
New Hampshire State Building Code	State of New Hampshire; Select Board	Good	The state sets the code and municipalities adopt it. The town has very limited ability to expand or alter it, and the planning team identified this as the clearest example of a capability the town does not control. The state has adopted an updated edition of the International Building Code since the last plan.
Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act, RSA 483-B	NHDES; Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee; Conservation Commission	Average	State law administered by NHDES. The town's role is referral and local awareness rather than administration.
Surry Master Plan — adopted June 25, 2025	Planning Board	Good	Updated within the plan cycle, on June 25, 2025. Its land use direction is toward preserving open space and lower density, which reduces rather than increases future vulnerability. Six objectives in its implementation matrix function as mitigation: retaining the existing natural vegetation and natural resources on subdivided property; considering additional overlay districts to protect sensitive natural resources; revisiting the steep slopes ordinance to consider reducing the gradient at which it applies; studying how the characteristics and condition of the road network should shape the zoning ordinance; collaborating with relevant organizations to safeguard water quality and the riparian and aquatic habitats of the Ashuelot River valley; and a joint Conservation Commission and Planning Board review of the updated Natural Resources Inventory. Provides the vehicle for carrying mitigation objectives into land use policy.[40]
Natural Resources Inventory — completed 2026	Conservation Commission	Good	New since the last plan and added to this table during Meeting 3. Inventories the places in town that warrant protection and can be referenced by the Planning Board when reviewing applications, so that a proposal affecting a sensitive area is identified before rather than after a decision. Improvement is a matter of use rather than of content: referencing it explicitly in subdivision and site plan review.
Emergency Operations Plan — adopted 2022	Emergency Management Director	Good	The planning team's view at Meeting 3 was that the plan is sufficient provided it is kept on its update schedule and added to as needs arise, and that expansion is not required. Currency also maintains eligibility for grant funding. One amendment is proposed in the mitigation strategy: designating a shelter, which is the precondition for grant funding of a shelter generator.
Surry Village Charter School Emergency Operations Plan	School administration; NH Department of Education; NHHSEM	Good	A site-specific plan submitted to NHHSEM annually and due each October 15, reviewed by the fire department during annual inspections. It is an all-hazard plan covering evacuations, shutdowns and active threats. Drill requirements are set by statute — six fire drills and four other drills a year, one of which must address an active threat and may be discussion based. Compliance is enforced by the

[40] Town of Surry Master Plan, adopted June 25, 2025, Chapter 2, Implementation Plan matrix, pp. 9–10. surry.nh.gov

Capability	Responsible party	Effectiveness	How the town could expand or improve it
			Department of Education. The town is not the enforcing authority and its ability to improve this capability is limited to coordination.
Groundwater Protection District Ordinance — effective March 13, 2007	Planning Board; Surry Village Water Company	Good	An overlay district adopted under RSA 674:16 and 674:21, covering the wellhead protection areas and stratified-drift aquifers shown on the town's August 2006 Groundwater Protection District map. It prohibits high-risk uses in the district, including underground fuel storage, junkyards, snow dumps and bulk outdoor road salt storage, and limits storage of regulated substances. The Surry Village Water Company is the town's only community water system; NHDES also lists public water supplies at the school, Beth El Bible Church and the campground.
Select Board Handbook — in preparation	Select Board	Poor	Proposed at Meeting 3 as a specific replacement for the generic "best management practices" entry carried forward from 2021. It qualifies as a mitigation capability to the extent that it directs incoming board members to the plans they are expected to use, including this one.
This Hazard Mitigation Plan	Emergency Management Director; Select Board	Average	Adoption maintains eligibility for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance funding. Section 9 sets out how it will be monitored, evaluated and updated.

6.3 ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

Table 26. Administrative and Technical Capabilities

Capability	Responsible party	Effectiveness	How the town could expand or improve it
Emergency Management Director and Deputy Emergency Management Director	Town of Surry	Average	The town's principal emergency management capability and the party responsible for most actions in this plan. Both positions are held alongside other roles.
Surry Volunteer Fire Department	Town of Surry	Good	A call department operating from the fire station at 444 NH Route 12A, which also serves as the Emergency Operations Center and has backup power. Suppression capacity beyond a small fire depends on mutual aid; a Class B fire in May 2021 drew assistance from five surrounding communities.
Southwest New Hampshire Mutual Aid	Regional; not town-controlled	Average	Provides fire and emergency medical dispatch and mutual aid response. The town has very little control over the system. Gaps in dispatch coverage across Surry were raised at Meeting 3; the repeater identified as a need in the 2021 plan relates to these frequencies rather than to the town's own radio, which is why that action needs re-scoping rather than simple carry-forward.
Town radio system	Highway Department; Fire Department	Average	A single town-licensed frequency operating radio to radio, without a dispatch or repeater. Used by the highway department and occasionally by the fire department. Rated average at Meeting 3 on the reasoning that it is adequate for what it is and for the resources the town will put into it. The identified improvement is a tone generator added to the base station, which would let the town trip its own pagers when mutual aid dispatch is unavailable.
Town road and bridge maintenance	Highway Department	Average	Identified at Meeting 3 as a key protective capability — clearing fallen trees, repairing washouts, keeping routes open. Rated no higher than average, with the limits described as town budgeting and what town meeting will support. The 2021 plan's entry referred only to state bridge maintenance; this separate town entry was added at Meeting 3.
Ditch and drainage maintenance	Highway Department	Good	The town purchased a backhoe after the 2021 plan expressly so that its own staff could maintain roadside ditches, culverts and drainage structures without hiring the work out. The planning team's assessment at its fourth meeting was that no further equipment is needed and that the capability is in place and working. The work is continuous rather than a project with an end — the crew works through the town and begins again — which is why a candidate action on this subject was set aside and recorded here instead. This is the clearest example in the plan of a capability acquired between updates closing out a problem statement.
State bridge maintenance	NHDOT	Average	NHDOT maintains state-owned bridges in Surry. The planning team noted that the department is constrained by available revenue. The town's lever is advocacy and the State Aid Bridge program rather than direct action.
Culvert inventory and replacement program	Highway Department	Good	Surry was among the first towns in the region to obtain a complete Class V culvert inventory, in 2014, and it underpins the stream crossing assessment shown on the 2026 hazard map. The planning team established at its fourth meeting that this is a stronger capability than the written record suggested. The inventory has been kept current rather than left to age: the map held in the Select Board's office is updated as culverts are changed, and a spreadsheet is maintained alongside it.

Capability	Responsible party	Effectiveness	How the town could expand or improve it
			More substantially, the town has replaced and upsized essentially all of its metal culverts in the years since the 2013 flood, working through the deficient structures as they were identified. The team's assessment was that the network is in good condition and that no further inventory or upgrade program is needed, which is why three candidate actions were set aside. The improvement available is modest: digitizing the office map so that it survives the person who keeps it.
Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Select Board	Town of Surry	Average	The town's land use and natural resource decision-making bodies, all serving in a voluntary capacity.
Regional planning and GIS support	Southwest Region Planning Commission	Good	Provides mapping, data and planning capacity the town does not hold in house, including the hazard and community lifelines map prepared for this plan.
Surry Mountain Dam flood warning system	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Good	The Corps monitors water levels and conditions at the dam and maintains a communication and escalation plan that it activates as needed, which triggers reverse-911 notification of town officials and of the small number of downstream residents in immediate danger. The system is manned and staffed by the Corps. The town participates in periodic workshops and exercises. The improvement available to the town is participation and familiarity rather than operation. This entry supersedes the generic state and federal dam programs entry in the 2021 list, which the planning team removed at Meeting 3 as duplicative.
Fire ponds and dry hydrants	Fire Department	Poor	Eleven fire pond locations and two dry hydrants, at 781 Old Walpole Road and 48 Surry Dam Road, constitute the town's water supply for firefighting. The planning team was careful at its fourth meeting to distinguish a pond that exists from a pond the department can use. Several cannot be reached by apparatus for much of the year — one can be driven down to but not back out of once the ground softens, and the Merriam Road pond cannot be approached closely — and even the newest installation has given trouble. Volume is the other constraint: several of the Gilsum Road ponds are likely to hold insufficient water in drought, the conditions in which wildfire risk is highest. Restoring reliable service at existing locations is the cheaper half of Action 4 and the fire department treats it as the more urgent half.
Emergency backup power	Emergency Management Director	Poor	Currently limited to the fire station. The planning team identified the highway garage and Town Hall as the gaps — the garage because an immobilized town truck during a winter storm cascades into loss of emergency access across town, and Town Hall because it hosts town meeting and elections and has lost power during an election in the past. A portable generator with a breaker switch is the interim measure at the garage; automatic standby generators are the stated goal at both.
National Flood Insurance Program participation — community 330170	Select Board or designee	Good	Surry entered the regular program on October 31, 2007. Participation maintains the availability of flood insurance in the town. Described in full in Section 5.4. The Community Rating System has been considered and not pursued.
Local law enforcement	New Hampshire State Police	Average	Surry no longer maintains a police department; coverage is provided by the State Police on their own frequencies. The 2021 capability list recorded local police and should be corrected.
Floodplain administrator	Bruce Smith, Select	Average	Surry does have a named contact. Bruce Smith, a former selectman serving as the Select Board's

Capability	Responsible party	Effectiveness	How the town could expand or improve it
	Board designee		designee, serves as the town's National Flood Insurance Program contact and as its liaison with the New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development — a correction he supplied in reviewing this draft, and one that resolves what the earlier version wrongly recorded as an absent capability. What the town does not have is a formally designated floodplain administrator as a distinct role. The ordinance assigns administration to the Select Board or designee, so floodplain permit decisions sit with the Select Board alongside all their other responsibilities. The planning team identified that at Meeting 3 as a structural weakness rather than a performance one; larger municipalities assign the work to a named administrative position. The improvement available to a town of Surry's size is to confirm the designation formally and obtain the FEMA floodplain administrator training, which would strengthen the town's NFIP standing at very little cost.

6.4 FINANCIAL AND OUTREACH CAPABILITIES

Table 27. Financial and Outreach Capabilities

Capability	Responsible party	Effectiveness	How the town could expand or improve it
Town operating budget and highway budget	Select Board; Budget Committee; town meeting	Average	The highway budget is a single undifferentiated appropriation rather than a set of dedicated lines, which the planning team described as giving useful flexibility. There is no dedicated fund for emergency repair and none for hazardous tree removal. Establishing either would be a matter for town meeting, and is the standard answer to how this capability could be expanded.
Capital reserve and expendable trust funds	Select Board; town meeting	Good	The mechanism available for accumulating funds toward larger capital items such as a bridge replacement or a standby generator, ahead of the year in which they are needed.
Access to federal and state grant programs	Emergency Management Director; SWRPC	Good	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, Flood Mitigation Assistance and Safeguarding Tomorrow through NHHSEM; Emergency Management Performance Grant, which NHHSEM confirmed at Meeting 3 has funds currently available and which will fund a generator for a shelter designated in the town's Emergency Operations Plan; NHDOT State Aid Bridge and Highway Block Grant Aid; the NHDES Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund for stream crossing work. Maintaining an adopted hazard mitigation plan is itself the precondition for most of these.
Mass notification system	Emergency Management Director; NHHSEM	Poor	Genasys replaced Code Red as the town's alerting system. The town has not used it and cannot obtain figures on how many residents have opted in, which is described as a privacy restriction, so its actual reach is unknown. Sign-up is promoted on the town website. Raising the opt-in rate is the subject of a mitigation action, and NHHSEM has offered support.
Town website, annual report and town meeting	Town of Surry	Good	The town's standing channels for reaching residents. Low cost to use and already in place, which is why outreach actions in this plan score well on administrative feasibility.
Fire department outreach and burn permitting	Fire Department	Average	Burn permits are the town's direct lever on the most common wildfire ignition pathway in Surry: the August 2022 fire on Old Walpole Road began as a rekindled permitted burn.

6.5 THE TOWN'S ABILITY TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE ITS CAPABILITIES

Three constraints run through every entry in Tables 25 to 27:

- Money and town meeting. Almost every capability the town controls is limited by what the operating budget carries and what town meeting will appropriate. This is true of most small New Hampshire towns.
- Volunteer capacity. The Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the Select Board and the Fire Department all operate on volunteer time. Capabilities that require sustained administrative attention — a floodplain administration function, a well failure log, an outreach campaign — are constrained less by cost than by the time volunteers have available.
- Jurisdiction. The building code, the shoreland act, the dam, the dispatch frequencies and the school plan are all beyond the town's authority to change. Where that is the case the plan does not propose an action the town cannot take.

Against those constraints, the capability review found that the town's strongest opportunities are in using instruments it already has rather than in creating new ones. The floodplain ordinance already requires the Select Board to obtain and use available flood elevation data. The Steep Slopes Ordinance already applies a modern design storm to culvert capacity. The Natural Resources Inventory already identifies the places that warrant protection. None of those three requires a town meeting vote, a new regulation or outside funding to put to work. That observation shapes the mitigation strategy in Section 7.

