



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako HRVA Electoral Area 'G' Committee

Summary - Understanding Community Resiliency Workshop

Date: Jan 25th, 2022

Time: 6 pm – 9 pm

Format: Zoom

Overview

On Tuesday, January 25th, 2022, participants from the HRVA Committee for Electoral Area 'G' came together on Zoom to review and discuss Community vulnerabilities in Electoral Area 'G'. This document provides a summary of what was discussed throughout the session. Thank you to everyone who took the time out of their work week to contribute to this session.

The Understanding Community Resiliency workshop objectives were as follows:

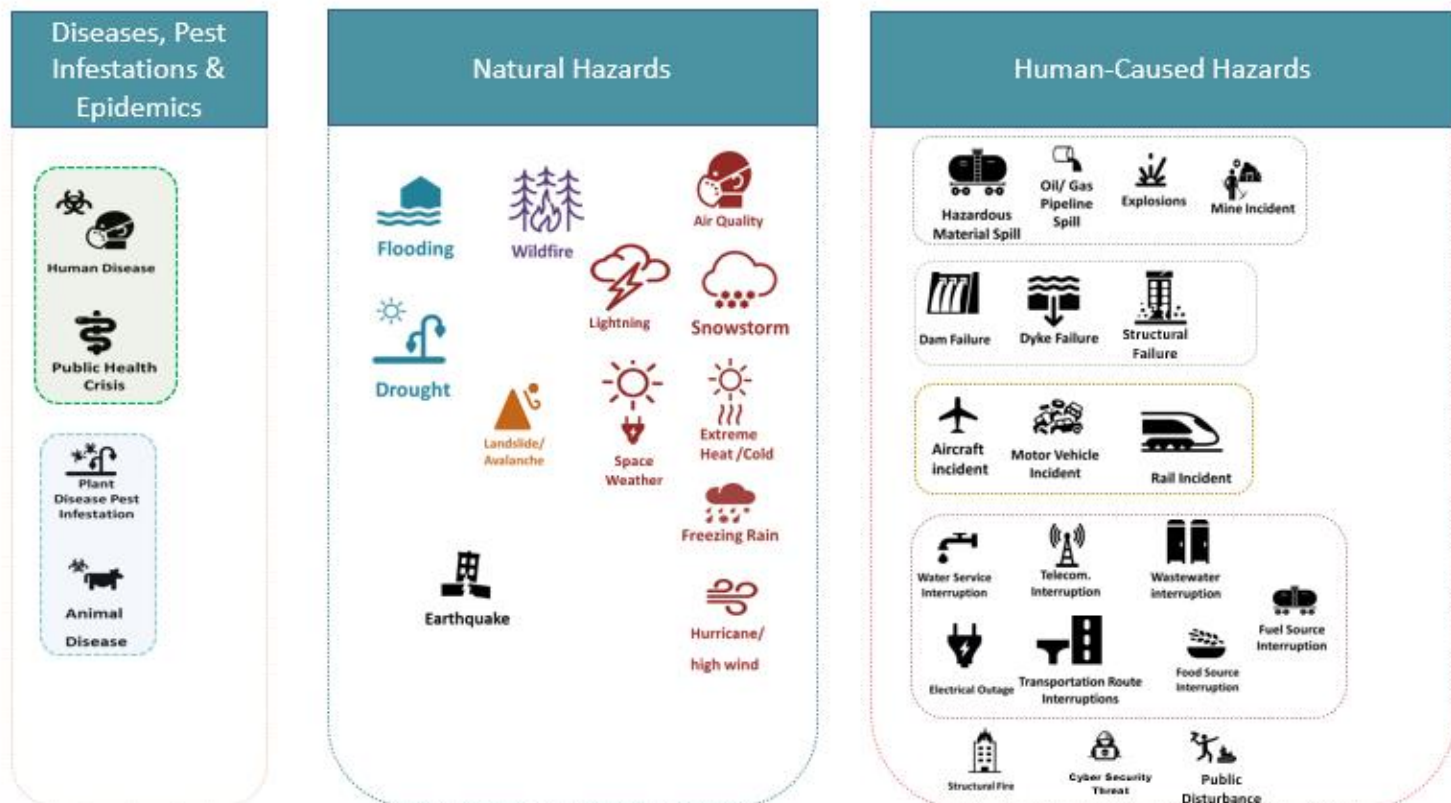
- Review list of 37 selected hazards;
- Review and identify additional vulnerabilities in Area 'G': Social, Economic, Environmental, Physical, and Underlying risk drivers;
- Review and discuss hazard scenarios to better understand vulnerabilities.
- Discuss the need for additional information before embarking on likelihood and consequence scoring of hazards.

