

CITY OF THOMPSON FALLS



Regular City Council Meeting  
In the City Hall, 108 Fulton Street, Thompson Falls, MT  
Monday, March 10, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.

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**AGENDA**

**OPEN MEETING** - Call to order

**ROLL CALL OF THE COUNCIL**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**SET THE AGENDA**

**CONSENT AGENDA** – Claims, Minutes, Financial Reports, Court Report & Water Shut-off List/Arrangements

**COMMUNITY DECAY AND VIOLATIONS LIST REPORT** - Attached

**ENGINEER'S REPORT** - Attached

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS** - Recreation Public Properties Committee

**INFORMATION** – Annie Wooden presenting detail on Thompson Falls Days – June 27, 2025 – June 29, 2025

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**ACTION ITEMS**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. **Zoning Committee Vacancy** - Zoning Committee vacancy.

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**NEW BUSINESS** - *Mayor Rusti Leivestad will present the agenda items unless otherwise noted.*

2. **Western Region APA Status Notice to Western Region Jurisdictions Resolution.** The Western Region Hazard Mitigation Plan is part of Montana's broader effort to reduce or eliminate long-term risks to life and property from hazards such as floods, wildfires, tornadoes, and earthquakes. This plan is coordinated by the Montana Disaster and Emergency Services (MT DES) and aims to support consistency across the state, lighten the administrative burden on local and tribal governments, and ensure comprehensive eligibility for FEMA mitigation grant funding. **Bill Naegeli**
3. **City Council Vice President** - Election of City Council Vice President.
4. **Water adjustment** for a leak in their water service line at 604 Grove Street. \$61.97 **Virgina Byers**
5. **Water adjustment** for a leak in their water service line at 614 Clay Street. \$70.80 **Marsha Hart**
6. Present to the City Council the possibility of building a **Skate Park in the City Limits.** **Sunday Dutro Sauter**
7. **Sewer Project Phases 1 & 2 Pay Application**—Pay Application for reimbursement Sewer Project Phases 1 and 2. The total amount is \$265,161.59, which includes RD \$67,696.00, RD \$62,465.59, and RD \$135,000.00
8. **Sewer Project Phases 3 & 4 Pay Application** - Pay Application for reimbursement Sewer Project Phases 3 and 4. CDBG \$448.25, ARPA \$21,715.00, RRG \$3,454.75 and City \$1,886.00. Total \$27,504.00.
9. **Water Project Pay Application for Reimbursement** - Pay Application for reimbursement Water Project. ARPA \$21,927.60

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**UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT** - The public may speak for up to 3 minutes about items not on the agenda.

**MAYOR'S REPORT** - Mayor Rusti Leivestad's updates.

**ADJOURN**

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**Zoom Meeting Details:** The City of Thompson Falls is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: City Council Meeting, March 10, 2025

Time: Mar 10, 2025, 06:00 PM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82807804709?pwd=PJc9yb0obpsQlq0n3PlIqy7nMoGSB9.1>

Meeting ID: 828 0780 4709

Passcode: 550540

Dial by your location • +1 669 444 9171 US Meeting ID: 828 0780 4709 Passcode: 550540

March 2025 Mayor's Notes

Violations List – attached

Engineer's Report – attached

Committee reports- Recreation -Public Properties

Information – Annie Wooden re: Thompson Falls Days 6/27-29, 2025

Action Items

Unfinished Business

1. Zoning Committee Vacancy – (table)

New Business

2. Western Region APA Status Notice to Western Region Jurisdiction Resolution. The Western Region Hazard Mitigation Plan is part of Montana's broader effort to reduce or eliminate long-term risks to life and property from hazards such as floods, wildfires, tornadoes and earthquakes. The plan is coordinated by the Montana Disaster and Emergency Services (MT DES) and aims to support consistency across the state, lighten the administrative burden on local and tribal governments and ensure comprehensive eligibility for FEMA mitigation grant funding. The plan builds off existing local hazard mitigation plans and is developed in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. It involves a phased planning process, with the Western Region being one of the three regions (Central, Western, Eastern) established for this purpose. More detailed information or updates on the status of this plan are on the website for Montana Hazard Mitigation Project. Bill Naegeli presenting and will be looking for approval of resolution for Thompson Falls to sign onto the Mitigation Plan.
3. Elect City Council Vice President - VP act if President is absent -Duties: act in the Mayor's absence, conduct meetings, lead the committee of the whole. They need to have the time and be available to do these duties.
4. Water Adjustment for leak - 604 Grove Street - \$61.97 – Virginia Byers
5. Water Adjustment for leak – 614 Clay Street - \$70.80 – Marsha Hart
6. Skate Park – and recreation complex – Attachments of the proposed project with cost projections included with packet – Also an assessment by the Public Works Director of his concerns and questions to be considered. Sunday Dutro Sauter -
7. Sewer Project Phases 1&2 Pay App Reimbursement - RD \$67,696.00, RD \$62,465.59, and RD \$135,000.00 Total \$265,161.59

After the City prevailed on Razz's claims arising from alleged changed subsurface conditions, Razz then raised a number of other issues. First, Razz was awarded a number of construction days in recent change orders. This affected the amount of unscheduled employment of the engineer ("UEE") that Razz was charged under the contract. Second, Razz argued that it was owed interest for the alleged late release of retainage. Third, Razz has throughout the process suggested that it was improperly charged UEE. In order to fully and finally resolve Razz's claims and put this matter behind the City, the proposed release would permit \$135,000 to be paid to Razz. In exchange, Razz will release all claims against the City and agree not to bid on the next phases of the project.

8 Sewer Project Phases 3&4 Pay App Reimbursement – CDBG \$448.25, ARPA \$21,715.00, RRG \$3,454.75, and City \$1,886.00 Total \$27,504.00

9. Water Project Pay App Reimbursement – ARPA \$21,927.60

Unscheduled public comment

Mayors Report

**REQUEST FOR ITEM TO BE PLACED ON AGENDA  
THOMPSON FALLS CITY COUNCIL**

I, Rusti Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

request the following item be placed on the agenda for  
the 3-10 2025, City Council Meeting:

Please give a brief description of the item to be discussed,  
approximate time you need and the results you would like to see.

Information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Action: Zoning - Board of Adjustments  
Subdivision Opening -  
Apply at City Hall

**All agenda requests must be submitted by Noon on  
Wednesday before the Council Meeting.**

**REQUEST FOR ITEM TO BE PLACED ON AGENDA  
THOMPSON FALLS CITY COUNCIL**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

request the following item be placed on the agenda for  
the \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_, City Council Meeting:

Please give a brief description of the item to be discussed,  
approximate time you need and the results you would like to see.

Information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Action: Western Region APA  
status Notice to Western  
Region Jurisdictions

**All agenda requests must be submitted by Noon on  
Wednesday before the Council Meeting.**

Resolution #854

**Adopting the 2024 Western Montana Region  
Hazard Mitigation Plan**

**Whereas, the City of Thompson Falls** recognizes the threat that natural hazards pose to people and property within our community; and

**Whereas,** undertaking hazard mitigation actions will reduce the potential for harm to people and property from future hazard occurrences; and

**Whereas,** an adopted Hazard Mitigation Plan is required as a condition of future funding for mitigation projects under multiple Federal Emergency Management Agency pre- and post-disaster mitigation grant programs; and

**Whereas,** the City of Thompson Falls resides within the Planning Area, and fully participated in the mitigation planning process to prepare this Hazard Mitigation Plan; and

**Now, therefore, be it resolved,** that the City Council, hereby adopts the Western Montana Region Hazard Mitigation Plan, as an official plan; and

**Be it further resolved,** the City of Thompson Falls will submit this Adoption Resolution to the Montana Disaster & Emergency Services and Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region VIII officials to enable the Plan's final approval. While some content may require revisions to meet the plan approval requirements, changes occurring after adoption will not require the City of Thompson Falls to re-adopt any further iterations of the plan.

This Resolution was adopted by the Governing Body of the City of Thompson Falls, Sanders County, Montana, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of March 2025.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Mayor has executed this Resolution, and the Clerk/Treasurer has so attested.

Approved:

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rusti Leivestad, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chelsea Peterson, Clerk/Treasurer





## **Annex P Sanders County**

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### **P.1 Mitigation Planning and County Planning Team**

This County Annex builds on previous versions of the Sanders County Hazard Mitigation Plan completed in 2019. As part of the regional planning process, the County established a County Planning Team (CPT) to develop the mitigation plan and identify potential mitigation projects. The following communities participated in the DMA planning process with the County:

- City of Thompson Falls
- Town of Hot Springs
- Town of Plains

More details on the planning process followed and how the counties, municipalities, and stakeholders participated can be referenced in Chapter 3 of the base plan. A full list of local government departments and stakeholders that participated can be found in Appendix A.

### **P.2 Community Profile**

#### **P.2.1 Geography and Climate**

Sanders County is located in Northwestern Montana. It has a land area of about 2,770 square miles (1,733,000 acres) and is bounded by Mineral and Missoula Counties to the south, Lincoln and Flathead Counties to the north, Lake County to the east, and Bonner and Shoshone Counties, in the Idaho Panhandle on the west. Sanders County is Montana's 18th most populous county with approximately 11,000 residents. Thompson Falls is the county seat and incorporated communities include Thompson Falls, Plains, and Hot Springs. The east portion of Sanders County, including the Town of Hot Springs, is within the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation.