6.6 CORRECTIONS TO THE 2021 CAPABILITY LIST

Seven entries carried forward from the 2021 plan are not carried as listed. Three did not match the town's current instruments or services, two were removed by decision at Meeting 3, and two were removed by the planning team in its review of the draft.

Table 28. Corrections to the 2021 Capability List

2021 entry	What review found	Resolution
"Best Management Practices"	Too generic to describe anything the town does. The planning team agreed at Meeting 3 to remove it.	Removed, and replaced by the Select Board Handbook entry at 6.2.
"State and Federal Dam Programs"	Judged duplicative of the Surry Mountain Dam flood warning system entry. Other dams in town are inspected and regulated by the state, not the town.	Removed at Meeting 3. Dam capability is carried in the single flood warning system entry.
Emergency snow removal policy	Plowing and storm clearance are routine Highway Department operations, covered under town road and bridge maintenance.	Removed by the planning team in its review of the draft.
Hazardous materials plan	The town holds no plan of its own; hazardous materials response is provided by the Keene Fire Department hazmat team under mutual aid (§4.5).	Removed by the planning team in its review of the draft.
Local police	Surry no longer maintains a police department.	Replaced by a State Police entry at 6.3.

SECTION 7 | MITIGATION STRATEGY

The mitigation strategy is where the risk assessment turns into work the town will actually do. This section records the goals the plan serves, how candidate actions were identified, how they were evaluated and prioritized, and what became of the actions in the previous plan.

7.1 GOALS

Table 29. Hazard Mitigation Goals

Goal	Confirmed for 2026
To improve upon the protection of the general population, the citizens of the Town of Surry and guests, from all natural, technological and human-caused hazards.	**Carried forward**
To reduce the potential impact of natural, technological and human-caused hazards on the Town of Surry's emergency response services, critical facilities, and infrastructure.	**Carried forward**
To reduce the potential impact of natural, technological and human-caused disasters on the Town of Surry's economy, natural resources, historic/cultural treasures, and private property.	**Carried forward**
To improve the Town of Surry's emergency preparedness and disaster response and recovery capability.	**Carried forward**
To reduce the Town of Surry's risk with respect to natural, technological and human-caused hazards through outreach and education.	**Carried forward**
To identify, introduce and implement cost-effective hazard mitigation measures so as to accomplish the Town's goals and objectives and to raise the awareness of and acceptance of Hazard Mitigation opportunities generally.	**Carried forward**
To address the challenges posed by climate change as they pertain to increasing risks in Surry's infrastructure and natural environment.	**Carried forward**
To work in conjunction and cooperation with the State of New Hampshire's Hazard Mitigation Goals and with FEMA.	**Carried forward**

These eight goals are carried forward unchanged from the 2021 plan and are consistent with it. They originate in the goals of the New Hampshire State Hazard Mitigation Plan, which the 2021 planning team reviewed, concurred with and amended to suit the town, so keeping them unchanged holds Surry in step with the State's goals as well as with its own previous plan. The planning team proposed no amendment at any of its four meetings in 2026, and the Select Board confirms the goals by adopting this plan. The risk assessment points to three themes that a future revision might take up, offered as a starting point for the next update rather than as a proposal for this one. First, keeping the town's two access routes open, since almost every serious impact in the recent history of Surry is a road blocked by water or by a fallen tree. Second, maintaining the ability to communicate and to respond when power and radio are lost. Third, sustaining the water supply the fire department depends on, in the drought conditions that make it most necessary.

A further theme emerged at the fourth meeting and explains several decisions in the action plan. Discussing whether the town should designate a shelter, a member put it that part of the purpose of the plan is building resilience within the community so that a shelter is not necessary — that the safest place for residents is their own homes, and the work is to keep them able to stay there. That reasoning is why the plan funds access, power and water supply rather than a building, and why the shelter action is an inventory rather than a designation.

7.2 HOW CANDIDATE ACTIONS WERE IDENTIFIED

Candidate actions came from five sources, and the plan lists all of them rather than only those finally selected, so that the record shows what was considered.

- Problem statements prepared by the planning team, each naming a hazard, a place and an activity affected.
- Discussion at the first and second planning team meetings, where members described specific failures they had experienced.
- The 2026 resident survey, from which nine of the candidate actions derive.
- The 2021 plan's action list, reviewed for actions still relevant and not yet complete.
- Review of the town's regulations and of the capability assessment, which identified provisions already on the books that are not being used.

7.3 CATEGORIES OF ACTION

FEMA expects a plan to consider a range of action types rather than only capital projects. The planning team worked with four categories.

Table 30. Categories of Mitigation Action

Category	What it covers
Plans and regulations	Land use ordinances, building standards, design requirements, and amendments to instruments the town already has.
Structure and infrastructure projects	Culverts, bridges, generators, equipment, and physical works.
Natural systems protection	Using natural function to reduce risk — floodplain and wetland storage, forest and vegetation management, stream and bank stabilization.
Education and awareness	Outreach that changes what residents know and do, including alerting, burn permit practice and website information.

7.4 HOW ACTIONS WERE EVALUATED

Each candidate action is scored against seven STAPLEE criteria on a scale of 1 to 3, giving a maximum of 21. A score of 3 is recorded where the consideration is clearly favorable, 2 where it is mixed or uncertain, and 1 where it is clearly unfavorable.

Scoring thirty-one actions across seven criteria in one evening is not realistic for a volunteer planning team, so the team used a different method. Draft scores were prepared in advance and circulated as a working pack, and the planning team worked through them to find the ones it disagreed with rather than generating every number from scratch. Members were asked to weigh in where their own knowledge was strongest — the Select Board chair on political feasibility, the Highway Department on what the town can actually build, the Fire Chief on response capability. Where a member had scored independently and differed, the member's score replaced the draft: this is why Actions 2 and 3 carry 14 and 13 rather than the 18 and 17 originally proposed. The scores are a guide to discussion, not a precise result.

Table 31. STAPLEE Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	The question it asks
Social	Would residents accept and support the action?
Technical	How well would it actually solve the problem?
Administrative	Does the town have the staff, expertise and funding to carry it out?
Political	Would town officials and voters support it? Is there a local champion?
Legal	Does the town have the authority? Are there easements, permits or property questions?
Economic	Is it cost effective against the alternatives?
Environmental	Would it affect the natural environment or trigger permitting?

Scoring an action is not the same as adopting it. A high score indicates that an action would be comparatively straightforward to carry out, not that it is the most important thing to do. Selection follows separately, on the basis set out below.

7.5 HOW ACTIONS WERE PRIORITIZED

Priority is assigned from two judgments — the impact the action would have on reducing risk, and the urgency with which it is needed — rather than from the STAPLEE total. The two are combined on the matrix below.

Table 32. Priority Matrix: Impact by Urgency

	Urgency: High	Urgency: Medium	Urgency: Low
Impact: High	**High priority**	**High priority**	Medium priority
Impact: Medium	**High priority**	Medium priority	Low priority
Impact: Low	Medium priority	Low priority	Low priority

Conventions Used in the Action Plan

- Timelines are stated as calendar years — 2027, 2028, 2027 to 2031 — rather than as short, medium or long term. This removes the need to define those terms and tells a reader when the town actually intends to act.
- Cost and funding appear together, as a cost band followed by the named source or sources: for example “Low cost; existing department budget” or “Moderate to high cost; FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance and town capital reserve.” A specific figure replaces the band wherever one is known. Where the town genuinely does not know, “Unknown cost” is recorded rather than a figure invented for the table.
- Hazard names match the risk assessment exactly. An action addressing more than one hazard lists them separated by semicolons, and “Multiple Hazards” is used where an action is genuinely general. This is how tropical storms and hurricanes are represented: rather than write separate tropical storm projects, the plan assigns that hazard to the culvert, bridge, tree and generator actions that in fact reduce it, because a tropical system reaches Surry as wind and as rainfall and has no distinct failure mode of its own.
- Action numbers carry through from the evaluation table. Numbers are therefore not consecutive in the final action plan, and the gaps show where an action was considered and set aside.

7.6 STATUS OF THE 2021 MITIGATION ACTIONS

The 2021 plan carried twenty-two mitigation actions. The planning team reviewed every one of them at its first meeting, assigning a status and discussing what had happened. The record below is taken from that discussion.[41]

Four statuses are used: completed, in progress, not started, and not pursued. Two further outcomes appear where the team concluded that an entry did not belong in an action plan at all — either because it describes something the town already does, which belongs in the capability assessment at Section 6, or because the action as written would not in fact address the risk it was aimed at.

Table 33. Status of the 2021 Mitigation Actions

#	Action as written in 2021	Status	What the planning team recorded
1	Emergency alert system for the town	Completed	Code Red has been replaced by Genasys, with the changeover about two years ago and training held in Keene. The town can trigger its own alerts. The system has not yet been used, and resident enrollment is unknown, so its actual reach cannot be measured. Carried forward in a different form: an outreach campaign to raise sign-up is proposed as a new action.
2	Post outreach materials on the town website, including National Flood Insurance Program information	Completed	The page exists on the town website. Flood insurance information is available to residents whether or not they are in a mapped flood zone.
3	Enforce the digital flood insurance rate maps and floodplain ordinance so that NFIP requirements are maintained	Not an action	The planning team concluded this describes an ongoing obligation rather than a project. It moves to the capability assessment at Section 6.2. New maps are expected, and the state review of the floodplain ordinance is timed to coincide with them.
4	Determine the location for an evacuation center	In progress	Clarified during the review: what is needed is a transfer or collection point for dislocated residents rather than a shelter for overnight stays, because the town has no long-term shelter. Next steps identified are engaging the American Red Cross, which is updating its shelter locations, and neighboring towns. The school is a town-owned building across the street from the fire station, but its accessibility is a constraint. Carried forward.
5	Update the Emergency Operations Plan	Completed	Adopted in 2022. Now in maintenance, and recorded as a capability at Section 6.2. One amendment is proposed under the new plan — designating a shelter, which is the precondition for grant funding of a shelter generator.
6	Install a fire danger sign to mitigate forest fire and alert the public to conditions	In progress	On the radar but constrained by time, funding and the need for someone to change it seasonally, as fire danger shifts in spring and again in late summer and early fall. A bare-bones two-post sign was estimated at around $1,000, or a couple of thousand dollars commercially. The local Scout troop, a possible route for the work, has disbanded. Forestry grants were raised as a possibility. The team was open to replacing it with a lower-cost form of public information, which is what the new plan proposes.

[41] Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team Meeting 1, July 1, 2026. Recording and transcript retained in the project record.

#	Action as written in 2021	Status	What the planning team recorded
7	Continue Firefighter I certification through the New Hampshire Fire Academy and recruit new members	Completed and ongoing	Described as a continuous effort that cannot be finished. The roster has stayed at about the same size over five years, with some retirements and resignations offset by new members. Firefighter I is the minimum standard for interior structural firefighting. Keeping it in the plan supports the department's Assistance to Firefighters Grant applications, which require a training program and which the department has won repeatedly. Carried forward for that reason.
8	Incorporate the hazard mitigation plan as an appendix to the master plan	Not completed	The two documents have not been brought together. The planning team's assessment was that this is not the most useful route to integration, because the master plan is not a regulatory document. Alternative integration mechanisms are set out at Section 9.6 and carried forward there rather than as an action.
9	Review and update local road design standards as local conditions and technology change	Completed	The Road Standards Ordinance was updated in March 2020. A successor action is proposed rather than a carry-forward: revisit the standards in light of recent events, current construction cost figures and culvert design, and consider adding a road condition assessment so the town knows which roads need attention. The team noted that these standards govern new roads built through subdivision rather than existing town roads, and that heavy construction traffic on roads built to a lower gravel standard is itself a source of failure.
10	Ensure the school emergency response plan is practiced annually and improve town and school district communication	Completed and ongoing	The school maintains a site-specific emergency operations plan, submitted to the state annually by October 15 under statute, covering all hazards rather than fire alone. Drill requirements changed from ten fire drills to six fire drills and four others. The fire department reviews the plan during annual inspections. The school is a charter entity and a tenant of the town, so it is responsible for its own plan and the town is not the enforcing authority. Recorded as a capability at Section 6.2.
11	Provide information on water conservation, drought-resistant landscaping and rain gardens	Not started	The team noted the difficulty of pitching conservation messaging in a town where every household is on a private well. Possible vehicle identified: Conservation Commission content on the town website. Reconsidered in the new plan alongside the drought actions.
12	Identify locations for water distribution	Not started	Revisited during the review to establish what it is for. The scenarios identified are flooding making private wells unusable, contamination, and catastrophic failure of the small water system serving sixteen houses. Carried forward paired with a specific vulnerability, as the new plan requires of every action.
13	Trim trees near critical facilities, town structures and roads	Completed and ongoing	Done as needed by the highway department, with no dedicated budget line. Recorded as a capability. The team identified a specific location that would make a better project than a general commitment: the ledge On Old Walpole Road beyond Pond Road going up through the Notch, where trees come down five or six times a year. A named location with a cost estimate is carried into the new plan.
14	Hold a workshop on emergency preparedness	Not pursued	The team preferred posting information on the town website to holding a workshop. On infectious disease specifically, the view was that the town would rely on the regional public health network and the state in a regional incident, and that information-sharing is the proportionate response at the town's level of risk.
15	Obtain weather radios for certain locations	Partially complete	The fire department has the means to monitor weather broadcasts and the school is understood to have a radio. Other critical facilities are not continuously staffed, which limits the value of a radio in them. Not carried forward in this form.
16	Provide National Incident Management System and	Partially complete	The fire department is required to hold it and does. The Select Board was identified as the group that should have it, as the town's budget