Participants

Name	Organization
Christopher Newell	RDBN Area G Director
Jessie Zhu	Village of Granisle EM & ESS
Sandy Anaka	Pleasant Valley Cattlemen's Association
Byron Sketchly	Topley Fire Cheif
Mark Smaill	RCMP
Andy Muma	Houston Search and Rescue & BC SARA
Wendy Curtis	Granisle Better at Home
Vince Ross	Resident Buck Flats
Dwayne Anderson	SD 54
Glenn Kelly	Topley Assistant Fire Chief
Diana Reyes	District of Houston Intern
Deborah Jones-Middleton	RDBN
Chris Walker	RDBN
Liliana Dragowska	RDBN

6:00- 6:30 Welcome, Introductions, Outcomes and Review of Selected Hazards

The session began with a welcome from Director Fisher and a round table of introductions. This was followed by a short presentation from Liliana reviewing the objectives of the meetings, overview of the HRVA committee process, and reviewed the 37-hazard selected at the November 30th, 2021 HRVA Hazard Identification workshop.



Hazard Groupings

Atmospheric Fire Disease & Epidemic Geological Hazardous Materials Hydrological Infrastructure Failure Interruptions to Critical Services Security Transportation

The committee discussed reflections that came up since the last HRVA Hazard ID workshop, the notes below summaries the reflections:

- Prevalence of food vulnerability in the region, this can be seen more, and current events are highlighting this supply chain issue. With the Truckers striking and driving to Ottawa due to the Covid restrictions on the border for commercial trucking, this is being reflected in food source interruptions at the grocery stores. This is a concern.
- Telecommunication interruptions, particularly during emergency events. When there is a fire, we need good communication mediums, and our region struggles with this. Recognition of the RDBN's current initiative to advocate for connectivity.
 - The only alternative for reliable communication is satellite communication, costing single SAR groups high monthly rates for vary rare use. This is a challenge regionally.

6:30 – 7:30 Discussion on Vulnerabilities in Area 'G'

In this section Liliana presented the key findings from the Area G Understanding Community Vulnerabilities backgrounder paper and began to explore with participants four grouping of vulnerabilities that may be considered in this project. The information presented and discussed was a starting point in the collection of known vulnerabilities within the region. The intention is that the HRVA process will help to strengthen our collective community knowledge of our vulnerabilities to enable future conversations that will focus on resiliency strategies. Both vulnerability and resiliency are important, and closely related, concepts for evaluating a community's ability to cope with the impacts of a hazard event. It is important to differentiate between the two:

- Vulnerability looks at the factors that increase a community's susceptibility to damage from a hazard;
- Resiliency is a measure of a community's ability to resist or recover from damage (SOPAC, 2002).