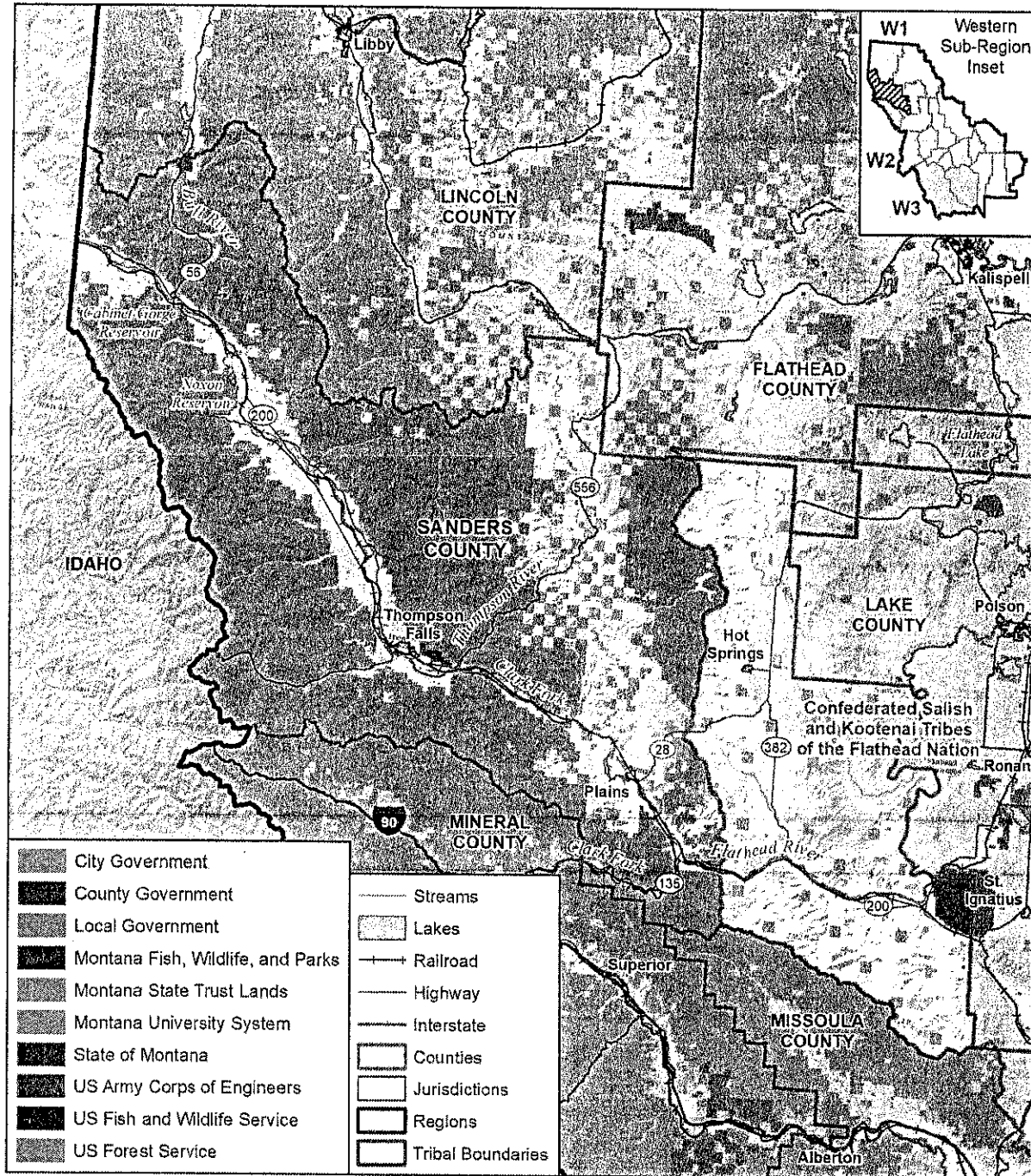
Lofty mountain ranges and broad intermontane valleys provide a wide range of topographic relief in Sanders County. Elevations in the Sanders County range from about 2,200 to 7,500 feet above sea level. The town of Heron is located on the valley floor at about 2,200 feet above sea level. Baldy Mountain, located approximately 20 miles straight-line distance northeast of Thompson Falls, is the tallest peak in the county at approximately 7,500 feet. The Bitterroot Mountains form the south boundary of Sanders County, and the Cabinet Mountains are to the north. The county also encompasses the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness and the Lolo and Kootenai National Forests.

Sanders County, like the remainder of the northwest U.S., is heavily influenced by the predominant mid-latitude westerly flow aloft. Storm systems embedded in this flow are most frequent and potent in the winter and spring months, and with convection increasing during the warm spring, May and June are typically the wettest months. The complex terrain also plays a big role in amount and distribution of precipitation. Uplift over the terrain causes increased amounts in the mountains, while down slope drying can greatly reduce amounts in the valleys depending on the flow direction. Therefore, the mountains in western Montana generally receive in excess of 50 inches of water equivalent precipitation annually, while the major valleys get less than 20 inches a year.

Generally, nearly half of the annual long-term average precipitation falls in the months of May, June and July. Most snow falls during the months of November through March. The majority of Montana's river flows occur during the spring and early summer months with the melting of the winter snowpack. Heavy rains during the spring thaw increase the flood threat. Rivers carry floating ice during the late winter or early spring and ice jams usually occur in March during the spring breakup. Relatively low runoff predominates

the rest of the year, especially in the dry late summer, and in winter when much of the precipitation falls as snow and remains frozen. Flood flows on the Clark Fork River have been modified by dams. Temperatures are relatively mild in western Montana compared to locations east of the Continental Divide. Arctic intrusions do occur from the north and east generally a few times every winter, but the cold air rarely lasts long due to the usually active flow from the west. During these arctic events, however, temperatures can drop well below zero. Summers can be hot in the valleys. While average highs are in the 80s in July and August, individual days often rise into the 90s and even low 100s. Figure P-1 shows the land stewardship in Sanders County.

Figure P-1 Sanders County Base Map and Land Stewardship



Map compiled 9/2022;  
Intended for planning purposes only.  
Data Source: Montana State Library

0 10 20 Miles





### P.2.2 Population Trends

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, Sanders's population was 11,804 people. There was an increase in population in the county and its jurisdictions from 2010 to 2020 of 3.9%. Specific demographic variables for the County are provided in Table P-1 below.

**Table P-1 Population Trends in Sanders County 1980-2020**

Incorporated Community	1990	2000	1990-2000 Change	2010	2000-2010 Change	2020	2010-2020 Change
Town of Hot Springs	411	531	29.2%	598	12.6%	627	4.8%
Town of Plains	992	1,126	13.5%	1,031	-8.4%	1,019	-1.2%
Town of Thompson Falls	1,319	1,321	0.2%	1,481	12.1%	1,489	0.5%
Sanders County	8,669	10,227	18%	11,366	11.1%	11,804	3.9%

Source: US Census 2010-2020, U.S. Decennial Census 1980-2000

### P.2.3 Demographics

The 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) reports demographic estimates for Sanders County, summarized in the table below Table P-2.

**Table P-2 Demographic Estimates for Sanders County (2016-2020 ACS)**

Characteristic	Sanders County	State of Montana
Percentage of persons below 150% poverty estimate	32.6%	24.1%
Unemployment Rate estimate	5.0%	4.0%
Percentage of housing cost-burdened occupied housing units with annual income less than \$75,000 (30%+ of income spent on housing costs) estimate	30.0%	21.4%
Percentage of persons with no high school diploma (age 25+) estimate	10.0%	7.5%
Percentage uninsured in the total civilian noninstitutionalized population estimate	9.7%	9.6%
Percentage of persons aged 65 and older estimate	30.9%	22.1%
Percentage of persons aged 17 and younger estimate	17.6%	21.3%
Percentage of civilian noninstitutionalized population with a disability estimate	21.3%	15.6%
Percentage of single-parent households with children under 18 estimate	1.9%	3.9%
Percentage of persons (age 5+) who speak English "less than well" estimate	0.2%	0.3%
Minority (other than white non-Hispanic) estimate	10.0%	14.6%

Characteristic	Sanders County	State of Montana
Percentage of housing in structures with 10 or more units estimate	0.3%	3.3%
Percentage of mobile homes estimate	15.9%	13.1%
Percentage of occupied housing units with more people than rooms estimate	1.2%	2.1%
Percentage of households with no vehicle available estimate	4.2%	4.9%
Percentage of persons in group quarters estimate	2.0%	2.8%
Percentage Female estimate	48.3%	49.7%
Median Age estimate	54.5	40.1
Median Gross Rent estimate	\$672	\$836
Median House Value estimate	\$263,500	\$244,900
Percent Unoccupied Housing Units estimate	20.7%	15.3%

Source: ACS 2016-2020

## P.2.4 Social Vulnerability

Social vulnerability is broadly defined as the susceptibility of social groups to the adverse impacts of natural hazards, including disproportionate death, injury, loss, or disruption of livelihood. Social vulnerability considers the social, economic, demographic, and housing characteristics of a community that influence its ability to prepare for, respond to, cope with, recover from, and adapt to environmental hazards. Additional details on social vulnerability and the NRI can be found in Section 4.1.1.5 of the Base Plan.

The SoVI-based social vulnerability score in Sanders County is higher (more vulnerable) than 73% of Montana counties and all but three of the other 19 counties in the Western Region. Based on this SoVI score, the NRI rated Sanders County as having a *relatively high* social vulnerability. Factors that contribute to social vulnerability in Sanders County include a high relatively proportion of the population living with disabilities, near or at the poverty level, and with a high burden from the cost of housing. Sanders County residents are also considerably older and attain a lower level of education than in other Montana counties (Table P-2). Refer to Section 4.1.1.5 of the Base Plan for more information on social vulnerability.

With regard to hazards, socially vulnerable populations may be disproportionately impacted by hazards that include flooding, wildfires, dam failure, wildfires and others. Severe weather hazards may result in power outages that could have a greater impact on these populations, including those dependent on electricity for medical reasons.

## P.2.5 Development Trends

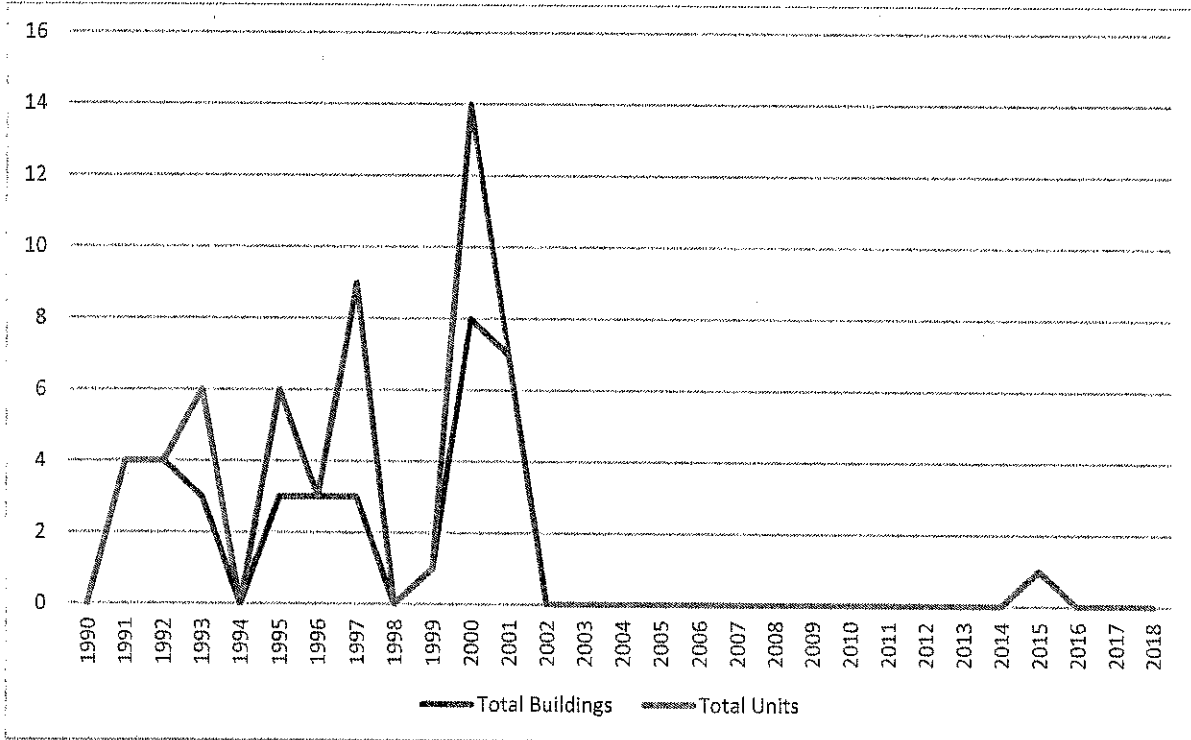
Sanders County is predominantly a rural county. Urban development is concentrated in the incorporated communities of Thompson Falls, Plains, and Hot Springs and in a number of small towns along the Flathead and Clark Fork rivers. Thompson Falls is the largest city and most densely developed. Residential development along the Clark Fork River is increasing rapidly. Because of the steep valley walls, development generally occurs in the valley bottom which may be prone to flooding. Land use in Sanders County is primarily agriculture (timber, crop and livestock production), with small communities and individual homes and farms interspersed. Croplands primarily produce small grains and hay. Native rangeland and planted

pastures provide forage for livestock. Livestock obtain water from dugout impoundments, wells, and surface water.