#	Action as written in 2021	Status	What the planning team recorded
	Incident Command System training for town officials		holders and managers in an incident. New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management offers an Incident Command System course for senior officials delivered on site, and the FEMA independent study courses are free online. NHHSEM also offers to facilitate tabletop exercises, which count toward NIMS compliance. Carried forward with a narrower scope.
17	Upsize culverts at East Surry Road, Lower Pond Road and Old Walpole Road	Partially complete	East Surry Road is a bridge rather than a culvert, and no work is needed there at this time. Lower Pond Road is complete. The culvert at the bottom of Old Walpole Road is the significant remaining one and has been inspected by the state. Separately, the town has created a capital reserve fund for bridge replacement and maintenance. The team was clear that the East Surry Road bridge is not under immediate threat and was identified as a future rather than urgent need, with replacement unlikely within five years. Carried forward, reworded as contributions to the capital reserve and engineering rather than construction.
18	Identify more locations for dry hydrants	In progress	The fire department has developed a list of desired locations and has discussed permitting support and logistics with the Conservation Commission. A dry hydrant setup has already been purchased. No installation has yet taken place. Carried forward as the planning team's stated priority action, now written with specific locations and a cost.
19	Install a generator at the school	In progress	Three parties are involved — the Town of Surry, the SAU91 school district and the charter school — and all have been made aware of the Emergency Management Performance Grant route, which requires a fifty percent match. The view expressed was that the school is a town building and a town asset, so the town should carry the project regardless of who occupies it. Federal hazard mitigation funding may offer a more favorable match and will be checked. Carried forward, with shelter designation in the Emergency Operations Plan identified as the precondition.
20	Stabilize the bank on Joslin Road down to Merriam Brook	Completed	Carried out approximately three years ago. Not carried forward.
21	Install a repeater for the fire department	Not pursued as written	The underlying need is the ability to reach Southwest New Hampshire Mutual Aid: portable radios cannot get out from parts of town and mobile radios are marginal. But the town's topography means there is no single site from which a repeater would cover it — a network of sites would be needed, and the team judged the cost against the benefit to be unfavorable. The conclusion recorded was that a repeater may not be the solution to the risk, and that newer technology may offer a better route. Carried forward re-scoped: a study to establish costs and options, and the lower-cost tone generator at the fire station base station identified at the third meeting.
22	Monitor repair shops for hazardous materials	Not pursued as written	The town is not involved in monitoring; the Department of Environmental Services carries this out, and the town's role is to call them when an incident is reported. The team reframed the underlying concern as household hazardous waste reaching groundwater, and proposed public information about the household hazardous waste facility the town already pays for, on the reasoning that people dump in their yards when they do not know a free route exists. Carried forward in that form.

Mitigation Carried Out That the 2021 Plan Did Not Anticipate

The town also carried out mitigation that was not in the previous plan. Without it, the status table would suggest a plan only partly delivered. The planning team identified the following, all achieved through grants and all reported in the town report each year.

- A specialized off-road emergency response vehicle, allowing access to remote locations and to wildland fire.
- Extrication equipment for vehicle rescue.
- Self-contained breathing apparatus and a filling station.
- An Emergency Management Performance Grant project for the Emergency Operations Center at the fire station.
- A cardiac monitor and automated external defibrillators.

The planning team put the total secured through grants over the five-year period at approximately $674,000. Several of these directly address hazards profiled in this plan: the off-road vehicle bears on wildfire response in a town where most structures adjoin woodland, and the medical equipment on the emergency medical capacity of a town with no health care facility of its own.

7.7 HOW THE ACTION PLAN WAS SELECTED

The planning team applied one test above all others: does the action address one of the five hazards the risk assessment scores highest? The five were named on the board at the start of the exercise — flooding, tropical storms, long-term utility outage, high wind and wildfire — and used as the filter throughout. Three actions came out on that basis alone — emergency potable water distribution, municipal cybersecurity, and household hazardous waste education — each of which the team agreed was worth doing but agreed was not hazard mitigation as this plan defines it.

A second test removed several candidate actions because the town has already done the work. The culvert network has been inventoried, replaced and upsized since the 2013 flood, essentially eliminating the metal culverts, and the Highway Department maintains both a map in the Select Board's office and a current spreadsheet; the inventory and upgrade actions were therefore struck and recorded as capabilities instead. Roadside ditch maintenance went the same way: the town bought a backhoe after the previous plan expressly so that its own staff could maintain ditches and culverts, and the work is perpetual rather than a project. In the planning team's words, an action plan is for things that are getting created or changed significantly, not for what the town already does.

Two pairs of actions were merged because they duplicated each other: the hazard tree and rockfall action absorbed the tree management program, and the forest fuels action absorbed the invasive forest pest response. One action was raised in priority, the shelter and regional coordination action, because the American Red Cross is re-evaluating shelter locations across the region now and the window to contribute Surry's inventory is open. Two were reframed rather than removed: the evacuation point action was narrowed to evaluating sites after the team objected to the premise that the school should become a shelter, and the zoning review was moved forward to 2027 and reassigned to the State's offered floodplain ordinance review.

One action was considered but not committed to. Emergency communications redundancy scored well and the gap it addresses is real — portable radios cannot get out from parts of town. But the

planning team concluded that closing it is not within the town's power: it belongs to the regional dispatch center, which is working on it. The town will participate in the regional effort instead of committing to a project it could not complete. It appears at Table 2 for that reason.

The team was realistic about volume. Its own estimate was that Surry would complete four or five of these actions over the five years of the plan, with the remainder forming a backlog, and it asked repeatedly for the list to be cut further rather than extended. Eighteen actions is therefore not a forecast of eighteen completions; it is a ranked queue, which is what the priority column is for.

SECTION 8 | FROM HAZARD TO ACTION

This ledger traces each of the five highest-scoring hazards through the plan: the problem it causes in Surry, the assets exposed to it, what the town already has in place, and which actions address it. It is offered as a navigation aid and as evidence that the mitigation strategy follows from the risk assessment rather than sitting alongside it.

Hazards are shown in risk order. Low-rated hazards are omitted, consistent with the planning team's decision to concentrate effort where the risk is greatest.

Table 34. From Hazard to Action

Hazard and score	Problem in Surry	Assets exposed	Existing capability	Actions that address it
Flooding and erosion — 20, High	Undersized and aging stream crossings overtop and wash out; the Ashuelot overflows NH 12A at Gilsum Road; banks and shoulders erode. The consequence is loss of access rather than inundation of buildings.	Gilsum Road and East Surry Road bridges; culverts town-wide; NH 12A; Surry Mountain Recreation Area and boat launch; agricultural land beside the streams; private wells.	Floodplain Management Ordinance; Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations; Steep Slopes Ordinance design storm; a culvert inventory kept current by the Highway Department in both map and spreadsheet form; essentially complete replacement and upsizing of metal culverts since the 2013 flood; a town-owned backhoe used for ditch and culvert maintenance; NFIP participation; Surry Mountain Dam and its flood warning system.	Road–stream crossing and bank erosion hotspot review (8); harmonizing the three culvert standards (9); East Surry Road bridge capital reserve (7); the State floodplain ordinance review (17); prioritized culvert replacement and maintenance (19); gravel and dirt road improvement (21). The planning team removed the culvert inventory and upgrade actions at Meeting 4 on the ground that the work is done and the inventory is current — see the capability assessment at Section 6.
Tropical and post-tropical cyclones — 18, Medium	Wind and rainfall arrive together, so road clearing and flood response are needed at the same moment.	Everything exposed to flooding and to high wind, simultaneously.	As for flooding and high wind. Genasys alerting. Mutual aid.	Addressed through the flooding and high wind actions, which carry this hazard as a second tag rather than through separate projects.
High wind events and tornadoes — 14, Medium	Trees come down across NH 12 and 12A, bringing overhead lines with them; roads close until the utility can de-energize; communications are lost.	Overhead distribution; the two access routes; the fire station base radio; single-access roads and long driveways.	Town radio system; Southwest NH Mutual Aid; highway department; Genasys.	Hazard tree, rockfall and roadside tree management program (10), developed jointly by the Highway Department and Select Board and supplementing utility line clearance, which covers only what threatens the utilities' own lines. Communications redundancy was evaluated and recognized as impactful but left to the regional dispatch center — see Table 2.
Wildfire — 14, Medium	Brush and forest fire reaching structures, in a town where almost every residence adjoins woodland. Suppression water depends on ponds that drought reduces.	Eleven locations where a fire pond has existed, several not reachable by apparatus for much of the year, and two dry hydrants; residences at the end of long driveways; the	Fire department and mutual aid; burn permitting; fire ponds and dry hydrants; Natural Resources Inventory.	Dry hydrant installation and restoration of existing fire pond capacity (4), the planning team's stated priority; wildfire and outdoor burning outreach (5); forest fuels and invasive forest pest outreach (25), raised to High priority at Meeting 4 because wildfire is among

Hazard and score	Problem in Surry	Assets exposed	Existing capability	Actions that address it
		forested uplands; standing timber weakened by emerald ash borer, hemlock woolly adelgid and hemlock looper.		the five highest-scoring hazards; Firefighter I certification (28); wildland access routes (26).
Long-term utility outage — 14, Medium	An outage of two weeks or more — the threshold the utilities and the State use for a declaration — in a town with two access roads, overhead distribution and no municipal water. Residents use a shorter yardstick: one survey respondent reported five days without power, and the planning team observed that most people would call anything beyond a couple of days long-term.	Households dependent on electricity for well pumps and heat; the fire station, Town Hall and highway garage; the school.	Generator at the fire station; Genasys alerting; mutual aid.	Participation in the American Red Cross regional shelter inventory (15); evaluation of transfer point sites (2); Genasys enrollment and coverage (1); incident command training and tabletop exercises (14). The planning team declined to commit to a school generator or a designated cooling and warming location in this plan period, preferring to establish what the town needs first — see Table 2.
Drought — 10, Medium	Private wells go dry and fire ponds lose capacity, in a town entirely dependent on groundwater. Residents rank this hazard first.	All 354 housing units on private wells; the Surry Village Water Company; fire ponds and dry hydrants; farms and the sugarhouse; streamflow and aquatic habitat.	Fire ponds; Surry Village Water Company; Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act; Natural Resources Inventory.	Fire pond dredging and dry hydrant installation; a simple log of private well failures kept at the town office, so that the next plan update has a record where this one has none.

The table shows two cross-hazard findings. The first is that a single physical failure — a tree or a washout closing one of two roads — is what flooding, high wind, tropical storms, severe winter weather and long-term utility outage each produce by a different route, which is why several actions carry four hazard tags. The second is that drought and wildfire are linked through the fire ponds: the town's suppression water falls away in exactly the conditions that make a fire most likely. That interaction is the clearest cascading risk in the assessment and is the reason the dry hydrant action is the planning team's stated priority.

A third finding is a disagreement. More than half of the residents who answered the 2026 survey named roads as the town's most vulnerable or most concerning asset. The planning team, reviewing the same subject at its fourth meeting, reached the opposite conclusion — that the road and culvert network is in good condition after a decade of sustained work, and that further culvert actions would not address a real problem. Both views are reflected in this plan: the team's judgment is why the culvert actions were set aside, and the residents' judgment is why road-related actions still account for five of the eighteen in the action plan. A member of the team offered the most likely reconciliation, which is that what residents experience as a road problem is often dust, grading and ride quality rather than

failure under flood. The next update should test that, because if it is right the town is answering a maintenance complaint with a mitigation plan, and if it is wrong the plan is missing something the public can see.

SECTION 9 | PLAN MAINTENANCE, INTEGRATION AND ADOPTION

This section sets out who keeps the plan current over the five years after approval, and when. The worksheets in Appendix G support each step.

9.1 MONITORING THE PLAN

The Emergency Management Director is responsible for monitoring this plan and initiates a review of it annually. Over the five-year cycle this produces four reviews. Appendix G proposes dates for each and provides the worksheets used to record them.