Participants were asked if there is any missing information or insight members might have on specific factors that they perceive have the potential to contribute to vulnerabilities within Electoral Area G. The notes below summarize the discussion and additions under each topic presented and will ultimately assist HRVA committee members in subjectively scoring the likelihood and consequence of each hazard in our area:

Area 'G' First Response Agencies:

- Tachet has a fire department with a fire truck and 3 trained responders – currently seeking first responder training.
- Granile has 15 volunteers.
- Topley Fire department has 21 volunteers, 2 engines: 2007 and a 1996 firetruck; water tenure 2006; 1 pickup 2015 doubles as a rescue vehicle; 2012 rescue vehicle with equipment including jaws of life.
- Nadina Wildfire centre has 3 seasonal Initial Attack crews and one officer at the fire base.
- Houston SARs- 30 operational volunteers, with swift water and winter response teams.
- Houston Link for Learning provides Victim Services.
- Topley Fire is in the process of building a Structural Protection Unit (S.P.U.). This unit will be contained in a cargo trailer so can be taken to any location. The plan is to have this completed for the upcoming fire season and will have enough supplies,(sprinkler heads, hose, pumps, generator etc.) to cover 6-8 homes with protection from wildfires. Will be in service by the end of March 2022. This S.P.U. is being built to Ministry of Forests and B.C. Fire Commissioner standards to be 'standards compliant' and can be used anywhere in the province with the understanding that our fire protection area has priority.

Social Factors and Vulnerabilities

- It would be beneficial to collect the number of households in Topley and within the fire protection area. Potential to ask stats to break this information out by postal code?
- Add in census data for Topley unincorporated.
- In Granisle there community paramedicine with home health monitoring available. This Service extends into the indigenous communities in the area and out to mill bay.
- Add the better at home program.
- NSDP and Child Development Centre do not have offices in Houston, and this creates challenges with engagement and community services in Houston.

- Add food support organizations: Houston Link to Learning meal program on Tuesday and Thursday 80 meals; Salvation Army food hampers; Love by the Bowl soup kitchen is open Wednesday and provides takeout meals. Granisle twice a month lunch;
- Link to learning has taken over the harm reduction program

Economic Factors and Vulnerabilities

- Transient labour workforce including pipeline workers and tree planter. Adds challenge with communication, evacuations and relocating workers.
- Add economic drivers of recreation and steelhead fishing.
- Highlight mining and mining exploration – many mines in this region are closed and in long term maintenance: Huckleberry Mine, Equity Silver, Granisle Mine, Bell Mine.
- Add section on the importance of Volunteers providing services and is a critical component of how the region operates. What percentage of people volunteer in the community to provide critical response services- fire rescue, SAR, EOC, ESS, etc.

Environmental Factors and Vulnerabilities

- It would be beneficial to know how many homes between Houston and Topley and in Topley are in flood prone areas, map out unofficial flood areas.
- Topley has known areas of high running ditches and flooding – opportunity as a resiliency strategy to map out known or historical flash flood areas that are not covered under provincial mapping.
- Granisle experiences flooding and a highwater table in the spring and after sever rain events resulting in basements flooding for some residents

Physical Critical infrastructure factors

- Add substations in Houston, Huckleberry mines, Equity Mine, Topley, Granisle
- Safe and accessible rural and individual water supply becomes a risk for many residents – ground and surface contaminants and drought are factors.
- Add community halls as possible reception centres

7:30 – 8:45 Discuss Hazard Scenarios in Breakout Groups

Participants were broken out into three groups to complete 6 hazard scenario worksheets. These scenario worksheets were designed to help guide the committee through an alternative discussion process that would help to highlight and articulate additional vulnerabilities within the Electoral Area.

Reference documents used included [RDBN Hazard Identification Backgrounder](#) and [Understanding Community Resiliency Backgrounder](#).

Hazard Scenarios have been updated and included in the Final version of the Understanding Community Resiliency Backgrounder document available by following this link or on the RDBN's HRVA website under Electoral Area 'G' updates.

8:45 pm – 9 pm Wrap Up and Next Steps

To wrap up the session committee members had a brief discussion on what stood out for them in the scenarios and discussion. This was followed by some final remarks and reminders of next steps in the process:

- Liliana to send a summary of this meeting along with a request for committee member to reflect and respond to Liliana if they feel there is a need for additional information before embarking on likelihood and consequence scoring of hazards?
- Liliana to draft and send out Hazard Likelihood and Consequence Scoring instructions, followed by committee members completing the Likelihood and Consequence Scoring surveys.