Sanders County is not predicted to sustain significant growth over the next 20 years. Incorporated communities are implementing infrastructure projects to accommodate growth within their city limits and a few subdivisions have been platted over the past 10 years in rural locations. Due to these trends, and existing regulations concerning development in hazardous areas in Sanders County, growth and development have not increased the community's vulnerability to hazards since the previous plan was approved.

The U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Survey provides information and local statistics on new privately-owned residential construction. Figure P-2 below displays the new privately owned housing unit authorizations by year in Sanders County. This data indicates that there was a significant increase in unit authorizations at the start and just after the new millennium. Since 2002 it has been a steep decline in privately owned housing unit authorizations in Sanders County.

**Figure P-2 New Privately Owned Housing Unit Authorizations**



Source: US Census Bureau, [https://www.census.gov/construction/bps/data\\_visualizations/index.html](https://www.census.gov/construction/bps/data_visualizations/index.html)

### P.2.6 Economy

Table P-3 below provides a brief overview of economic characters in Sanders County. The following information is provided by the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates from 2016-2020.

**Table P-3 Sanders County Economic Profile**

<b>Economic Characteristics</b>	<b>Sanders County</b>
Families Below Poverty Level	11.0%
Individuals Below Poverty Level	16.8%
Median Home Value	\$263,500
Median Household Income	\$46,848
Per Capita Income	\$27,287
Population > 16 Years Old in Labor Force	43.5%
Population Employed	41.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates, 2021

Table P-4 below shows the breakdown of employment in Sanders County by the industry sector. According to the ACS, the leading employment sectors in the County are "Educational services, and health care and social assistance," which composes nearly a quarter of the total employment in the County with 863 people. This is followed by "Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services" with 439 people. Third is the "Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, and mining" Industry with 324 of the population in Sanders County employed.

**Table P-4 Sanders County Occupation by Industry Profile**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Population Employed</b>	<b>Percent of Labor Force</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	324	7.8%
Construction	275	6.7%
Manufacturing	237	5.7%
Wholesale trade	210	5.1%
Retail trade	527	12.8%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	348	8.4%
Information	48	1.2%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	144	3.5%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	313	7.6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	863	20.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	439	10.6%
Other services, except public administration	237	5.7%
Public administration	163	3.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates, 2016-2020

## P.3 Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

### P.3.1 Identified Hazards

The CPT reviewed significant hazards for inclusion in the hazard mitigation plan. Several changes were made from the 2019 Sanders County Hazard Mitigation Plan to be consistent with the 2023 Montana Western Region Hazard Mitigation Plan. The 2019 Sanders County Hazard Mitigation Plan profiled the following hazards:

- Wildfire
- Severe Weather and Drought
- Hazmat Incidents & Transportation Accidents
- Communicable Disease
- Flooding
- Landslide
- Terrorism, Violence, Civil Unrest & Cyber Security
- Dam Failure

Each of these hazards is still profiled, however some changes in the naming and organization of them have been done. Severe Weather is now profiled as Severe Summer Weather and Severe Winter Weather, with Drought receiving a separate stand-alone profile. Terrorism, Violence, Civil Unrest & Cyber Security is now referred to as Human Conflict, while Cyber Security is profiled as Cyber-Attack. Hazmat Incidents & Transportation Accidents are now profiled as separate chapters. Additionally in this plan update, Avalanche, Earthquakes, Tornadoes & Windstorms, and Volcanic Ash were added.

Table P-5 provides a summary of the overall hazard significance for the hazards evaluated in this plan, showing variability by jurisdiction. More details on hazards can be found in Chapter 4 of the base plan.

**Table P-5 Sanders County Overall Hazard Significance by Hazard and Jurisdiction\***

Hazard	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
Avalanche	Low	Low	Low	Low
Communicable Disease	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Cyber-Attack	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Dam Failure	Low	Low	Low	Low
Drought	High	High	High	High
Earthquake	Low	Low	Low	Low
Flooding	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Hazardous Materials Incident	Low	Low	Low	Low
Landslide	Low	Low	Low	Low
Severe Summer Weather	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Severe Winter Weather	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Human Conflict	Low	Low	Low	Low
Tornadoes & Windstorms	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Transportation Accidents	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Volcanic Ash	Low	Low	Low	Low



Hazard	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
Wildfire	High	High	High	High

\*Significance based on a combination of Geographic Extent, Potential Magnitude/Severity and Probability as defined below.

<p><b>Geographic Extent</b></p> <p><u>Negligible:</u> Less than 10 percent of planning area or isolated single-point occurrences</p> <p><u>Limited:</u> 10 to 25 percent of the planning area or limited single-point occurrences</p> <p><u>Significant:</u> 25 to 75 percent of planning area or frequent single-point occurrences</p> <p><u>Extensive:</u> 75 to 100 percent of planning area or consistent single-point occurrences</p> <p><b>Potential Magnitude/Severity</b></p> <p><u>Negligible:</u> Less than 10 percent of property is severely damaged, facilities and services are unavailable for less than 24 hours, injuries and illnesses are treatable with first aid or within the response capability of the jurisdiction.</p> <p><u>Limited:</u> 10 to 25 percent of property is severely damaged, facilities and services are unavailable between 1 and 7 days, injuries and illnesses require sophisticated medical support that does not strain the response capability of the jurisdiction, or results in very few permanent disabilities.</p> <p><u>Critical:</u> 25 to 50 percent of property is severely damaged, facilities and services are unavailable or severely hindered for 1 to 2 weeks, injuries and illnesses overwhelm medical support for a brief period of time or result in many permanent disabilities and a few deaths. overwhelmed for an extended period of time or many deaths occur.</p> <p><u>Catastrophic:</u> More than 50 percent of property is severely damaged, facilities and services are unavailable or hindered for more than 2 weeks, the medical response system is overwhelmed for an extended period of time, or many deaths occur.</p>	<p><b>Probability of Future Occurrences</b></p> <p><u>Unlikely:</u> Less than 1 percent probability of occurrence in the next year or has a recurrence interval of greater than every 100 years.</p> <p><u>Occasional:</u> Between a 1 and 10 percent probability of occurrence in the next year or has a recurrence interval of 11 to 100 years.</p> <p><u>Likely:</u> Between 10 and 90 percent probability of occurrence in the next year, or has a recurrence interval of 1 to 10 years</p> <p><u>Highly Likely:</u> Between 90 and 100 percent probability of occurrence in the next year or has a recurrence interval of less than 1 year.</p> <p><b>Overall Significance</b></p> <p><u>Low:</u> Two or more of the criteria fall in the lower classifications or the event has a minimal impact on the planning area. This rating is also sometimes used for hazards with a minimal or unknown record of occurrences/impacts or for hazards with minimal mitigation potential.</p> <p><u>Medium:</u> The criteria fall mostly in the middle ranges of classifications and the event's impacts on the planning area are noticeable but not devastating. This rating is also sometimes utilized for hazards with a high impact rating but an extremely low occurrence rating.</p> <p><u>High:</u> The criteria consistently fall along the high ranges of the classification and the event exerts significant and frequent impacts on the planning area. This rating is also sometimes utilized for hazards with a high psychological impact or for hazards that the jurisdiction identifies as particularly relevant.</p>
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### P.3.2 Building Inventory and Assets

People, property, critical facilities/infrastructure, and other important assets in Sanders County are exposed to the hazards identified in this plan. Table P-6 summarizes the property inventory for the County and each participating jurisdiction, based on improvement value (i.e., structures) and includes the building count and value grouped by parcel type and jurisdiction. This is an assessment of the overall property exposed within the County and by jurisdiction.

Assets inventoried to determine vulnerability include people, structures, critical facilities, and natural, historic, or cultural resources. For the regional planning process, locally available GIS databases were utilized. Parcel and assessor data was obtained through Montana's MSDI Cadastral website. This Statewide database provided the basis for building exposure and property types. The focus of the analysis was on "improved" or developed parcels. These parcels were identified based on an improvement value greater than zero. Property Types were used to identify occupancy types as shown in the following table, which includes summations of total improved value for the various property types.

Total building inventory and value within Sanders County is based on an analysis of improved parcels for over \$1.6 billion, with over \$1 billion in improved value properties and \$604 million plus worth of content estimations. Of the over \$1.6 billion of total building exposure in Sanders County, Unincorporated Sanders County accounts for \$1.3 billion of this total number. Residential properties represent the greatest portion of structures in the County, accounting for over \$1.2 billion of the \$1.6 billion in total values. This is shown in Table P-6 below.

**Table P-6 Sanders County Building Inventory and Value by Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Improved Parcels	Improved Value	Content Value	Total Value
Hot Springs	Commercial	1	\$36,429	\$36,429	\$72,858
	Exempt	10	\$1,184,350	\$1,184,350	\$2,368,700
	Residential	322	\$27,648,378	\$13,824,189	\$41,472,567
	Tribal	4	\$402,510	\$402,510	\$805,020
	Vacant	6	\$75,267	\$75,267	\$150,534
	<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>\$29,346,934</b>	<b>\$15,522,745</b>	<b>\$44,869,679</b>
Plains	Exempt	40	\$9,482,287	\$9,482,287	\$18,964,574
	Residential	487	\$58,314,468	\$29,157,234	\$87,471,702
	Vacant	5	\$106,910	\$106,910	\$213,820
	<b>Total</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>\$67,903,665</b>	<b>\$38,746,431</b>	<b>\$106,650,096</b>
Thompson Falls	Commercial	1	\$216,550	\$216,550	\$433,100
	Exempt	25	\$8,732,565	\$8,732,565	\$17,465,130
	Residential	628	\$74,385,544	\$37,192,772	\$111,578,316
	<b>Total</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>\$83,334,659</b>	<b>\$46,141,887</b>	<b>\$129,476,546</b>
Sanders County	Agricultural	859	\$154,887,162	\$154,887,162	\$309,774,324
	Commercial	5	\$797,317	\$797,317	\$1,594,634
	Exempt	71	\$15,314,733	\$15,314,733	\$30,629,466
	Industrial	3	\$4,288,870	\$6,433,305	\$10,722,175
	Residential	3,938	\$644,139,315	\$322,069,658	\$966,208,973
	Tribal	22	\$2,394,940	\$2,394,940	\$4,789,880
	Vacant	81	\$2,102,280	\$2,102,280	\$4,204,560
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,979</b>	<b>\$823,924,617</b>	<b>\$503,999,395</b>	<b>\$1,327,924,012</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>6,508</b>	<b>\$1,004,509,875</b>	<b>\$604,410,458</b>	<b>\$1,608,920,333</b>

Source: MSDI Cadastral database, <https://msl.mt.gov/geoinfo/msdi/cadastral/>

### Critical Facilities, Infrastructure, and Other Important Community Assets

A critical facility is defined as one that is essential in providing utility or direction either during the response to an emergency or during the recovery operation. Much of this data is based on GIS databases associated with the 2022 Homeland Infrastructure Foundation-Level Data (HIFLD). Other critical facility databases were also used, such as the National Bridge Inventory (NBI), with supplementation from the HMPC. Where applicable, this information was used in an overlay analysis for hazards such as dam failure, flood, and wildfire.

FEMA organizes critical facilities into seven lifeline categories as shown in Figure P-3. These lifeline categories standardize the classification of critical facilities and infrastructure that provide indispensable service, operation, or function to a community. A lifeline is defined as providing indispensable service that

enables the continuous operation of critical business and government functions, and is critical to human health and safety, or economic security. These categorizations are particularly useful as they:

- Enable effort consolidations between government and other organizations (e.g., infrastructure owners and operators).
- Enable integration of preparedness efforts among plans; easier identification of unmet critical facility needs.
- Refine sources and products to enhance awareness, capability gaps, and progress towards stabilization.
- Enhance communication amongst critical entities, while enabling complex interdependencies between government assets.
- Highlight lifeline related priority areas regarding general operations as well as response efforts.