Each annual review is timed to the town's budget calendar, so that any mitigation action needing an appropriation can be brought to the Budget Committee and to town meeting in the same cycle. A review that concludes after the warrant has closed delays any funded action by a year.

For each action in the plan, the review records:

- the action and the party responsible for it;
- its status — completed, deleted, deferred, in progress, or newly added;
- a brief narrative covering progress made, obstacles encountered, any change to the action and why, funding sources sought or secured and amounts, and the next step.

The Emergency Management Director convenes the planning team, or such members of it as remain available, to carry out the review, and may invite others whose work bears on a particular action. Southwest Region Planning Commission is available to assist and to supply data.

9.2 EVALUATING THE PLAN

Monitoring asks whether the actions are being done. Evaluation asks whether the plan is still the right plan. At each annual review the planning team considers each goal against a rating scale and records a short rationale for the rating given, so that a judgment made in one year is legible to whoever reads it in the next.

Table 35. Plan Evaluation Ratings

Rating	Meaning
Outstanding	The goal has been advanced further and faster than the plan anticipated.
Exceeds expectations	Progress is ahead of what the plan anticipated.
Meets expectations	Progress is in line with the plan.
Needs improvement	Progress has fallen behind and a change of approach or resourcing is required.
Unacceptable	No meaningful progress has been made and the goal requires reconsideration.

The evaluation also asks four questions that bear on whether the plan still describes the town accurately: whether any hazard event has occurred that the risk assessment did not anticipate; whether development has occurred in a hazard area; whether any capability has been gained or lost; and whether any assumption about funding has changed. A yes to any of them is a reason to amend the plan rather than to wait for the next full update.

9.3 UPDATING THE PLAN

A local hazard mitigation plan expires five years after FEMA approval, and a lapsed plan suspends the town's eligibility for most FEMA mitigation funding. The Emergency Management Director is therefore responsible for beginning the update process approximately two years before expiration, and specifically for securing the funding to carry it out. In practice that means approaching New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management about a planning grant, and Southwest Region Planning Commission about staff capacity, in the third year of the cycle rather than the fifth. The update readiness checklist at Appendix G sets out the steps and proposed dates.

The annual reviews feed the update directly. A plan whose action statuses, goal ratings and new events have been recorded each year needs a revision rather than a rewrite, which is both cheaper and more accurate than reconstructing five years from memory.

9.4 ORGANIZING THE PLANNING TEAM FOR THE NEXT UPDATE

The 2026 update was prepared by a planning team convened by the Emergency Management Director with Southwest Region Planning Commission, meeting four times between July and September 2026. Membership was recorded on sign-in sheets, and a summary of each meeting was produced and circulated. The composition of the team and the record of its work are set out in Appendix A, Documentation of the Planning Process.

During the update the New Hampshire Municipal Association advised SWRPC that a group of this kind is close enough to an advisory committee that it should follow the rules that govern such bodies under state law. The Right-to-Know Law defines a public body to include any committee, subcommittee or subordinate body of a town, *or advisory committee thereto*, and defines an advisory committee as one whose primary purpose is to consider an issue designated by the appointing authority so as to provide that authority with advice or recommendations. That is a fair description of what a hazard mitigation planning team does: it considers hazards and mitigation on the town's behalf and recommends a plan to the Select Board for adoption. A body within the definition meets in public, gives advance notice of its meetings, and keeps minutes available for public inspection.[42]

Much of this already describes how the 2026 process ran. What changes for the next cycle is the formality with which the group is created and its meetings are noticed, rather than the way the work is done.

What the Town Intends to Do Differently

These are recorded as the town's intent, to be confirmed with the New Hampshire Municipal Association or town counsel before the next update begins. The plan records the direction rather than offering a legal opinion.

[42] RSA 91-A:1-a, https://gc.nh.gov/rsa/html/VI/91-A/91-A-1-a.htm, and RSA 91-A:2. See also the New Hampshire Department of Justice memorandum on the Right-to-Know Law, https://mm.nh.gov/files/uploads/doj/remote-docs/right-to-know.pdf. Advice to the town from the New Hampshire Municipal Association, 2026.

Table 36. Steps to Establish a Standing Hazard Mitigation Committee

Step	What it involves
Formal creation and appointment	The Select Board establishes the committee by vote at a public meeting, appoints its members by name, and records its charge. This fixes membership, gives the group standing to act on the town's behalf, and removes any question about who was entitled to participate in the decisions the plan records.
A name that reflects its status	The group may wish to adopt a name identifying it as a standing committee of the town rather than a project team — for example a hazard mitigation advisory committee — so that it is clearly and consistently identified in notices, minutes and appointments.
Notice of meetings	Notice of the time and place of each meeting posted in two appropriate places, or printed in a newspaper of general circulation, at least 24 hours in advance, excluding Sundays and legal holidays. Where the town maintains a website, the Department of Justice guidance is that it should be used as one of the two places.
Minutes	Minutes recorded promptly and open to public inspection within five business days, recording the names of members, persons appearing before the committee, a brief description of the subject matter and any final decisions, the start and end times, and who produced them.
Hybrid and remote participation	The 2026 meetings were held at the fire station with state liaisons joining by video. Where a committee member rather than a guest participates remotely, additional conditions apply: remote attendance is permitted only where attendance in person is not reasonably practical, with the reason recorded in the minutes; a quorum must be physically present at the noticed location except in an emergency; every part of the meeting must be audible to the public at that location and to all members; and votes are taken by roll call.
One question for counsel	The planning team includes people who are not town officials — regional planning commission staff and state emergency management liaisons. The Department of Justice memorandum does not address committees with outside participants, so it is worth asking whether they are appointed members of the committee or invited participants, since the remote participation rules and any quorum requirement turn on that distinction.
A public hearing during the comment period	The town may choose to hold a public hearing on the draft plan rather than relying on written comment alone. FEMA does not require a hearing, but one would both fit the committee's status and strengthen the record of public involvement that FEMA does require.

None of this affects the validity of the 2026 update. The planning process met FEMA's requirements for public and stakeholder involvement, and the record of it is documented and retained. The change applies going forward, and the natural moment to act on it is when the Emergency Management Director begins organizing the next update roughly two years before this plan expires. Recording it here is how the town makes sure the point is not lost between now and then.

9.5 CONTINUED PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The town will keep a copy of the adopted plan available for public inspection at Town Hall and posted on the town website, together with a note of how to comment on it. Comments received are held for consideration at the next annual review.

The annual review is conducted at a meeting open to the public and noticed in the same way as other town meetings. Where a mitigation action requires an appropriation, town meeting itself provides a further point of public consideration. The planning team will also use the town website and annual report to inform residents about mitigation work as it proceeds, which doubles as the outreach the plan identifies as a mitigation action in its own right.

9.6 INTEGRATION WITH OTHER PLANNING MECHANISMS

Integration works in both directions: this plan draws on the town's other instruments, and its findings are carried back into them.

Table 37. Integration With Other Planning Mechanisms

Mechanism	How this plan connects to it
Surry Master Plan, adopted June 25, 2025	The Master Plan's land use direction toward preserving open space and lower density reduces future vulnerability, and this plan cites it as a change in development under Section 3. The Master Plan's implementation matrix is the natural vehicle for carrying mitigation objectives into land use policy at its next revision.
Zoning Ordinance and land use regulations	The risk assessment identifies where regulation would reduce risk: the definition that prevented the town from declining a floodplain building permit, and the three inconsistent culvert standards. Both are carried as mitigation actions addressed to the Planning Board.
Floodplain Management Ordinance	This plan records the ordinance's existing but unused base flood elevation provision, and carries its implementation as an action. Amendments identified by the Office of Planning and Development review will be brought forward when the new maps are issued.
Natural Resources Inventory, 2026	Identifies the places in town warranting protection. Referencing it in subdivision and site plan review connects natural resource protection to flood storage and erosion control, which is where the two subjects genuinely overlap.
Emergency Operations Plan, 2022	The operational counterpart to this plan. This plan proposes one amendment to it — designating a shelter — which is also the precondition for grant funding of a shelter generator.
Capital planning and the annual budget	The annual monitoring review is timed to the budget calendar precisely so that mitigation actions reach the Budget Committee and town meeting as funding requests rather than as good intentions.
Southwest Region Planning Commission regional work	Regional transportation, hazard mapping and GIS work provide data the town could not generate itself, and the town's hazard information feeds regional and state planning in return.

9.7 ADOPTION

FEMA accepts two routes to approval, and the planning team chose between them deliberately at its fourth meeting. A town may submit a draft, obtain approval-pending-adoption, and then adopt; or it may adopt first and submit the adopted plan for review. Surry adopts first. The reasoning the team accepted is that adoption is the step within the town's own control, and tying it to a federal review of uncertain duration places the town's timetable in someone else's hands. Adopting first secures the local decision while it has momentum, and any comments FEMA returns are taken up as amendments or carried to the next update.

The plan is therefore adopted by the Surry Select Board by resolution, at a regular meeting following the close of the public review period. Board agendas are set on the Thursday before each meeting, so the item is placed before that deadline. The signed resolution is included as an appendix to the final plan, and the adopted plan is then provided to New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management for transmission to FEMA Region 1. FEMA's stated target is 45 days from submission to decision.

Adoption makes the plan locally effective. FEMA approval is a separate thing and is what makes the town eligible to apply for Hazard Mitigation Assistance funding; eligibility runs for five years from that approval.

Review and Adoption Schedule for the 2026 Update

The planning team settled this sequence at its fourth meeting on September 23, 2026. The same sequence can serve as the model for the next update.

Table 38. Review and Adoption Schedule for the 2026 Update

Step	What happens
Team review	The complete draft goes to every member of the planning team for two weeks. The team was offered the alternative of delegating review to one or two members and declined it, preferring that everyone see the whole document. Comments go to SWRPC directly or through the Emergency Management Director. Printed copies are left at the Town Hall for members who prefer to mark up paper. No further planning team meeting is scheduled unless the team asks for one.
Public review	The revised draft is posted on the town website with a posted notice, and an email notification is sent to the same list of stakeholders and abutting communities contacted at the start of the process. The review period is four weeks.
Resolution of comments	Where no substantive comments are received, the plan proceeds unchanged. Where they are, SWRPC works with the Emergency Management Director and the planning team to settle them before the plan goes forward.
Adoption	The Select Board adopts the plan by resolution at its first available meeting after the review period closes.
Submission and approval	The adopted plan is submitted through NHHSEM to FEMA Region 1. On the schedule above, with the public review closing on November 30, 2026, adoption at the Select Board's next available meeting points to an approval decision early in 2027.

APPENDICES

The appendices are kept short. FEMA's guidance states that where a narrative description of the planning process is provided, supporting documentation such as meeting minutes and sign-in sheets does not need to be included in the plan itself. Surry's supporting record is gathered here anyway, so that a reader reviewing this plan can reach everything behind it in one place. Appendices A, C, D and G follow this list in full. Appendix B is a separate large-format sheet. Appendices E and F cannot exist until the plan is adopted and submitted, and each is represented by a placeholder.

Table 39. Appendices to This Plan

Appendix	Title	Content and location
A	Documentation of the Planning Process	Follows this list. The planning team roster and each member's participation by meeting, the meeting record with an edited summary of all four meetings, the crosswalk to the twelve tasks of the State scope of work, the stakeholder list organized by FEMA category with the responses received, and the public participation record. Supporting documents — signed sign-in sheets, recordings and transcripts, completed worksheets and correspondence — are retained in the project folder and available on request.
B	Past and Potential Hazards and Community Lifelines Map	A separate large-format sheet, 48 by 36 inches, too large to bind with this plan. Mapped assets by community lifeline with addresses and feature identifiers, hazard locations, dam inventory, preliminary flood hazard zones, stream crossing hydraulic vulnerability, bridge condition, the 2014 Class V culvert inventory, wellhead and water supply intake protection areas, and conservation land.
C	Mitigation Action Evaluation Worksheet	Follows this list. The full STAPLEE evaluation of all thirty-one candidate actions, including the thirteen set aside, with its STAPLEE total score and the outcome of each.
D	Federal Disaster Declarations Affecting Cheshire County	Follows this list. The thirty-three federal declarations on record that designate Cheshire County, 1973 to 2023, from the FEMA disaster declarations dataset. Two kinds appear, and the difference matters in practice. A major disaster declaration, numbered DR, follows an event and opens federal assistance for repair and rebuilding, and it is the declaration that makes hazard mitigation grant funding available — the grant funding this plan update is itself a product of DR-4799. An emergency declaration, numbered EM, is issued to meet an immediate need, usually before or during an event, and covers emergency protective measures and direct federal assistance rather than long-term repair; it does not generally open mitigation funding. A third kind, numbered FM, covers fire management assistance for a single wildfire. Those since the 2021 plan are also discussed in the hazard profiles at Section 5.
E	Certificate of Adoption	Follows this list as a placeholder. The signed resolution of the Surry Select Board adopting this plan is inserted after the Board acts, before the plan goes to NHHSEM and FEMA Region 1. See Section 9.7.
F	Local Mitigation Plan Review Tool	Follows this list as a placeholder. FEMA's review form, completed to identify where each plan element is satisfied, is prepared once the plan is otherwise final and submitted with it.
G	Plan Maintenance Worksheets	Follows Appendix F. A proposed maintenance calendar for 2027 to 2032 and the worksheets used at each annual review: action progress, goal ratings, the four accuracy questions, an update

Appendix	Title	Content and location
		readiness checklist, and a hazard event record.

SOURCES

Sources are cited in footnotes at the point of use throughout the plan rather than gathered in a bibliography, so that a reader checking a particular figure finds its source on the same page. The principal sources are the FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide and Handbook; the New Hampshire State Hazard Mitigation Plan 2023 Update; the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information Storm Events Database; the U.S. Geological Survey gauge on the Ashuelot River at Gilsum; the U.S. Drought Monitor; the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services dam inventory; FEMA Region 1 National Flood Insurance Program records; New Hampshire Employment Security economic and labor market information; and the Town of Surry's own ordinances, regulations, plans and meeting record.

APPENDIX A. DOCUMENTATION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

This appendix records how the Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026 was developed, who took part, and how the public and stakeholders were given the opportunity to participate. It satisfies FEMA Elements A1, A2 and A3, and the documentation requirements of Tasks 2, 3 and 11 of the State scope of work.

FEMA Element A1-a provides that where a narrative description of the planning process is given in the plan, supporting documentation such as meeting minutes and sign-in sheets need not be included in the plan itself. Section 2 of this plan carries that narrative. This appendix carries the supporting record, so that the plan and its evidence travel together. Signed sign-in sheets, the meeting recordings and transcripts, the completed worksheets and the correspondence are retained in the project folder maintained by Southwest Region Planning Commission and are available to the planning team, NHHSEM and FEMA on request.

A.1 PLANNING TEAM

The Surry Hazard Mitigation Planning Team was convened by the Emergency Management Director in June 2026. Members represent a cross-section of the community, including town officials, department heads, board chairs and residents, together with the State liaisons and the regional planning commission.

Table A1. Planning Team Membership

Name	Title	Affiliation	Role
Jason Contrady	Emergency Management Director; Deputy Fire Chief; Deputy Treasurer	Town of Surry	Chair
Bruce Smith	Deputy Emergency Management Director; Budget Committee; Surveyor of Timber; Cemetery Trustee	Town of Surry	Emergency management
Josh Brooks	Fire Chief	Town of Surry	Fire service
John Berglund	Treasurer; Forest Fire Warden; Zoning Board of Adjustment; former Planning Board member; former Fire Chief	Town of Surry	Forestry; finance
Jay Croteau	Select Board Chair; Zoning Board of Adjustment Chair	Town of Surry	Town executive
John Davis	Conservation Commission Chair; Health Officer; School Board member	Town of Surry; Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee	Conservation; public health
Wayne Hartz	Town Moderator	Town of Surry	Resident
Durwin Clark	Highway Department; Sexton	Town of Surry	Public works
Elizabeth Curless	Stakeholder Liaison, Hillsborough and Cheshire Counties	NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management	State liaison
Scott Lambertson	Stakeholder Liaison, Hillsborough and Cheshire Counties	NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management	State liaison
Henry Underwood	Senior Planner	Southwest Region Planning Commission	Planner and facilitator

A.2 PARTICIPATION BY MEETING

Table A2 records attendance at each planning team meeting. A dash indicates that the member did not attend that meeting. Hours of participation are kept on the meeting sign-in sheets for the grant's in-kind match and are summarized below the table. Southwest Region Planning Commission staff time is billed to the grant and is not counted as match.

Table A2. Participation by Meeting

Member	M1 (Jul 1)	M2 (Jul 22)	M3 (Sep 2)	M4 (Sep 23)	Meetings attended
Bruce Smith	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 of 4
John Berglund	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 of 4
Jason Contrady	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 of 4
Jay Croteau	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 of 4
John Davis	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 of 4
Wayne Hartz	Yes	—	Yes	Yes	3 of 4
Josh Brooks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4 of 4
Elizabeth Curless	Yes	—	Yes	—	2 of 4
Scott Lambertson	Yes	—	Yes	—	2 of 4
Durwin Clark	Yes	—	—	—	1 of 4
Members attending	10	6	9	7	32

The grant requires a town match of $3,062.39. Participation across the four planning team meetings totals 103.55 hours. Of these, the 8.00 hours contributed by Elizabeth Curless and Scott Lambertson do not count toward the local match, leaving 95.55 eligible hours from the eight town members. Valued at the federal volunteer rate of $35.96 an hour, that is $3,435.98 of in-kind contribution, which satisfies the required match with $373.59 to spare. The match is therefore met without counting participation in the public review period or the second community public meeting.

A.3 MEETING RECORD

Four planning team meetings were held. All were held at 7:00 p.m. at the Surry Fire Station with a virtual option, and all were noticed in advance to encourage public attendance. Edited summaries of each follow the table.

Table A3. Planning Team Meetings

Meeting	Date	Principal business
1	July 1, 2026	Introductions and mission statement; overview of the plan update process and the grant scope of work; review of the 2021 plan and the status of its mitigation actions; initial discussion of hazards of concern; outreach materials and tactics.
2	July 22, 2026	Review of the Meeting 1 summary; outreach materials and survey finalized; past hazard events reviewed; asset inventory activity against the 2021 critical facilities list; risk assessment scores reviewed; problem statements drafted.
3	September 2, 2026	Outreach summary and survey results; changes in development since the last plan; capability assessment reviewed and rated; identification and initial evaluation of mitigation actions; introduction of the STAPLEE criteria.
4	September 23, 2026	STAPLEE evaluation and scoring of all thirty-one candidate actions; selection of the

Meeting	Date	Principal business
		actions carried into the five-year plan; prioritization, responsible parties, timelines, costs and funding sources; corrections to the draft risk assessment and community profile; review and adoption schedule agreed.

A.3.1 Meeting 1 — July 1, 2026

Present: Bruce Smith, Durwin Clark, Jason Contrady, Jay Croteau, John Berglund, John Davis, Josh Brooks, Wayne Hartz, Elizabeth Curless and Scott Lambertson (NHHSEM), and Henry Underwood (SWRPC).

Introductions and hazards of concern. Members introduced themselves around the hazards that concern them: radio coverage and interoperability; overdevelopment and water resources; isolation of emergency resources and year-round water supply; remote fire access; town-wide emergency communication, and the difference between the hill and the village; and shelter and facility limitations. These concerns shaped the hazard profiles and the candidate actions that followed.

Project overview. The purpose of the update was set out: identify hazards, vulnerabilities and mitigation actions for the next five years, and maintain the town's eligibility for FEMA and NHHSEM mitigation funding before and after a disaster. Approximately four planning team meetings were planned, with at least one separate community public meeting to present the draft and receive input. The planning team would supply local knowledge, priorities, outreach input and the selection of actions; SWRPC would draft, map, facilitate and handle grant and requirement compliance. The overview and schedule were accepted as the working framework.

Mission statement. The draft statement was discussed and the team agreed to refine it to reference Surry explicitly and to reference both short-term and long-term risk reduction, having clarified that the plan runs for five years while mitigation addresses risk over decades. The geographic scope is the Town of Surry, with coordination with neighbors through outreach and mutual aid.

Review of the 2021 action plan. The team reviewed the previous implementation schedule line by line and recorded a status for each action. Completed items included the move from Code Red to Genasys, the NFIP information page on the town website, the Joslin Road bank stabilization at Merriam Brook, and the ongoing enforcement of the floodplain ordinance, which was reclassified as an existing protection. Ongoing maintenance items included Firefighter I training and recruitment, tree trimming and hazard tree removal, and periodic review of the road standards updated in 2020. Items carried forward in revised form included evacuation and transfer point coordination, dry hydrant and fire pond expansion, the East Surry Road bridge capital reserve, and culvert and road design standards. Several actions were identified for reframing or replacement: the fire danger sign, the infectious disease workshop, weather radios, town-wide NIMS and ICS training, the radio repeater, and the monitoring of repair shops for hazardous materials. The team also identified mitigation carried out that the 2021 plan had not anticipated — approximately $674,000 in emergency response equipment grants over five years, and conservation and natural resource protection activity that also reduces flood and erosion risk.

Outreach. Draft outreach components were presented: a stakeholder notification email, a public hazard and project survey in both online and printable form, a website and newsletter article, a flyer, a social media post, a public meeting script, and a mapping activity for residents. The team agreed to the strategy subject to minor wording and contact updates, agreed that the survey would run on

Microsoft Forms with paper copies available, and agreed to distribute through the town newsletter, the town website and Facebook, and members' own contacts. Paper surveys and flyers would be placed at the Town Hall, the Town Clerk and Tax Collector's office and the library.

Next steps. Members were asked to review the outreach materials and return comments and additional contacts by mid-July. Follow-up items were agreed on NIMS and ICS training for local officials, on a possible generator project at the school, and on Genasys enrollment and coverage.

A.3.2 Meeting 2 — July 22, 2026

Present: Bruce Smith, Jason Contrady, Jay Croteau, John Berglund, John Davis, Josh Brooks, and Henry Underwood (SWRPC).

Meeting 1 summary. The draft summary was reviewed and accepted informally, with any further corrections to be sent to the facilitator. It was noted that parts of the summary came from automatic transcription and had been corrected, and that the summaries are meeting summaries rather than formal minutes. The revised mission statement was adopted for use going forward.

Outreach materials finalized. The survey, stakeholder email, website and newsletter text and the Select Board script were finalized with minor wordsmithing. The survey would open that week and run to approximately September 15. The Select Board presentation was set for Monday, August 10. The stakeholder contact list was walked through against FEMA's required outreach categories and contacts were confirmed or added for each.

Past hazard events. The team reviewed the hazard events recorded for Surry and the region since the 2021 plan and added local detail the databases do not hold — most importantly the March 2023 storm, when heavy wet snow brought down lines at the Ledges section of NH Route 12A, blocked traffic between Alstead and Keene, delayed plowing, and left the fire station inaccessible from parts of town for a period. Local recollection also added detail to the drought record.

Asset inventory. The 2021 critical facilities list was reviewed asset by asset and rebuilt using FEMA's community lifeline categories. Locations, addresses and hazard exposure were confirmed or corrected for mapping. Gaps in the 2021 list were identified, including the fire station base radio.

Risk assessment and problem statements. The risk scores carried forward from 2021 were reviewed hazard by hazard, and problem statements were drafted identifying, for each hazard, the specific problem in Surry, the assets exposed and the consequence. These became the basis of the vulnerability analysis in Section 5 and the hazard-to-action ledger in Section 8.

A.3.3 Meeting 3 — September 2, 2026

Present: Bruce Smith, Jason Contrady, Jay Croteau, John Berglund, John Davis, Josh Brooks, Wayne Hartz, Elizabeth Curless and Scott Lambertson (NHHSEM), and Henry Underwood (SWRPC).

Outreach results. The Select Board presentation, the organizational email outreach and the survey were reported. The survey received thirty-one responses. Leading natural hazard concerns were drought, high winds, severe weather and wildfire; leading technological concerns were long-term utility outages, hazardous material spills and cyber events. Respondents raised the Surry Dam, Jocelyn Road flooding, erosion, private wells and a historical oil spill. The team discussed invasive

plants and insects, including the hemlock woolly adelgid, as contributors to wildfire and winter storm risk.

Changes in development. The team considered a building permit issued south of Surry Mountain Dam, including its downstream and flood zone exposure, and discussed state building codes, land use policy, wetland preservation and population change, and whether recent development has increased or decreased vulnerability.

Capability assessment. Plans, regulations, administrative and technical resources, financial resources and outreach capabilities were reviewed and rated. The Surry Mountain Dam flood warning system was described: Army Corps monitoring, escalation procedures, reverse 911 and notification of officials and downstream residents. Emergency power was confirmed as limited to the fire station, with the Town Hall and highway garage identified as candidates for portable or standby generators. The emergency operations plan was confirmed as adopted in 2022. Discussion also covered road design standards, town road and bridge maintenance, the National Flood Insurance Program, the Natural Resources Inventory completed in 2026, radio coverage and the Genasys alert system. Funding, staffing, maintenance, legal authority, environmental permitting and state or federal control were identified as the constraints on expanding capability.

Mitigation priorities. The team agreed to begin with the higher-risk hazards — flooding, drought, wildfire, high winds, tropical storms and utility outages. Candidate projects discussed included Genasys outreach, school or municipal generators, wildfire and burning outreach, and one to three dry hydrant or fire pond locations. The STAPLEE criteria were introduced and the team agreed to complete the evaluation and prioritization at the final meeting, with a draft plan to be circulated beforehand.