**Figure P-3 FEMA Lifeline Categories**



Source: FEMA

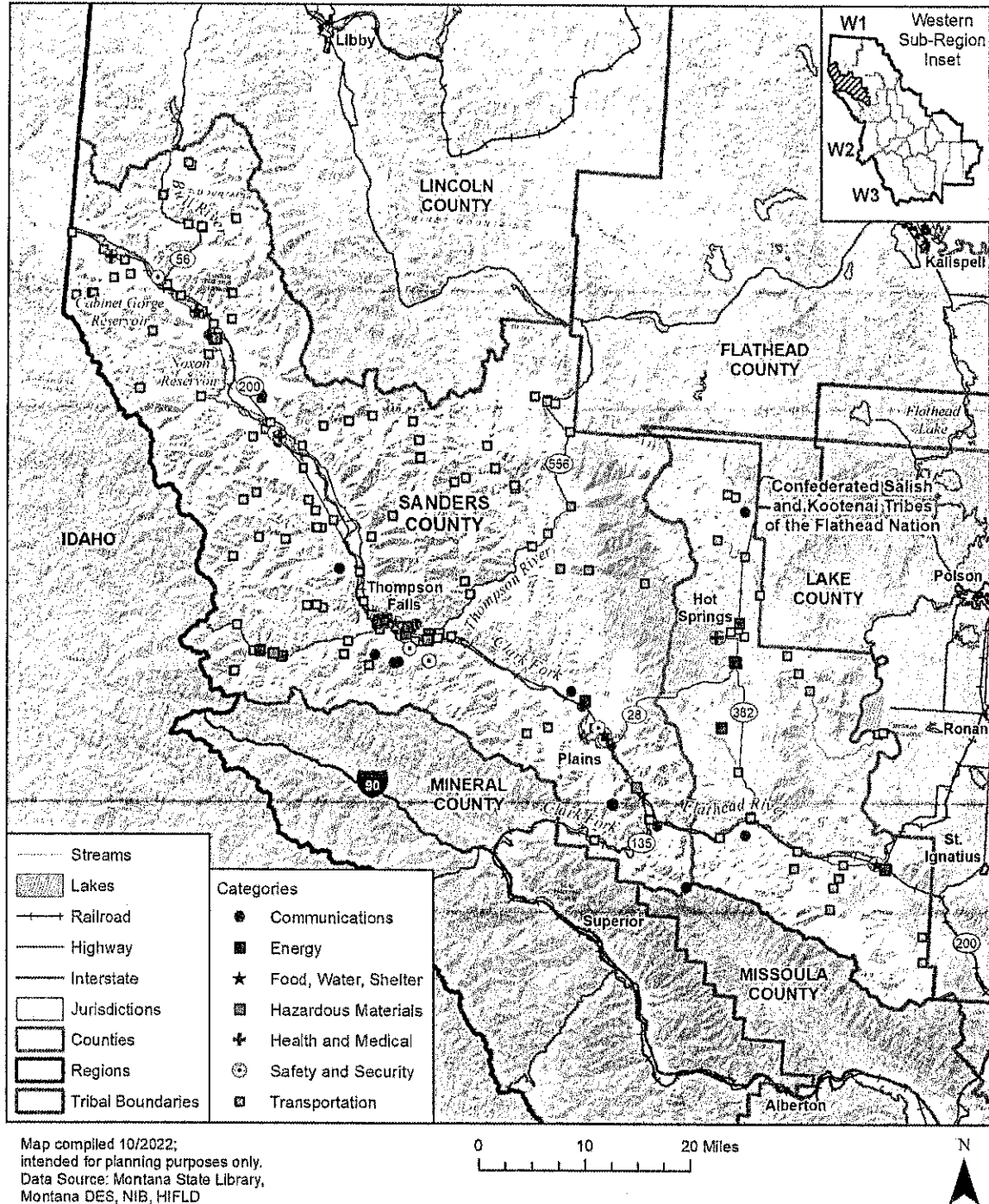
Table P-7 below summarizes the number of critical facilities by jurisdiction. Figure P-4 Sanders County Critical Facilities through Figure P-7 Town of Thompson Falls Critical Facilities displays the location of critical facilities by FEMA Lifeline in Sanders County.

**Table P-7 Sanders County Critical Facilities by Jurisdiction**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Communications</b>	<b>Energy</b>	<b>Food, Water, Shelter</b>	<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	<b>Health and Medical</b>	<b>Safety and Security</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Total</b>
Hot Springs	-	-	-	-	1	5	-	6
Plains	2	-	1	-	1	5	1	10
Thompson Falls	3	-	4	-	3	11	-	21
Sanders County	35	13	4	3	3	13	101	172
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>209</b>

Source: HIFLD 2022, Montana DES, National Bridge Inventory

Figure P-4 Sanders County Critical Facilities



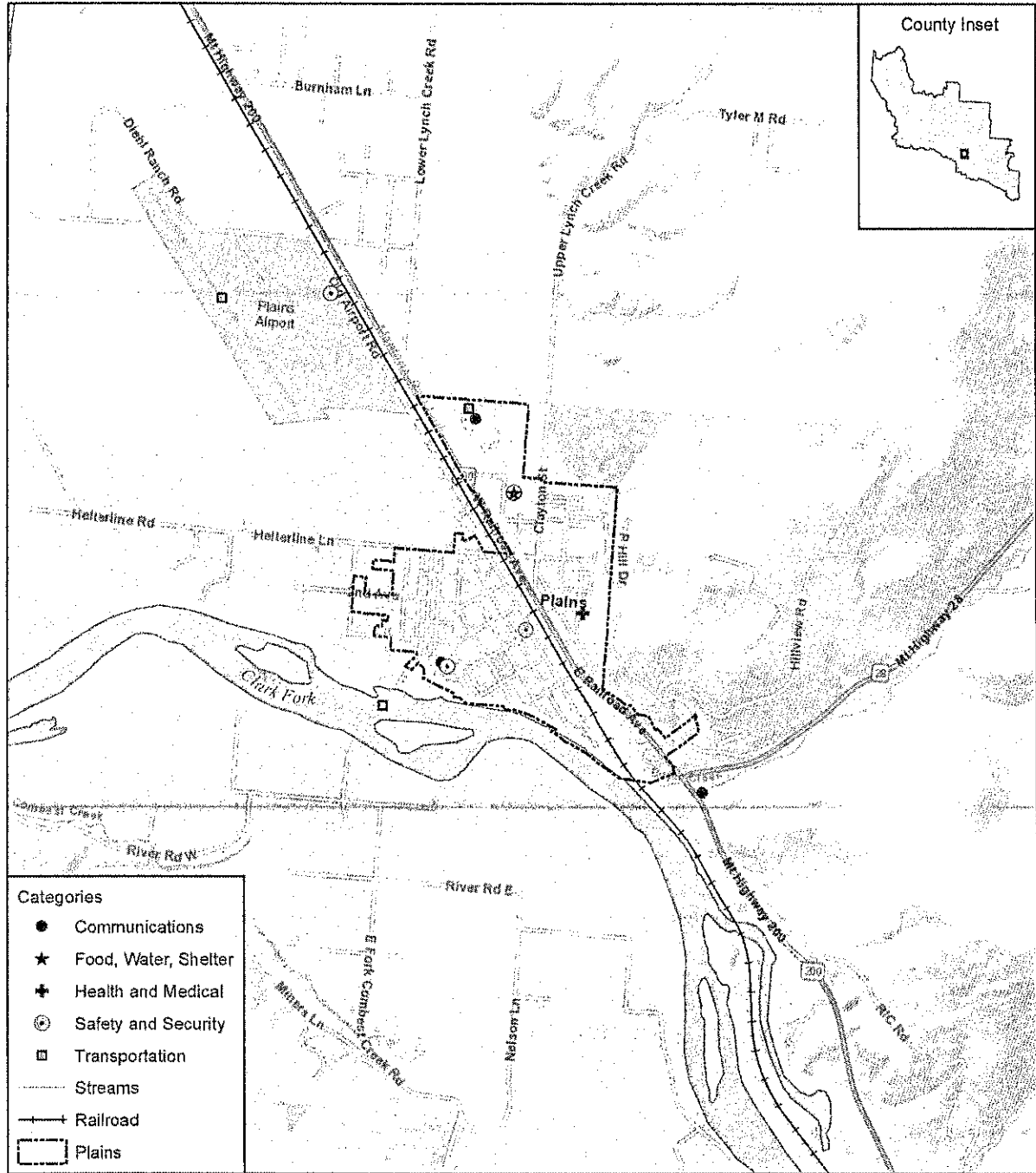


Map compiled 10/2022;  
intended for planning purposes only.  
Data Source: Montana State Library,  
Montana DES, NIB, HIFLD

0 0.5 1 Miles

N

Figure P-6 Town of Plains Critical Facilities

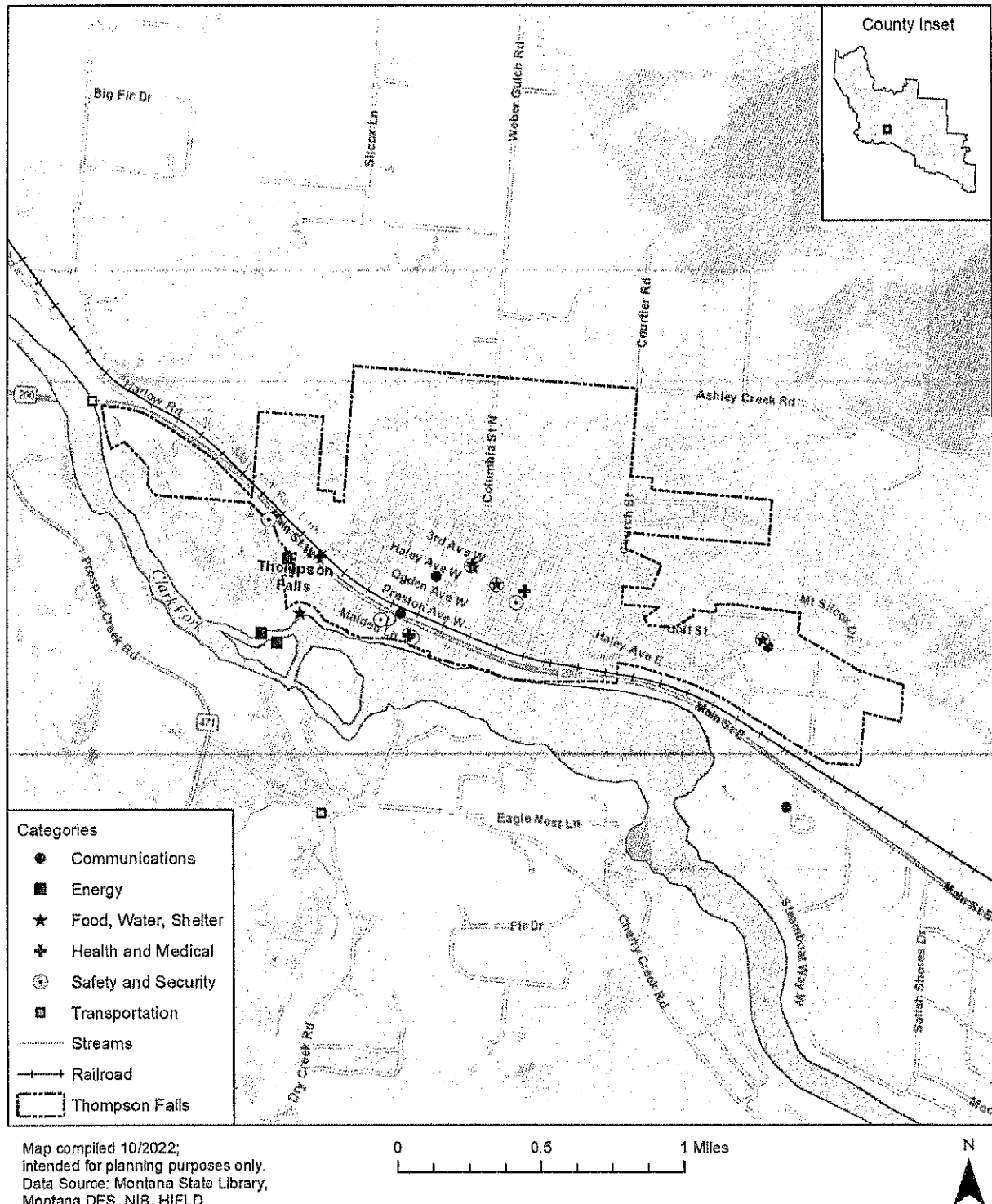


Map compiled 10/2022;  
intended for planning purposes only.  
Data Source: Montana State Library,  
Montana DES, NIB, HIFLD