NHHSEM noted the availability of Emergency Management Performance Grant funding and reminded the team of the Surry Village Charter School emergency operations plan deadline of October 15.

A.3.4 Meeting 4 — September 23, 2026

Present: Bruce Smith, Jason Contrady, Jay Croteau, John Berglund, John Davis, and Henry Underwood (SWRPC) in person; Josh Brooks and Wayne Hartz remotely.

Method. The facilitator brought the thirty-one candidate actions already scored against the STAPLEE criteria, and asked the team to react to the scores rather than generate them in the room. The team accepted that method. Two distinctions were established and are carried into Section 7 of this plan: the STAPLEE score measures general feasibility, or chance of success, and is not the priority; priority is decided separately as impact multiplied by urgency, and only for actions the town is actually willing to work on in the next five years. The high-risk hazards were written up as the filter for what entered the plan.

Volume. The team was explicit about how much the town can carry. Its own estimate was that Surry would complete four or five actions over the five years of the plan and that the remainder would form a backlog, so the list had to be selective. Eighteen actions were selected and thirteen set aside.

Actions set aside. Thirteen candidate actions came off the plan, each with the reason recorded and each retained in the Mitigation Action Evaluation Worksheet at Appendix C so that a future team can see what was considered. The reasons fall into three groups. Some are already done or already

maintained: the town has replaced and upsized essentially all of its metal culverts, keeps a culvert inventory and map that the Select Board's office updates as work is done, and bought a backhoe since the 2021 plan specifically to maintain ditches and culverts, so the culvert upgrade, culvert inventory and roadside drainage actions were moved to the capability assessment rather than carried as projects. Some are facility commitments the town is not prepared to make in this plan period: the school generator and the charter school project were deferred pending a needs assessment, and the proposal to designate a cooling and warming location was superseded by participating in the American Red Cross regional shelter inventory. And some do not belong in a hazard mitigation plan or address a low-risk hazard: municipal cybersecurity, household hazardous waste education, emergency potable water distribution, and the Rodgers Pond dam assessment. Emergency communications redundancy was kept visible in the ledger without being committed to, because the gap is real but sits with the dispatch center and the mutual aid system rather than with the town.

Actions merged, elevated or reframed. The hazard tree and rockfall action was merged with the tree management program and carried forward at high priority, on the reasoning that a documented annual program limits the town's liability as well as its risk, and that it is supplemental to utility line clearance, which addresses only what threatens the lines. Forest fuels and invasive forest pests were merged and raised to high, as an education and outreach commitment rather than a funded fuels program. Participation in the Red Cross regional shelter inventory was raised from medium to high. The evacuation and transfer point action was reframed and its scope reduced to evaluating potential sites and inventorying their capabilities, after the team pushed back on anything that reads as establishing a shelter. The East Surry Road bridge action was confirmed as continuing to build the capital reserve, the bridge being a town bridge and the last of the three in town not yet upgraded. The zoning review for flood-prone areas was reframed around the floodplain ordinance review offered by the State, with the NH Office of Planning and Development added as a responsible party and the timeline moved forward to 2027. The dry hydrant action was confirmed at high priority with the qualification that making the existing hydrants work is as much of the task as adding new ones.

Risk assessment. The team worked through the comparison of Surry's ratings with the 2023 State assessment and settled four divergences. Solar storms were lowered to agree with the State, the previous rating having been carried forward without examination for a hazard that would affect the whole state equally. The local ratings for known and emerging contaminants, severe winter weather and wildfire were kept, with the reasoning recorded in each profile. The definition of a long-term utility outage was settled: utilities and the State use a two-week threshold for a declaration, while residents would call anything beyond a couple of days long-term, and both figures are now given.

Corrections to the draft. The Select Board confirmed the parcel and status of the flood zone building permit, the updated building code adoption, the 2025 population estimate and the date of the preliminary flood hazard products. Two substantive corrections were made: the Surry Village Water Company is entirely gravity-fed and has no electrical dependency, so its listing as vulnerable to power failure was removed; and the eleven fire pond locations are locations where a pond has existed rather than locations reliably available to apparatus, access being seasonal. The team also noted that the Rodgers Pond dam problem was a leak since repaired rather than an overtopping, and that the town is a part owner.

Review and adoption. The team decided that the full draft should go to the whole planning team rather than to delegated reviewers, with two weeks for comment; that no further planning team meeting is needed unless the team asks for one; that the draft would then be posted on the town website with a posted notice and circulated to the stakeholder list for public review; and that the Select Board would adopt the plan before submission to FEMA rather than seeking approval pending adoption. Three or four hard copies were requested for the Town Hall.

A.4 SCOPE OF WORK CROSSWALK

The planning team followed the twelve tasks set out in Exhibit B of the grant agreement between the Town of Surry and New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for Major Disaster Declaration 4799.

Table A4. Scope of Work Crosswalk

Task	Scope of work requirement	How it was carried out	Where it appears
1	Grant award and contracting: official notification of award, contractor selection provided to NHHSEM, contract executed	The Select Board accepted the HMGP award of $9,187.17 with a $3,062.39 town match on January 12, 2026 and executed the agreement with NHHSEM	§1.1; grant file
2	Select and hire a vendor; vendor documents how the plan update was prepared, who was involved, and how the public was involved	The town engaged Southwest Region Planning Commission under a technical assistance agreement	§2.2; this appendix
3	Convene a local Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee with a cross-section of the community; develop a mission statement, assign roles, develop a timeline, hold a minimum of two community public meetings	Planning team convened by the Emergency Management Director. Mission statement, roles and timeline agreed at Meetings 1 and 2. Stakeholders invited by direct email on July 30, 2026 and through the SWRPC regional distribution. First community public meeting held at the Select Board on August 10, 2026; the second is held during the public review period	§2.2, §2.3, §2.4, §2.5; §§A.1–A.6
4	Revisit the hazard profiles: update hazard mapping, assess risks by location, extent, probability and severity, conduct a vulnerability analysis, update the description and prioritization of hazards	Hazard profiles rebuilt from the NOAA Storm Events Database, the NH State Hazard Mitigation Plan 2023 Update and local knowledge. Hazard locations mapped in GIS and published as the Past and Potential Hazards map. Risk scores reviewed at Meeting 2 and revised at Meeting 4	§5; Appendix B
5	Facility inventory: critical facilities, economic drivers, repetitive loss structures, land use maps, anticipated future land use, and how each intersects with known hazards	Asset inventory rebuilt from the 2021 critical facilities list, reviewed at Meeting 2, and mapped using FEMA community lifeline categories. NFIP repetitive loss status confirmed with FEMA Region 1	§3.3, §3.4, §4; Appendix B
6	Vulnerability: problem statements, existing protection measures including NFIP measures, method of enforcement and point of contact, historical performance and improvements needed, land	Problem statements drafted for each hazard identifying affected assets and consequences, reviewed by the planning team between Meetings 2 and 3. Capability assessment completed and rated at Meeting 3	§3.5, §3.6, §5, §6, §8

Task	Scope of work requirement	How it was carried out	Where it appears
	use and development trends		
7	Mitigation goals: create, edit or delete goals; obtain public input; analyze existing capabilities; review progress on previous actions; describe changes in priorities; describe NFIP participation	Goals reviewed against the NH State Hazard Mitigation Plan 2023 Update and the eight goals of the 2021 town plan, and carried forward unchanged. Public input obtained through the resident survey. Capability assessment completed at Meeting 3	§2.7, §3.6, §6, §7.1, §7.2
8	Actions: identify and analyze a comprehensive range of specific mitigation actions and projects, emphasizing new and existing buildings and infrastructure; analyze feasibility; coordinate with federal, state and local agencies	Thirty-one candidate actions were developed from the problem statements, the 2021 plan actions and survey responses. All thirty-one were evaluated against the STAPLEE criteria and scored at Meeting 4, where eighteen were selected for the action plan and thirteen set aside with the reason recorded	§1.2, §7.3, §7.4, §8; Appendix C
9	Plan review, evaluation and implementation: assess current development patterns and pressures, evaluate new hazard or risk information, describe changes in development in hazard-prone areas, report the status of previous actions	Changes in development identified at Meeting 3, verified against town records and confirmed by the Select Board at Meeting 4. Status of the 2021 actions compiled with the Emergency Management Director	§2.7, §3.4, §3.5, §7.6
10	Maintenance: monitor, evaluate and update the plan; assist with implementation and incorporation into other local planning processes; include an implementation schedule and a five-year revision procedure	Monitoring, evaluation and update procedure established with responsible party and schedule, and agreed at Meeting 4	§9
11	Public review of draft: continued public involvement including public review of the draft plan	In progress. The draft is posted on the town website with a posted notice and circulated to the stakeholder list, and the second community public meeting is held during the review period	§2.5; §A.6
12	Review and approval: submit to NHHSEM and FEMA, revise, obtain approval, adopt, submit the adopted plan, receive formal approval, close out the grant	Pending. The planning team decided at Meeting 4 to adopt the plan locally before submission	§9

A.5 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

FEMA Element A2-a requires the plan to document that five specified categories of stakeholder were given the opportunity to be involved in the planning process. The organizations below were invited by direct email on July 30, 2026, and again at the opening of the public review period, and through the Southwest Region Planning Commission regional distribution.

A.5.1 Local and Regional Agencies Involved in Hazard Mitigation Activities

Table A5. Local and Regional Agencies Involved in Hazard Mitigation Activities

Organization	Contact	Role
NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management	Austin Brown	State Hazard Mitigation Officer
NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management	Scott Lambertson; Elizabeth Curless	Stakeholder liaisons; attended planning team meetings
NH Office of Planning and Development	Stephanie Frechette	Principal Planner; provided NFIP community data and the Community Assistance Contact record
NH Office of Planning and Development, Floodplain Management Program	Sarah Thunberg	Principal Planner
NH Geological Survey	Shane Csiki	State Geologist and Director
NHDES Dam Bureau	Bill Thomas	Dam safety
NHDES Watershed Management Bureau	David Neils	Bureau Administrator
NHDES Rivers and Lakes Programs	Tracie Sales	Program Administrator
NHDOT Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance	Bill Watson	Administrator
NHDOT District 4	Frank Linnenbringer	District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	John Asseng	Upper Connecticut River Basin Operations Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District	Christie Baker; Sheila Warren	Surry Mountain Dam operations
NH Fish and Game	Lt. Bill Boudreau	Conservation law enforcement
USDA Farm Service, Walpole Field Office	Mike Greene	Director; agricultural damage data
Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee	Barbara Skuly	River corridor management; provided written comment
Southwest Region Planning Commission	Todd Horner	Executive Director

A.5.2 Agencies with Authority to Regulate Development

Table A6. Agencies with Authority to Regulate Development

Body	Contact	Role
Surry Planning Board	Eva Morel	Chair
Surry Zoning Board of Adjustment	Jay Croteau	Chair
Surry Conservation Commission	John Davis	Chair
Surry Building Inspector	Stevens Goldsmith	Building Inspector and Select Board member

A.5.3 Neighboring Communities

Table A7. Neighboring Communities

Community	Contact	Role
City of Keene	Elizabeth Ferland; Richard Wood	City Manager; Emergency Management Director
Town of Gilsum	Brian Bazarnicki; Dee Denehy	Select Board; Emergency Management Director and Fire Chief

Community	Contact	Role
Town of Walpole	Sarah Downing; Mark Houghton	Town Administrator; Emergency Management Director and Fire Chief
Town of Westmoreland	Jodi Scanlon	Administrative Assistant; Emergency Management Director
Town of Alstead	Misty Gratacos; Steven Reynolds	Town Administrator; Emergency Management Director

A.5.4 Businesses, Academia and Private Organizations

Table A8. Businesses, Academia and Private Organizations

Organization	Contact	Role
Eversource	Joseph Hoebeke; Courtney Jordan	Community Relations and Economic Development, Western New Hampshire; Emergency Preparedness
SAU 91 Surry School District	Timothy Pelloquin; Kim Caron	School Board Chair; Senior Education Official
Surry Village Charter School	Nicole Lackie Stafford	Principal and Head of School
Keene State College	Office of the President	Regional institution
Greater Monadnock Collaborative Chamber	Julie Schoelzel	President and CEO
Monadnock Economic Development Corporation	Cody Morrison	Executive Director
Dartmouth College	Christa Daniels; Erich Osterberg	Climate and resilience research
Antioch University New England	Abigail Abrash Walton	Chair, Environmental Studies

A.5.5 Nonprofit and Community-Based Organizations

Table A9. Nonprofit and Community-Based Organizations

Organization	Contact	Role
Greater Monadnock Public Health Network	Tricia Zahn	Senior Director, Center for Population Health, Cheshire Medical Center
Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services	Karen Gomes	Interim President and CEO
Monadnock Family Services	Kathy Baird	Chief Executive Officer
Monadnock Area Peer Support	Melissa Callender	Executive Director
Monadnock United Way	Liz LaRose	President
Southwestern Community Services	Beth Daniels	Chief Executive Officer
Able NH	Board of Directors	Disability advocacy
Surry Reed Free Library	Kelly Reeves	Library Director
Monadnock Conservancy	Amanda Littleton; Alex Metzger	Executive Director; Stewardship Director
Cheshire County Conservation District	Benee Hershon	Executive Director; suggested the USDA Walpole office as a source of crop damage data
NH Association of Conservation	Barbara Richter	Executive Director

Organization	Contact	Role
Commissions		
Connecticut River Conservancy	Lauren Zielinski; Charles Soucy	Stream Restoration Specialist; Stormwater Project Manager
The Nature Conservancy	Charles DeCurtis	Land conservation

A.5.6 Responses Received

Two substantive responses were received from stakeholders. The Cheshire County Conservation District suggested the USDA Walpole Field Office as a source of crop damage data, which was obtained and is reflected in the drought profile. Barbara Skuly replied by email on August 20, 2026 on behalf of the Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee, which had discussed the update at its meeting that week. The committee found nothing it believed was missing from the material it reviewed. Its main interest is culvert restoration, because much of Surry's flooding potential lies in the small streams rather than the Ashuelot mainstem, and it noted that the hazard map already draws on the state culvert database. She added that John Davis, the committee's member on the planning team, had raised the precarious position of the Avery parcel high on an eroded bank, and that he would bring any further issues to the committee while the plan was being updated. Any further responses received during the public review period are recorded at §A.6.

A.6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

FEMA Element A3-a requires documentation of how the public had an opportunity to be involved during the drafting stage and prior to plan approval, and how feedback was incorporated. The grant scope of work requires a minimum of two community public meetings.

A.6.1 During the Drafting Stage

Table A10. Public Participation During Drafting

Method	Date	Description and result
Resident survey	July to September 2026	A written and online survey asked residents which natural, technological and human-caused hazards concerned them most, which assets they considered most vulnerable, and which mitigation strategies they would support. Thirty-one responses were received. Results are summarized at §2.6 and cited in the hazard profiles under "What Residents Said."
Project flyer	July 2026	Printed and distributed at the Town Hall, the Town Clerk and Tax Collector's office and the Reed Free Library to publicize the survey and the plan update.
Town email newsletter	August 2026	Item announcing the plan update and the survey, sent to the town newsletter list.
Town website	July to September 2026	Project page carrying the survey and the meeting notices.
SWRPC website	July 2026 to the present	Planning team meeting dates were posted on the Southwest Region Planning Commission calendar, and the plan update was carried in the commission's newsletter and its Happenings electronic newsletter. The draft plan is posted on the commission's website for the public review period.
SWRPC regional distribution	July 30, 2026	Email announcement to the thirty-four municipalities in the region together with county offices, businesses and academic contacts.
Community public	August 10, 2026	Select Board meeting at which the plan update was presented, satisfying the first

Method	Date	Description and result
meeting		of the two community public meetings required by Task 3 of the scope of work.
Mapping activity	July 2026	Residents and planning team members were invited to identify hazard locations on a town map. Results are reflected in the Past and Potential Hazards layer at Appendix B.

A.6.2 Prior to Plan Approval

The complete draft plan is available for public review from November 10 through November 30, 2026, at the Town Hall, the Surry Reed Free Library, and on the town and Southwest Region Planning Commission websites, with an online comment form, a posted notice and flyer, and an email to the stakeholder list. The Select Board will accept comments on the draft at its meeting on November 30, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at Surry Town Hall, which serves as the second community public meeting required by the scope of work. When the review period closes this section will record the notice given, the comments received and how each was addressed, and the date of adoption.

APPENDIX B. PAST AND POTENTIAL HAZARDS AND COMMUNITY LIFELINES MAP

The Past and Potential Hazards and Community Lifelines Map is a separate large-format sheet, 48 by 36 inches, prepared by Southwest Region Planning Commission for this update. It is too large to bind with the plan and is provided as a loose sheet with each printed copy and as a separate PDF with the electronic copy submitted to NHHSEM and FEMA.

The map shows the following layers, each referenced from the section of the plan that relies on it:

Table B1. Map Layers and Where They Are Used

Map layer	Where it is used in this plan
Mapped assets by community lifeline, with addresses and feature identifiers	Section 4, Tables 9 and 10
Past and potential hazard locations identified by the planning team and residents	Section 5 hazard profiles; §A.6.1
Dam inventory	§4.5; §5.4
Preliminary flood hazard zones	§2.7; §3.6; §5.4
Stream crossing hydraulic vulnerability and the 2014 Class V culvert inventory	§5.4; Section 7
Bridge condition	§5.4; Table 1
Wellhead and water supply intake protection areas	§5.8; Section 6
Conservation land	§5.7; Section 6

A reduced-scale copy is not bound here because at letter size the asset labels and feature identifiers are not legible.

APPENDIX C. MITIGATION ACTION EVALUATION WORKSHEET

At its fourth meeting on September 23, 2026 the planning team evaluated thirty-one candidate actions against the STAPLEE criteria described at §7.4 — Social, Technical, Administrative, Political, Legal, Economic and Environmental — each scored 1 to 3 for a maximum of 21. Actions that passed were prioritized using the impact-by-urgency matrix at §7.5 and appear in Table 1. The thirteen set aside appear in Table 2 with the full reason; they are retained here so that a future planning team can see what was considered and why it was not carried.

Table C1. STAPLEE Evaluation of All Candidate Actions

#	Candidate action	Hazards addressed	STAPLEE total (of 21)	Priority	Outcome
1	Genasys public alert enrollment and coverage initiative	Multiple Hazards	20	6 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
2	Evaluate potential evacuation and transfer point sites	Multiple Hazards	14	6 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
3	Emergency generator at the school	—	13	—	Set aside (Table 2). The planning team decided against investing in a specific facility within this plan period, preferring to establish what the town actually needs first.
4	Install priority dry hydrants and restore fire pond capacity	Wildfire; Drought; Conflagration	16	9 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
5	Wildfire risk and outdoor burning outreach program	Wildfire	20	6 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
6	Priority culvert and small structure upgrade program	—	16	—	Set aside (Table 2). The work has substantially been done.
7	East Surry Road bridge capital reserve	Flooding and erosion; Tropical and post-tropical cyclones	18	6 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
8	Road–stream crossing and bank erosion hotspot review	Flooding and erosion; Tropical and post-tropical cyclones	18	4 Medium	In the action plan (Table 1)
9	Targeted review of road and culvert design standards against recent rainfall intensities and maintenance experience, including the conflicting minimum culvert diameters in the Road Standards Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations	Flooding and erosion	18	4 Medium	In the action plan (Table 1)
10	Hazard tree, rockfall and roadside tree management program	High wind events and tornadoes; Tropical and post-tropical cyclones; Severe winter weather	16	9 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
11	Emergency potable water distribution planning	—	19	—	Set aside (Table 2). Addresses drought and contamination, neither

#	Candidate action	Hazards addressed	STAPLEE total (of 21)	Priority	Outcome
					of which is among the five highest-scoring hazards, so it falls outside the filter the team applied.
12	Household and small business hazardous waste education	—	20	—	Set aside (Table 2). Known and emerging contaminants is rated Low risk.
13	Conservation and land use integration	Flooding and erosion; Drought	17	4 Medium	In the action plan (Table 1)
14	Incident command orientation and tabletop exercise program for the Select Board and key officials, delivered on site by NHHSEM	Multiple Hazards	21	6 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
15	Participate in the American Red Cross regional shelter inventory	Multiple Hazards	18	6 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
16	Review current zoning and enforcement practices, identify gaps, and enforce consistently in hazard-prone areas	Flooding and erosion; Wildfire; Severe winter weather	17	2 Low	In the action plan (Table 1)
17	Review zoning provisions for flood-prone areas and amend where appropriate, in conjunction with the new flood maps. The State has offered Surry a floodplain ordinance review, and that review is the mechanism: a comparison of what the town has against what it is expected to have, with amendments following from it.	Flooding and erosion	18	4 Medium	In the action plan (Table 1)
18	Culvert inventory and condition assessment	—	20	—	Set aside (Table 2). The inventory already exists and is maintained.
19	Prioritized culvert replacement and maintenance program	Flooding and erosion	17	4 Medium	In the action plan (Table 1)
20	Roadside ditch and drainage maintenance program	—	19	—	Set aside (Table 2). An existing capability rather than a new project.
21	Identify vulnerable gravel and dirt road segments and improve grading, crowning, drainage, ditching and aggregate	Flooding and erosion	17	4 Medium	In the action plan (Table 1)
22	Rodgers Pond dam and downstream assessment	—	18	—	Set aside (Table 2). The concern that prompted this action proved to be historical.
23	Tree management program for roads and utility corridors	—	16	—	Set aside (Table 2). Merged into Action 10, which it substantially duplicated.
24	Municipal cybersecurity and continuity program	—	19	—	Set aside (Table 2). Cyber attack is rated Low risk and is not a natural hazard.
25	Forest fuels and invasive forest pest	Wildfire; High wind	15	6 High	In the action plan (Table 1)

#	Candidate action	Hazards addressed	STAPLEE total (of 21)	Priority	Outcome
	outreach	events and tornadoes			
26	Identify and improve access routes into wildland areas for fire response, working with conservation landowners	Wildfire	11	2 Low	In the action plan (Table 1)
27	Invasive forest pest response	—	15	—	Set aside (Table 2). Merged into Action 25.
28	Continue Firefighter I certification through the New Hampshire Fire Academy and recruit new members	Wildfire; Multiple Hazards	20	6 High	In the action plan (Table 1)
29	Emergency communications redundancy and coverage assessment	—	19	—	Set aside (Table 2). Retained in this record deliberately.
30	Designate a cooling and warming location	—	17	—	Set aside (Table 2). Superseded by Action 15.
31	Charter School resilience upgrade — scoping study	—	15	—	Set aside (Table 2). The same facility as Action 3, and removed with it.

Actions are listed by candidate number. Hazards addressed are shown for actions carried into the plan; for actions set aside, see Table 2. Scores shown are STAPLEE totals only; the seven criterion scores behind each total are held in the Meeting 4 evaluation record. The totals for Actions 2 and 3 are those the planning team adopted at Meeting 4 (14 and 13), which are lower than the totals first drafted (18 and 17).

APPENDIX D. FEDERAL DISASTER DECLARATIONS AFFECTING CHESHIRE COUNTY

Thirty-three federal declarations on record designate Cheshire County, the earliest in July 1973 and the most recent in September 2023. They are listed newest first. Nineteen are major disaster declarations (DR), thirteen are emergency declarations (EM), and one is a fire management assistance declaration (FM).

A county designation means the county was included in the declaration. It does not mean that Surry itself sustained damage, and in several cases the plan's own record shows that it did not. The declarations since the 2021 plan are discussed with their local effects in the hazard profiles at Section 5.

By FEMA's incident type, severe storms account for 10 of the thirty-three, floods for 8, snowstorms for 7 and hurricanes for 4; the rest are one or two each. The type labels understate flooding, though: 14 of the thirty-three name flooding in the title, which is the clearest outside evidence that flooding is Surry's highest-rated hazard. Winter storms — declarations for snow, ice or severe winter storm — account for 11, the second-largest group after flooding, although none has been declared since 2013.