0 0.5 1 Miles



Figure P-7 Town of Thompson Falls Critical Facilities



### Natural, Historic, and Cultural Assets

Assessing the vulnerability of Sanders County to hazards also involves inventorying the natural, historical, and cultural assets of the area. This step is important for the following reasons:

- The community may decide that these types of resources warrant more protection due to their unique and irreplaceable nature and contribution to the overall economy.
- If these resources are impacted by a hazard, knowing so ahead of time allows for more prudent care in the immediate aftermath, when the potential for additional impacts are higher.
- The rules for reconstruction, restoration, rehabilitation, and/or replacement are often different for these types of designated resources.
- Natural resources can have beneficial functions that reduce the impacts of natural hazards, such as wetlands and riparian habitat, which help absorb and attenuate floodwaters.

### Historic and Cultural Assets

By definition, a historic property not only includes buildings or other types of structures, such as bridges and dams, roads, byways, historic landscapes, and many other features. The National Register of Historic Places, managed by the National Sanders Service and U.S. Department of Interior, is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Table P-8 below lists the properties that are identified as having cultural and historic significance in Sanders County as recorded by the National Register of Historic Places.

**Table P-8 Historic Properties and Districts on National Registers**

Property Name	City/Town	Location	Date Listed
Bend Guard Station	City unavailable	Lolo National Forest	
Symes Hotel	Hot Springs	209 N. Wall St.	11/12/98
Bull River Guard Station	Noxon	On banks of Bull R. near confluence with E. Fork Bull R., Kootenai NF	6/27/90
Ainsworth House	Thompson Falls	911 Maiden Ln.	10/7/86
Bedard House	Thompson Falls	207 Spruce St.	10/7/86
Cougar Peak Lookout	Thompson Falls	Plains / Thompson Falls Ranger District, Lolo NF	8/6/18
Dry Channel Bridge	Thompson Falls	Across the dry channel, now a reservoir, of the Clark Fork on the s edge of Thompson Falls, just above dry channel dam	
Gem Saloon	Thompson Falls	808 Main St.	10/7/86
Grandchamp House	Thompson Falls	1012 Preston Ave.	10/7/86
Griffen House	Thompson Falls	205 Gallatin St.	10/7/86
House at 112 Park Street	Thompson Falls	112 Park St.	10/7/86
House at 916 Preston Avenue	Thompson Falls	916 Preston Ave.	10/7/86
Hoyt House	Thompson Falls	204 Gallatin St.	10/7/86
IOOF Lodge	Thompson Falls	520 Main St.	10/7/86

Property Name	City/Town	Location	Date Listed
Main Channel Bridge	Thompson Falls	Across the main channel of the Clark Fork on the S edge of town, just above the Thompson Falls Power Plant	
Norby House	Thompson Falls	13 Pond St.	10/7/86
Northern Pacific Warehouse	Thompson Falls	Bounded by Preston Ave. and Main St. along Burlington Northern Right-of-Way	10/7/86
Preston House	Thompson Falls	205 Ferry St.	10/7/86
Rinard House	Thompson Falls	210 Jefferson St.	10/7/86
Sanders County Jail	Thompson Falls	Madison and Maiden Lane	10/7/86
Thayer House	Thompson Falls	109 Jefferson St.	12/22/86
Thompson Falls Hydroelectric Dam Historic District	Thompson Falls	US ALT 10 at Clark Fork River within NW part of Thompson Falls	10/7/86
Tourist Hotel	Thompson Falls	101 Main St.	10/7/86
Ward Hotel	Thompson Falls	919 Main St.	12/22/86
Weber's Store	Thompson Falls	510 Main St.	10/7/86
Thompson's Fall Dam	Thompson Fall		

Source: National Register of Historic Places, <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2210280>

### Natural Resources

Natural resources are important to include in benefit-cost analyses for future projects and may be used to leverage additional funding for projects that also contribute to community goals for protecting sensitive natural resources. Awareness of natural assets can lead to opportunities for meeting multiple objectives. For instance, protecting wetlands preserves sensitive habitats as well as attenuates and stores floodwaters.

Wetlands are a valuable natural resource for communities, due to their benefits to water quality, wildlife protection, recreation, and education, and play an important role in hazard mitigation. Sanders County encompasses several lakes and reservoirs, including the Cabinet Gorge Reservoir (2,789-acres) and the Noxon Reservoir (7,848-acres), both of which provide a rich ecosystem for dozens of aquatic species.

### Endangered Species

A table of endangered and threatened species in the State of Montana, as identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana Ecological Services Field Office, can be found in the Assets Summary Section in Chapter 4 of the base plan.

## P.4 Vulnerability to Specific Hazards

Vulnerability to hazards that can affect the Western Region is described in Section 4.2 *Hazard Profiles* of the Western Region base plan. The analysis of vulnerability in the base plan includes the type, location, and extent of hazards. In addition, the base plan provides an analysis of the vulnerability of six classes of assets: (1) People, (2) Property, (3) Critical Facilities and Lifelines, (4) the Economy, (5) Historic and Cultural Resources, and (6) Natural Resources. Subsections within Section 4.2 of the Western Region base plan



provide descriptions and analysis of the exposure of each asset class to each hazard, the susceptibility of each asset class to damage from exposure to each hazard, and the overall vulnerability of each class of asset to each hazard.

This section details vulnerability to specific hazards, where quantifiable, only where it differs from that of the Region as a whole. The results of detailed GIS analyses used to estimate potential for future losses are presented here, in addition to maps of hazard areas and details by jurisdiction and building type. For a discussion of the methodology used to develop the loss estimates, refer to Chapter 4 of the base plan. In many cases Chapter 4 contains information that differentiates the risk by county thus the information is not duplicated here. For most of the weather-related hazards the exposure does not vary significantly from the rest of the Region and thus the reader should refer to Chapter 4. Only unique issues or vulnerabilities are discussed, where applicable.

Hazards considered in this HMP update annex are as follows.

- Avalanche
- Communicable Disease
- Cyber-Attack
- Dam Failure
- Drought
- Earthquake
- Flooding
- Hazardous Materials Incident
- Landslide
- Severe Summer Weather
- Severe Winter Weather
- Human Conflict
- Tornadoes & Windstorms
- Transportation Accidents
- Volcanic Ash
- Wildfire

#### **P.4.1     Avalanche**

Avalanche is rated a low significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5).

The FEMA NRI annualized frequency of avalanche events in the County is .02, considered "very low," with 1 avalanche event recorded in the SHELDS database between January 1960 and December 2019. The Risk Index Rating for avalanches in the County, which accounts for expected annual loss, social vulnerability, and community resilience, is also considered "very low" with a score of 8.8. Due to the remote nature of avalanche events, risk is highest in the unincorporated County and lower in incorporated jurisdictions.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the avalanche risk relative to Lincoln County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.2     Communicable Disease**

All populations are vulnerable to communicable disease. Elder populations, young children, and individuals with pre-existing medical conditions are more likely to face long lasting impacts from communicable disease. While areas of high population density, such as the City of Thompson Falls, are likely to experience a greater number of cases due to a larger population, these larger cities also have greater access to medical resources. Communicable disease is rated as medium for all counties in the Western Region and there were no noted differences in rating of communicable disease by jurisdiction in Sanders County.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the communicable disease risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.3     Cyber-Attack**

All servers, networks, and users are vulnerable to cyber-attacks in Western Montana. Sanders County is rated as medium, along with most other counties in the Region. There have been no recorded cyber-attack events occurring in the county or its jurisdictions, however, minor cyber-attacks such as phishing emails

often go unreported. While all networks and servers are vulnerable to cyber, the City of Thompson Falls has a greater population and therefore more people exposed to a cyber-attack event.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the cyber-attack risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### P.4.4 Dam Failure

Dam failure is rated a low significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5). 35 people live within dam inundation zones made available for this HMP update. All of these people live on the Flathead Reservation.

The SoVI-based rating of social vulnerability in Sanders County is relatively high (Section P.2.4 *Social Vulnerability*), largely due to a high relatively proportion of the population living with disabilities, near or at the poverty level, and with a high burden from the cost of housing. Sanders County residents are also have a considerably older average age and attain a lower level of education than in other Montana counties (Table P-2). Dam failure can be devastating both financially and emotionally. Socio-economic vulnerability amplifies the financial and mental stress of dam failure hazards and often makes it difficult for people to recover. Dam failure may result in injuries or fatalities in situations with limited warning or when evacuation orders are not adhered to. Access and functional needs populations may have challenges with evacuations.

There are three high hazard dams in Sanders County (Table P-9, Figure P-8). In addition, additional high hazard dams exist upstream that could affect the county. Several of these upstream high-hazard dams drain to the Flathead River on the eastern end of the county and then to the Clark Fork River. Examples include Jocko Lake Dam, Ninepipe Dam, Lower Crow Reservoir Dam, Hungry Horse Reservoir, and the especially large Kerr Lake Reservoir. An apparently unnamed dam in Missoula County drains to the Clark Fork River before it enters Sanders County. Hubbart Dam in Flathead County drains to Sanders County by the Little Bitterroot River and eventually to the Flathead River. There are no significant hazard dams located in Sanders County. Two of the high hazard dams in Sanders County, Lower and Upper Dry Fork Dams, are federally owned.

**Table P-9 Dams in Sanders County**

Hazard Class	Dam Name	Owner	River	Nearest Downstream City	Distance to Nearest Downstream City (Miles)	Emergency Action Plans (EAP)
High	Noxon Rapids	Avista Corporation	Clark Fork River	Noxon	3	Yes
High	Lower Dry Fork	BIA	Dry Fork	None	0	Yes
High	Upper Dry Fork	BIA	Dry Fork	None	0	Yes

Source: National Inventory of Dams (NID)

With a relatively large number of high hazard dams that can affect Sanders County, dam failure flooding could result in potential property losses and loss to human life. Dam condition assessments conducted by the Montana Bureau of Mines & Geology between 2015 and 2022 determined that none of the high hazard dams with potential to impact Sanders County are in poor condition. Figure P-8 displays the location of dams in Sanders County.

Table P-10 presents the results of an analysis of assets potentially exposed to dam inundation. This analysis is limited to high-hazard dams with dam inundation zone maps that were provided for this HMP update. Dam inundation zones are shown as purple shaded areas in Figure P-8. The most notable dams not included in this analysis are the Kerr Dam in Lake County, which holds back Flathead Lake, and Noxon Rapids Dam, which forms Noxon Reservoir and is immediately upstream of the town of Noxon.

Agricultural facilities have the highest total value at risk with over \$4.4 million in total value (Table P-10). Sanders County has 11 critical facilities at risk to Dam Inundation. All are located on the Flathead Reservation and are within the transportation sector. This is shown in Table P-11 below. Refer to Chapter 4 of the base plan for a discussion of the dam failure risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region. Inundation zones made available for this HMP update from dams located in Lake County were found to affect 40 parcels in the Flathead Reservation.

**Table P-10 Sanders County Parcels at Risk from Dam Inundation by County and Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Improved Parcels	Improved Value	Content Value	Total Value	Population
Flathead Reservation	Agricultural	18	\$2,216,350	\$2,216,350	\$4,432,700	35
	Residential	16	\$1,819,535	\$909,768	\$2,729,303	
	Tribal	6	\$438,930	\$438,930	\$877,860	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>\$4,474,815</b>	<b>\$3,565,048</b>	<b>\$8,039,863</b>	<b>35</b>

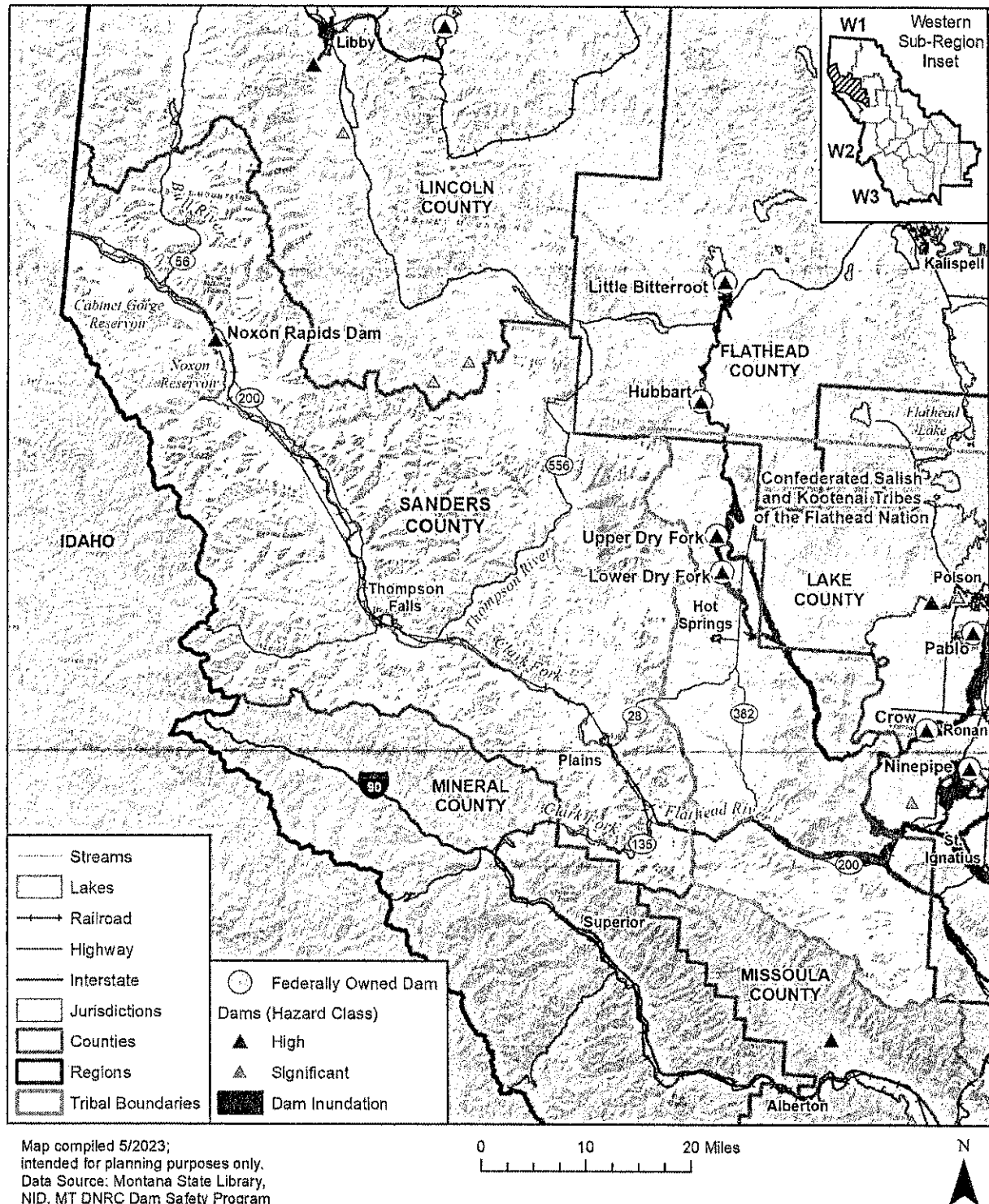
Source: Montana DNRC Dam Safety Program, Montana State Library, BIA, NID, HIFLD 2022, Montana DES, NBI

**Table P-11 Sanders County Critical Facilities at Risk to Dam Inundation by Facility Type**

Jurisdiction	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Materials	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Total
Flathead Reservation	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>

Source: Montana DNRC Dam Safety Program, Montana State Library, BIA, NID, HIFLD 2022, Montana DES, NBI

Figure P-8 Sanders County Dam Inundation



### P.4.5 Drought

Drought is rated a high significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5).

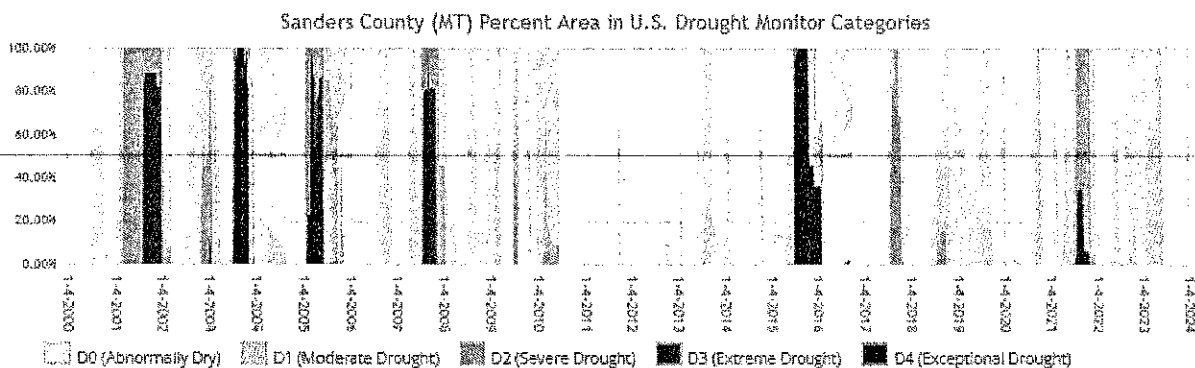
Sanders County has experienced 17 USDA drought declarations from 2012-2021, which is slightly more than the average county in the Western Region. These drought declarations occurred in 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2021.

The Drought Impact Reporter recorded 14 drought impact reports in Sanders County between 2000-2023. These impacts were primarily categorized as fire impacts or relief, response, and restrictions impacts. Fire impacts included active fires, enacting or increasing fire and firework restrictions, increased fire severity warnings, and the closing of timberlands to the public to prevent inadvertent fire starts. Relief, response, and restrictions impacts also included increased enacting or increasing fire or firework restrictions, increased fire severity warnings, and limiting access to timberlands, as well as the meeting of the Governor's Drought and Water Supply Advisory Committee, State drought disaster declarations, drought and severe drought alerts, and Hoot Owl Fishing Restrictions, which prohibits fishing between 2 p.m. and midnight, on the Blackfoot, Bitterroot, and Clark Fork Rivers and Flint and Blacktail Creeks.

The U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) is a national data set released weekly, showing the severity of drought in locations across the nation. Figure P-9 displays a time series showing the severity of drought in Sanders County between 2000 and 2023 (since the USDM came into being). The figure indicates that a small area in the County experienced significant drought (D4) in 2021.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the drought risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

**Figure P-9 Sanders County Percent Area in U.S. Drought Monitor Categories.**



Source: USDM; [www.drought.gov](http://www.drought.gov)

### P.4.6 Earthquake

Earthquake is rated a low significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5).

There are several known fault systems throughout the State of Montana, mostly concentrated in the Western Region. The potential severity of shaking and impacts to casualties and damage is not uniform across the Western Region and is likely to have a greater impact to counties in the northern portion of the region. The earthquake hazard in Sanders County is therefore rated as low overall significance.

According to a Hazus probabilistic loss analysis conducted for a scenario with 2% in 50 years recurrence, Sanders County has low to moderate economic losses when compared to the rest of the counties in the Western Region, with an estimated \$67,646,000 in total economic losses (1.5% of total losses in the region).



There is no significant difference in vulnerability across jurisdictions in Sanders County, however, the City of Thompson Falls and Town of Hot Springs have adopted building codes, which could indicate that the infrastructure in these jurisdictions is more resilient to shaking from earthquakes than in the Town of Plains. Older and historic buildings will be more vulnerable to earthquake shaking.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the earthquake risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.7 Flooding**

Flooding is rated a medium significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5). 427 people live within the 1% annual chance floodplain, 4% of the county population. This includes 46 people in Hot Springs and 66 people in Plains, 7% and 6% of these towns' populations, respectively.

The SoVI-based rating of social vulnerability in Sanders County is relatively high (Section P.2.4 *Social Vulnerability*), largely due to a high relatively proportion of the population living with disabilities, near or at the poverty level, and with a high burden from the cost of housing. Sanders County residents are also have a considerably older average age and attain a lower level of education than in other Montana counties (Table P-2). Flooding can be devastating both financially and emotionally. Socio-economic vulnerability amplifies the financial and mental stress of flood hazards and often makes it difficult for people to recover. Flooding may result in injuries or fatalities in situations with limited warning or when evacuation orders are not adhered to. Access and functional needs populations may have challenges with evacuations.

Table P-12 below summarizes the building counts and improved value of parcels in the County, broken out by jurisdiction, that fall within the 1% chance floodplains. Additionally, the table also summarizes loss estimate values, which are calculated based upon the improved value and estimated contents value and assumes a two-foot deep flood which usually results in 25% of the total value, based on FEMA depth-damage curves. Sanders County is mapped in the NFHL floodplain and this is the flood source used to perform the analysis.

Table P-12 indicates the estimated flood losses in each applicable jurisdiction in Sanders County, the unincorporated areas having the greatest numbers of properties at risk and highest estimated losses. The majority of the properties are residential. There is a total value of \$40.7 million in improved values and \$15.2 million in estimated losses to Sander County's residential properties. This is the largest amount of all property types analyzed.