Table D1. Federal Declarations Designating Cheshire County, 1973–2023

Declaration	Declared	Incident type	Title	Incident dates
DR-4740	2023-09-14	Flood	Severe storms and flooding	2023-07-09 to 2023-07-17
DR-4624	2021-10-04	Flood	Severe storm and flooding	2021-07-29 to 2021-08-02
DR-4622	2021-09-30	Severe storm	Severe storm and flooding	2021-07-17 to 2021-07-19
DR-4516	2020-04-03	Biological	COVID-19 pandemic	2020-01-20 to 2023-05-11
EM-3445	2020-03-13	Biological	COVID-19	2020-01-20 to 2023-05-11
FM-5123	2016-04-21	Fire	Stoddard Fire	2016-04-21 to 2016-04-23
DR-4139	2013-08-02	Severe storm	Severe storms, tornadoes and flooding	2013-06-26 to 2013-07-03
DR-4105	2013-03-19	Severe storm	Severe winter storm and snowstorm	2013-02-08 to 2013-02-10
EM-3360	2012-10-30	Hurricane	Hurricane Sandy	2012-10-26 to 2012-10-31
DR-4065	2012-06-15	Severe storm	Severe storm and flooding	2012-05-29 to 2012-05-31
EM-3344	2011-11-01	Severe storm	Severe storm	2011-10-29 to 2011-10-30
EM-3333	2011-08-27	Hurricane	Hurricane Irene	2011-08-26 to 2011-09-06
DR-1812	2009-01-02	Severe ice storm	Severe winter storm	2008-12-11 to 2008-12-23
EM-3297	2008-12-13	Severe storm	Severe winter storm	2008-12-11 to 2008-12-23

Declaration	Declared	Incident type	Title	Incident dates
DR-1695	2007-04-27	Severe storm	Severe storms and flooding	2007-04-15 to 2007-04-23
DR-1610	2005-10-26	Severe storm	Severe storms and flooding	2005-10-07 to 2005-10-18
EM-3258	2005-09-19	Hurricane	Hurricane Katrina evacuation	2005-08-29 to 2005-10-01
EM-3211	2005-04-28	Snowstorm	Record snow	2005-03-11 to 2005-03-12
EM-3208	2005-03-30	Snowstorm	Record snow	2005-02-10 to 2005-02-11
EM-3207	2005-03-30	Snowstorm	Record and/or near record snow	2005-01-22 to 2005-01-23
EM-3193	2004-01-15	Snowstorm	Snow	2003-12-06 to 2003-12-07
DR-1489	2003-09-12	Severe storm	Severe storms and flooding	2003-07-21 to 2003-08-18
EM-3177	2003-03-11	Snowstorm	Snow	2003-02-17 to 2003-02-18
EM-3166	2001-03-28	Snowstorm	Snow	2001-03-05 to 2001-03-07
DR-1305	1999-10-18	Hurricane	Tropical Storm Floyd	1999-09-16 to 1999-09-18
DR-1199	1998-01-15	Severe storm	Severe ice storm, rains and high winds	1998-01-07 to 1998-01-25
DR-1077	1996-01-03	Flood	Excessive rainfall, high winds and flooding	1995-10-20 to 1995-11-15
EM-3101	1993-03-16	Snowstorm	Blizzards, high winds and record snowfall	1993-03-13 to 1993-03-17
DR-876	1990-08-29	Flood	Severe storms and flooding	1990-08-07 to 1990-08-11
DR-789	1987-04-16	Flood	Severe storms and flooding	1987-03-30 to 1987-04-11
DR-771	1986-08-27	Flood	Severe storms, flooding	1986-07-29 to 1986-08-10
DR-411	1974-01-21	Flood	Heavy rains and flooding	1974-01-21
DR-399	1973-07-11	Flood	Severe storms and flooding	1973-07-11

Source: FEMA Disaster Declarations Summaries dataset, OpenFEMA, retrieved October 19, 2026, filtered to records designating Cheshire County, New Hampshire. DR-4799, the 2024 declaration under which this plan update is funded, made Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding available statewide but does not appear in the dataset as designating Cheshire County. State emergency declarations that did not lead to a federal declaration are not recorded in the FEMA dataset and are not listed here.

APPENDIX E. CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

To be replaced by the signed resolution. The Select Board adopts the plan after the public comment period closes and before the plan is submitted through NHHSEM to FEMA Region 1, as described at Section 9.7. The wording follows the sample adoption resolution in FEMA's Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide, as used for the Fitzwilliam Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026. Because the resolution provides that revisions needed to meet approval requirements do not require re-adoption, the plan can be adopted before FEMA review.

Town of Surry, New Hampshire

A Resolution of the Town of Surry Adopting the Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026

WHEREAS the Select Board recognizes the threat that natural hazards pose to people and property within the Town of Surry; and

WHEREAS the Town of Surry has prepared a multi-hazard mitigation plan, hereby known as the Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026, in accordance with federal laws, including the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended; the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended; and the National Dam Safety Program Act, as amended; and

WHEREAS the Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026 identifies mitigation goals and actions to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property in Surry from the impacts of future hazards and disasters; and

WHEREAS adoption by the Select Board demonstrates its commitment to hazard mitigation and achieving the goals outlined in the Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN OF SURRY, NEW HAMPSHIRE, THAT:

Section 1. The Select Board adopts the Surry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026.

While content related to the Town of Surry may require revisions to meet the plan approval requirements, changes occurring after adoption will not require the Select Board to re-adopt any further iterations of the plan. Subsequent plan updates following the approval period for this plan will require separate adoption resolutions.

ADOPTED by a vote of _____ in favor and _____ against, and _____ abstaining, this _____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST: By: _____ (print name)

_____	Surry Select Board, Chair
_____	Select Board
_____	Select Board

APPENDIX F. LOCAL MITIGATION PLAN REVIEW TOOL

Placeholder. FEMA's Local Mitigation Plan Review Tool is inserted here once the plan is otherwise final and is submitted with it.

The Review Tool records, for each required plan element, where in this plan the requirement is met. Planning-process elements (A1 to A4) are met in Section 2 and Appendix A; risk assessment elements (B1 to B2) in Sections 4 and 5; mitigation strategy elements (C1 to C5) in Sections 1, 6 and 7; plan maintenance in Section 9; plan update elements (E1 to E2) in §2.7, §3.5 and §7.6; and adoption (element F) in §9.7 and Appendix E. The completed tool will give page references to the final paginated plan.

APPENDIX G. PLAN MAINTENANCE WORKSHEETS

These worksheets put Section 9 into practice. The Emergency Management Director, or whoever convenes the annual review, completes them each year and files the completed copies with this plan. Kept up to date, they become the record of the five-year cycle that the next update starts from. The hazard event record (Table G6) is completed whenever an event occurs, not only at the annual review.

The dates in Table G1 are proposed. They assume FEMA approval in late January 2027, which would make the plan expire in late January 2032, and they place each annual review in September, ahead of the town's budget preparation for the following March town meeting. Adjust them to the actual approval date once it is known.

G.1 PROPOSED MAINTENANCE CALENDAR

Table G1. Proposed Maintenance Calendar, 2027–2032

When	Step	Who	Worksheet
February 2027	Record the FEMA approval and expiration dates. Post the adopted plan at Town Hall and on the town website with a note on how to comment (§9.5).	Emergency Management Director	—
September 2027	First annual review: record action progress and evaluate the plan against its goals (§9.1, §9.2). Notice the meeting as a public meeting.	Emergency Management Director; planning team	G2, G3
October 2027	Bring any action that needs an appropriation to the Select Board and Budget Committee for the 2028 budget and the March 2028 town meeting warrant.	Emergency Management Director; Select Board	G2
September 2028	Second annual review, and budget requests for the March 2029 warrant.	Emergency Management Director; planning team	G2, G3
September 2029	Third annual review. Approach NHHSEM about a planning grant for the next update and SWRPC about staff capacity (§9.3).	Emergency Management Director	G2, G3, G4
January 2030	Begin the update, two years before expiration. Ask the Select Board to establish the planning committee by vote (§9.4).	Emergency Management Director; Select Board	G4
September 2030	Fourth annual review. Confirm the grant award and the planner for the update.	Emergency Management Director; planning team	G2, G3, G4
January–August 2031	Planning team meetings and draft of the 2031 update.	Planning committee; planner	G4
September–November 2031	Public review, Select Board adoption, and submission through NHHSEM to FEMA Region 1, allowing for FEMA's 45-day review.	Emergency Management Director; Select Board	G4
January 2032	This plan expires five years after FEMA approval.	—	—

G.2 WORKSHEET: ANNUAL ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Complete one copy at each annual review. For each action record its status — completed, in progress, not started, deferred or deleted — and a short note on progress, obstacles, any change to

the action and why, funding sought or secured with amounts, and the next step. Add any new action at the foot of the table.

Review year: _____ Date of meeting: _____ Completed by: _____

Attending:

_____

Table G2. Annual Action Progress Report

#	Action	Responsible party	Planned	Status	Progress, funding and next step
1	Genasys public alert enrollment and coverage initiative	Emergency Management Director	2027 and recurring		
2	Evaluate potential evacuation and transfer point sites	Emergency Management Director; Fire Chief	2027		
4	Install priority dry hydrants and restore fire pond capacity	Fire Department; Conservation Commission	2027–2029		
5	Wildfire risk and outdoor burning outreach program	Fire Department; Fire Warden	2027 and recurring		
7	East Surry Road bridge capital reserve	Highway Department; Budget Committee; Select Board	2027–2031		
8	Road–stream crossing and bank erosion hotspot review	Highway Department; Conservation Commission	2028		
9	Review road and culvert design standards	Highway Department; Planning Board	2028		
10	Hazard tree, rockfall and roadside tree management program	Highway Department; Select Board	2027–2029		
13	Conservation and land use integration	Planning Board; Conservation Commission	2028–2031		
14	Incident command orientation and tabletop exercises	Emergency Management Director; Select Board; Highway and Fire Departments	2027–2028		
15	American Red Cross regional shelter inventory	Emergency Management Director	2027		
16	Review zoning and enforcement practices in hazard-prone areas	Select Board; Planning Board	2029		
17	Review zoning provisions for flood-prone areas with the new flood maps	Planning Board; Select Board; NHOPD	2027		
19	Prioritized culvert replacement and maintenance program	Highway Department	2028–2031		
21	Improve vulnerable gravel and	Highway Department	2028–		

#	Action	Responsible party	Planned	Status	Progress, funding and next step
	dirt road segments		2031		
25	Forest fuels and invasive forest pest outreach	Fire Department; Fire Warden; Conservation Commission	2027–2031		
26	Improve access routes into wildland areas	Fire Department; Conservation Commission; landowners	2029–2031		
28	Firefighter I certification and recruitment	Fire Department	2027–2031, ongoing		
New					
New					
New					

G.3 WORKSHEET: ANNUAL PLAN EVALUATION

Rate each goal using the scale in Table 35 — outstanding, exceeds expectations, meets expectations, needs improvement or unacceptable — and give a short reason, so that the rating can be understood by whoever reads it the following year.

Table G3. Goal Ratings

Goal (abbreviated from Table 29)	Rating	Reason for the rating
1. Protect the general population, residents and guests, from all natural, technological and human-caused hazards.		
2. Reduce the impact of hazards on emergency response services, critical facilities and infrastructure.		
3. Reduce the impact of disasters on the economy, natural resources, historic and cultural treasures, and private property.		
4. Improve emergency preparedness and disaster response and recovery capability.		
5. Reduce risk through outreach and education.		
6. Identify and implement cost-effective mitigation measures and raise awareness and acceptance of mitigation.		
7. Address the challenges climate change poses to infrastructure and the natural environment.		
8. Work in conjunction with the State of New Hampshire's hazard mitigation goals and with FEMA.		

Table G4. Is the Plan Still Accurate?

A yes to any question is a reason to amend the plan rather than wait for the next full update (§9.2).

Question	Yes / No	If yes, what happened and what should change
Has a hazard event occurred that the risk assessment did not anticipate?		
Has development occurred in a hazard area, such as a mapped flood zone or a steep slope?		
Has the town gained or lost a capability — an ordinance, a piece of equipment, staff or volunteer capacity?		
Has any assumption about funding changed?		

G.4 WORKSHEET: UPDATE READINESS CHECKLIST

Start this checklist in the third year of the cycle (§9.3). The target dates follow Table G1.

Table G5. Update Readiness Checklist

Step	Target	Done	Notes
Confirm the plan's FEMA approval and expiration dates	Sep 2029		
Ask NHHSEM about a planning grant and submit the application	Sep 2029 – Jan 2030		
Confirm SWRPC or another planner can support the update	Jan 2030		
Select Board establishes the planning committee by vote, with meetings held according to RSA 91-A (§9.4)	Jan 2030		
Assemble the completed annual reviews (Tables G2 to G4) for 2027 to 2030	Sep 2030		
Compile hazard events, building permits and ordinance changes since 2026	Jan 2031		
Update the stakeholder contact list and plan public outreach	Jan 2031		
Hold planning team meetings and prepare the draft	Jan – Aug 2031		
Public review, Select Board adoption and submission to NHHSEM and FEMA	Sep – Nov 2031		

G.5 WORKSHEET: HAZARD EVENT RECORD

Complete one sheet for each hazard event that affects Surry — not only declared disasters but any storm, flood, fire or outage that closes a road, damages property or calls for more than routine response. The records answer the first question in Table G4 at the annual review, and they become the local record of previous occurrences in the hazard profiles at the next update.

Table G6. Hazard Event Record

Item	Record
Date or dates of the event	
Hazard (use the names in Table 15)	

Item	Record
Where in Surry: roads, addresses, map points	
What happened, with measures of extent: rainfall, snowfall, ice, wind speed, river level, fire size	
Injuries or deaths	
Roads or bridges closed, and for how long	
Power, phone or radio outages: duration and households affected	
Damage to town property — roads, culverts, bridges, buildings, equipment — and estimated cost	
Damage to private property, farms or businesses, if known	
Response: departments involved, mutual aid, shelter or warming site, outside assistance	
Town costs: staff time, equipment, materials, contractors	
State or federal declaration, and whether the town applied for assistance	
Photos, reports and other records, and where they are kept	
Lessons: actions in this plan affected, or new actions to consider	
Recorded by, and date	