**Table P-12 Sanders County Parcels at Risk to 1% Flood Hazard by Jurisdiction**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Property Type</b>	<b>Improved Parcels</b>	<b>Improved Value</b>	<b>Content Value</b>	<b>Total Value</b>	<b>Estimated Loss</b>	<b>Population</b>
Flathead Reservation	Agricultural	2	\$184,200	\$184,200	\$368,400	\$92,100	
	Residential	2	\$158,720	\$79,360	\$238,080	\$59,520	4
	Tribal	2	\$211,490	\$211,490	\$422,980	\$105,745	
Hot Springs	Commercial	1	\$36,429	\$36,429	\$72,858	\$18,215	
	Residential	21	\$2,054,252	\$1,027,126	\$3,081,378	\$770,345	46
	Tribal	1	\$75,100	\$75,100	\$150,200	\$37,550	
Plains	Exempt	4	\$375,714	\$375,714	\$751,428	\$187,857	
	Residential	30	\$2,822,900	\$1,411,450	\$4,234,350	\$1,058,588	66
Sanders County	Agricultural	28	\$4,448,130	\$4,448,130	\$8,896,260	\$2,224,065	
	Exempt	5	\$1,288,220	\$1,288,220	\$2,576,440	\$644,110	

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Improved Parcels	Improved Value	Content Value	Total Value	Estimated Loss	Population
	Residential	195	\$35,717,787	\$17,858,894	\$53,576,681	\$13,394,170	427
	Vacant	2	\$35,540	\$35,540	\$71,080	\$17,770	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>\$47,408,482</b>	<b>\$27,031,653</b>	<b>\$74,440,135</b>	<b>\$18,610,034</b>	<b>543</b>

Sources: FEMA NFHL

Sanders County also has a total of 45 critical facilities located in the special flood hazard area (SFHA). The majority of critical facilities at risk are in the transportation sector and consist mainly of non-scour bridges. There are also three energy and two food, water and shelter facilities also located in the SFHA. This is shown in Table P-13 below.

**Table P-13 Sanders County Critical Facilities at Risk to 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazards**

Jurisdiction	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Materials	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Total
<b>Sanders County</b>	-	3	2	-	-	-	40	<b>45</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>45</b>

Source: Montana DNRC, FEMA, HAZUS, HIFLD 2022, Montana DES, NBI

All participating jurisdictions in Sanders County contain structures located in the floodplain other than Thompson Falls, as seen in Figure P-10 through Figure P-13 below.

Figure P-10 Sanders County Flood Hazard and Structures

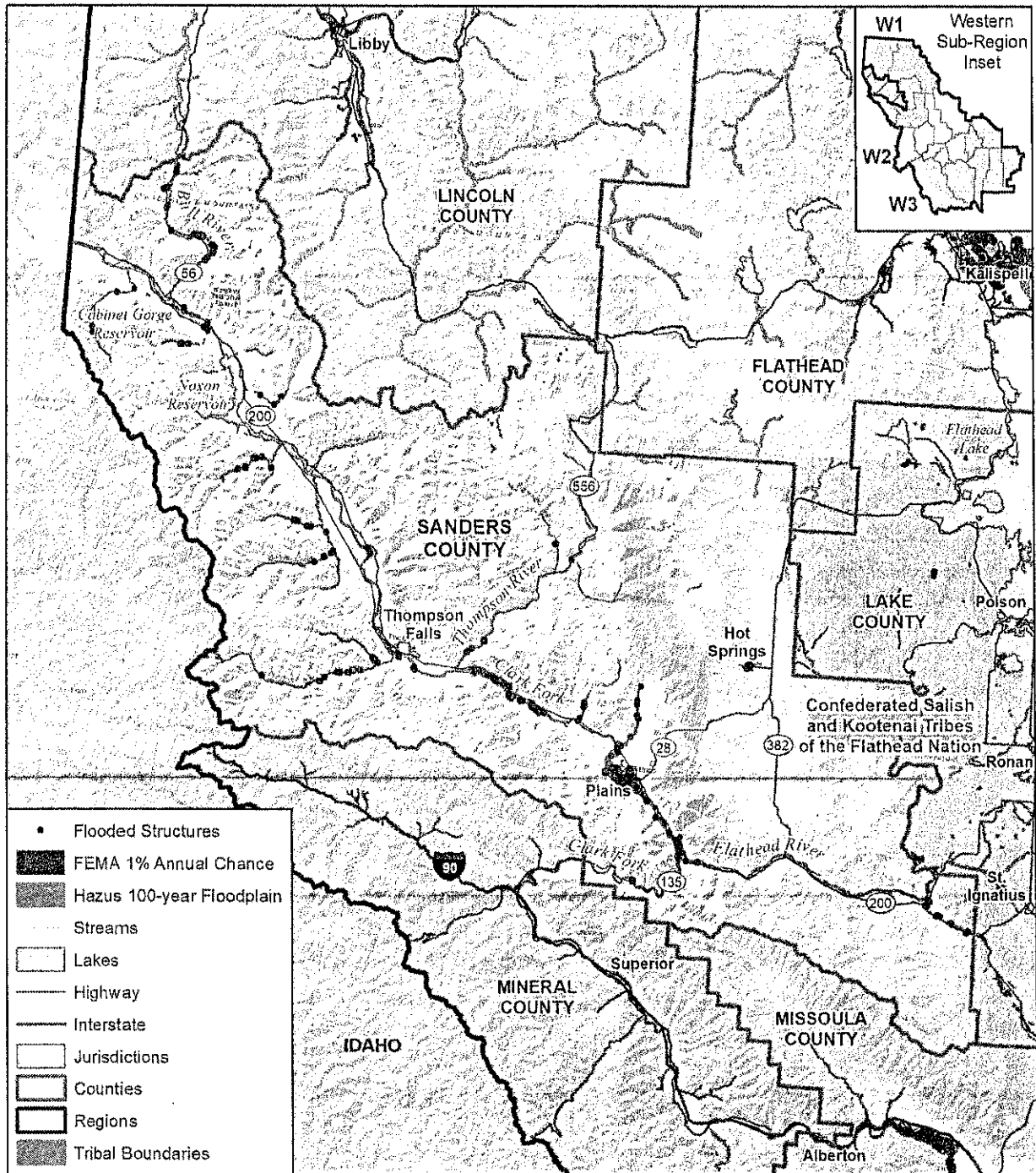


Figure P-11 City of Thompson Falls Flood Hazard and Structures

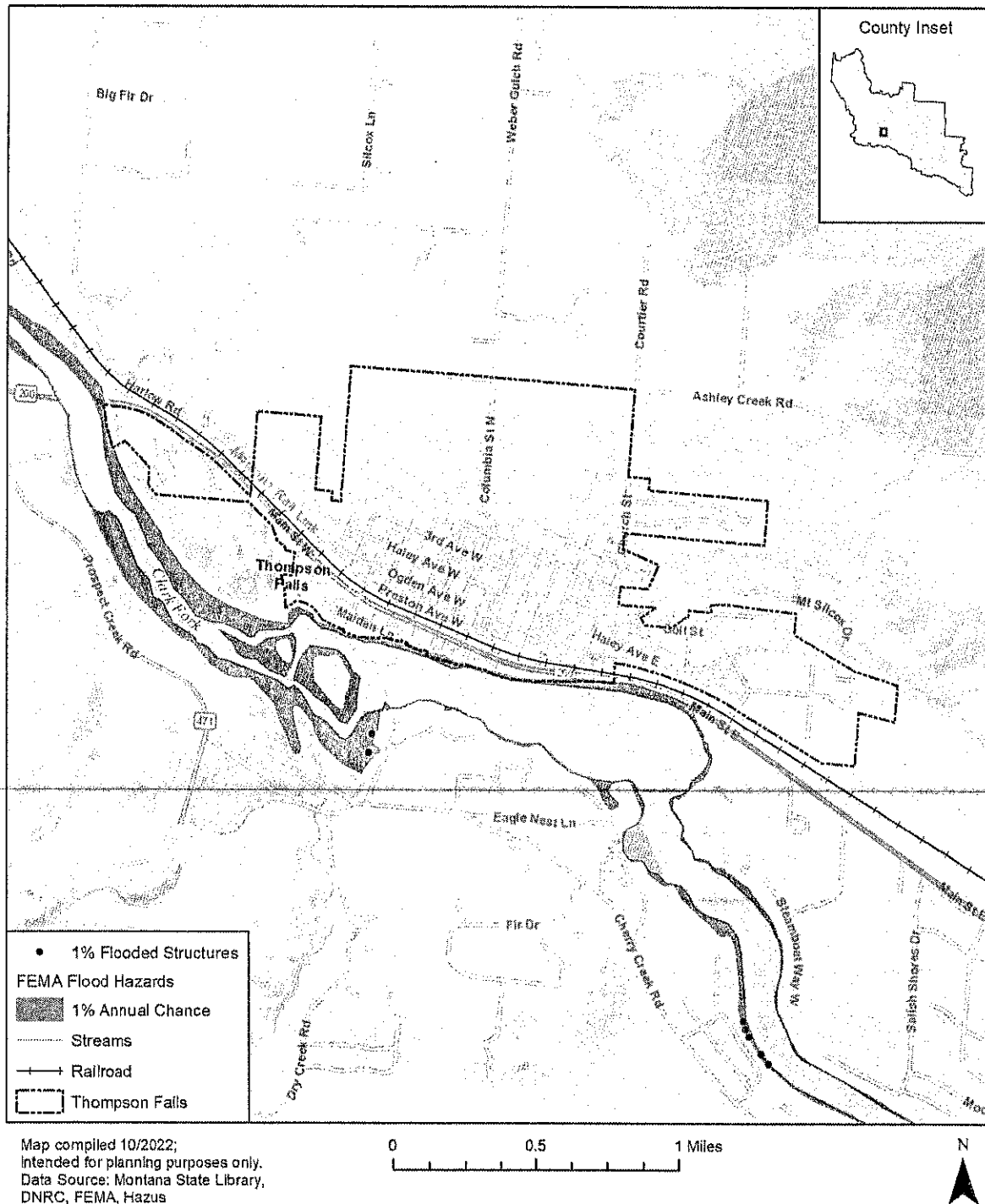
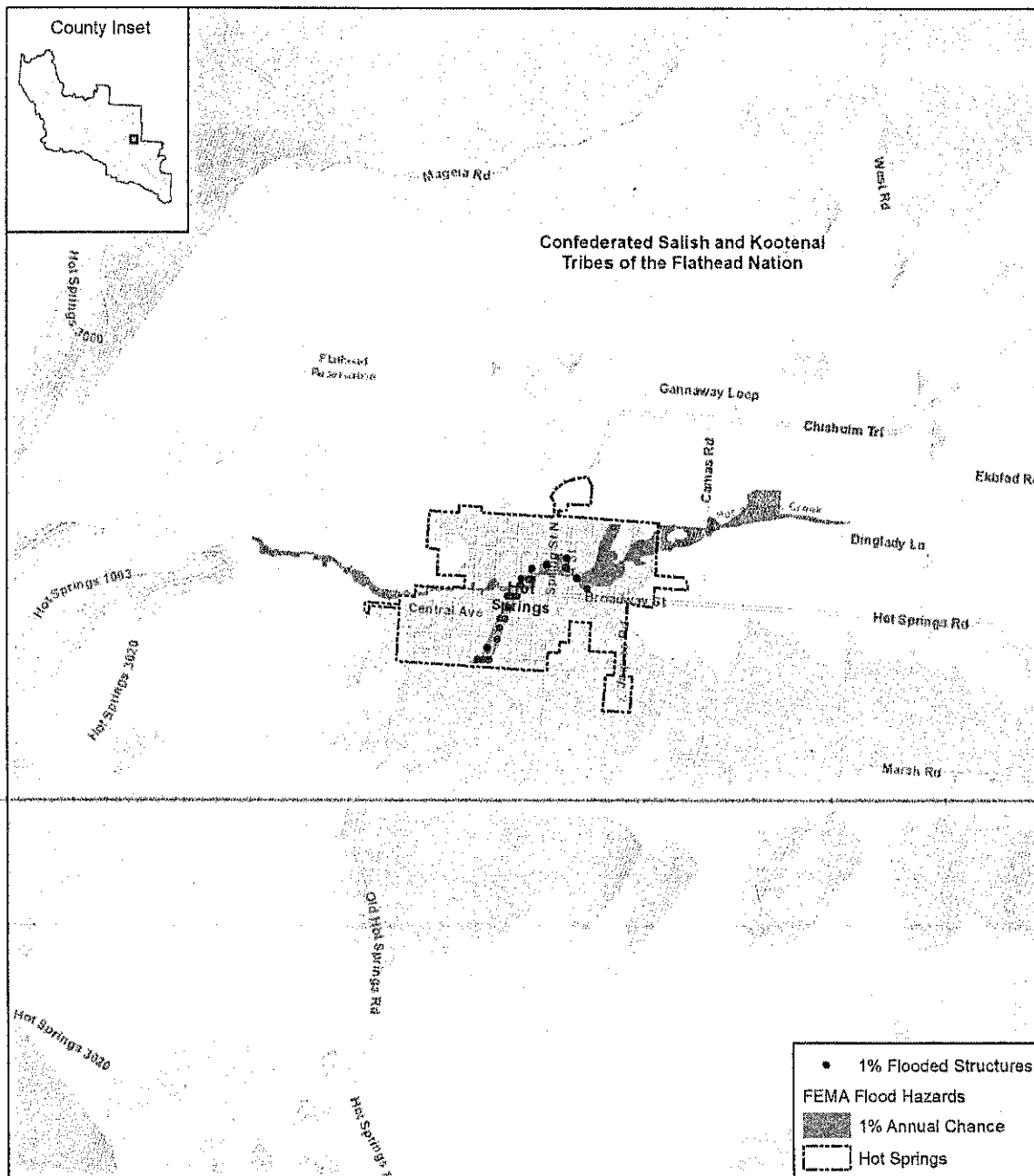


Figure P-12 Town of Hot Springs Flood Hazard and Structures



Map compiled 10/2022;  
intended for planning purposes only.  
Data Source: Montana State Library,  
DNRC, FEMA, Hazus

**Figure P-13 Town of Plains Flood Hazard and Structures**

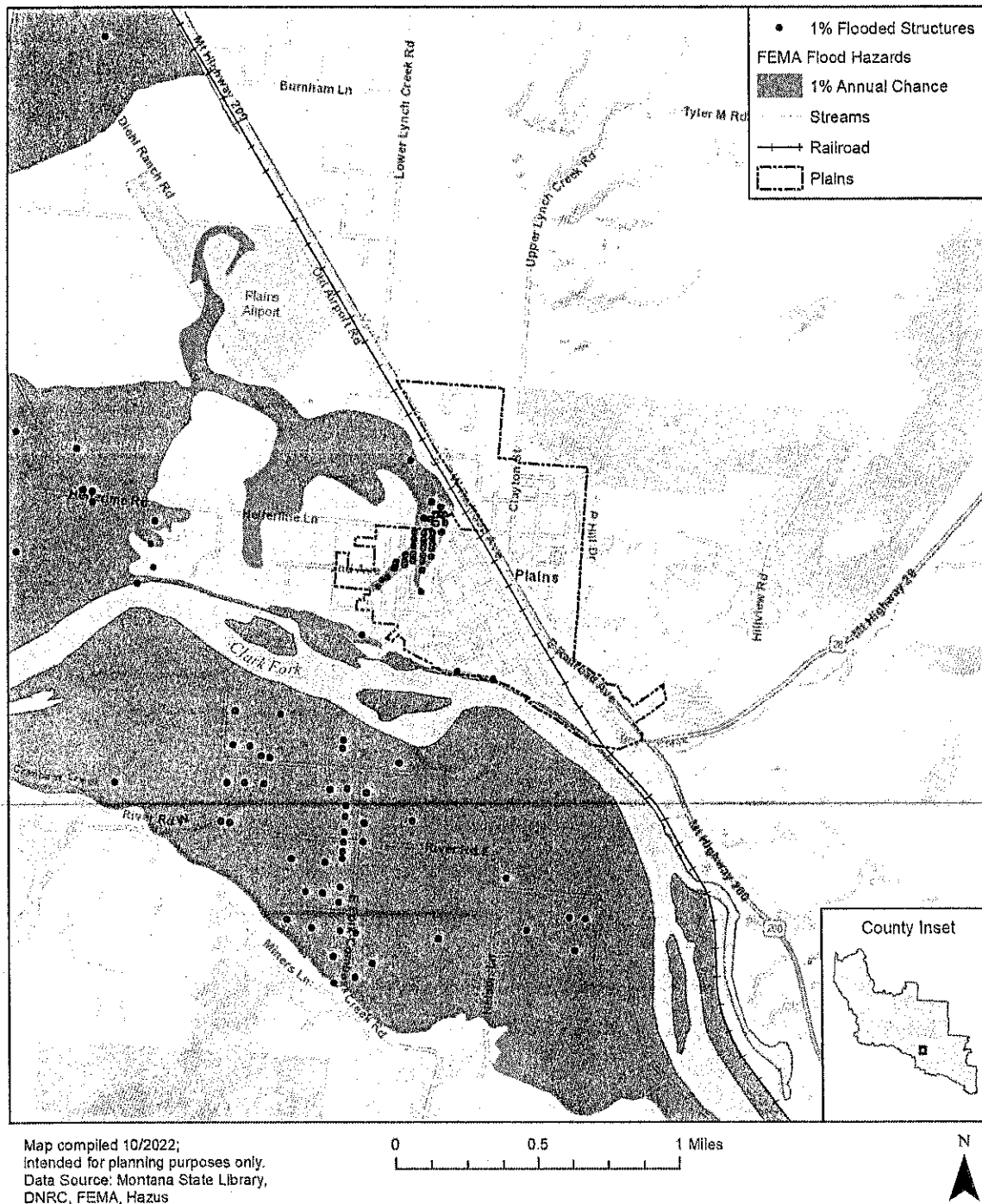
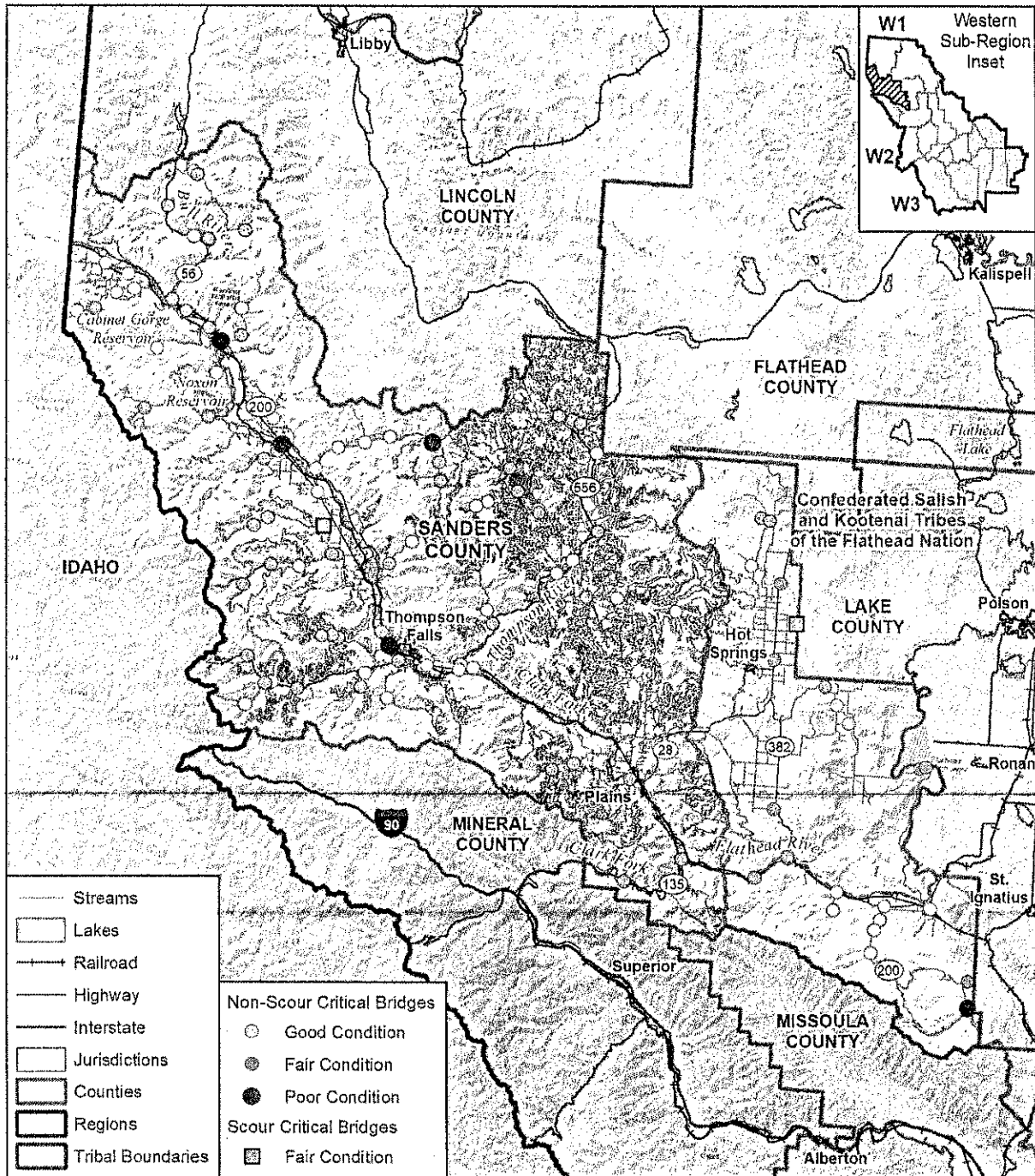


Figure P-14 below displays the location of bridges in Sanders County and their condition. Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the flood risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

Figure P-14 Sanders County Bridges



Map compiled 10/2022;  
Intended for planning purposes only.  
Data Source: Montana State Library,  
National Bridge Inventory

0 10 20 Miles





#### **P.4.8 Hazardous Materials Incident**

Sanders County has rated hazardous materials incidents as a low overall significance hazard. Sanders County has one Risk Management Program (RMP) facility, as well as one hazardous liquid pipeline which traverses the county passing near numerous towns and the Clark Fork River. Additionally, there have been 40 NRC reported hazardous material incidents that have occurred in Sanders County since 1990.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the hazardous materials incident risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.9 Landslide**

Landslide is rated a low significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5).

Sanders County has a very rugged and mountainous terrain, and geologic data indicates a high confidence in history of past landslides in the county. The County was included in two federal disaster declarations involving landslides in 1974 and 1986. Though Sanders County has a low annualized landslide frequency, it has a relatively moderate overall risk index rating and expected annual loss rating, according to the NRI. For more information, refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the landslide risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.10 Severe Summer Weather**

Severe summer weather is rated a medium significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5).

Sanders County experienced the third least number of total severe summer weather events in Western Region, including 19 hail events and 4 heavy rain events. There was no recorded lightning events or excessive heat events in the county that resulted in losses, however, lightning, and excessive heat events still occur in the county. Property losses from severe summer weather in Sanders County totaled to \$15,000 from 1955 to 2022 (less than 1% of total losses in the Western Region), mainly due to hail events. There were no recorded crop losses due to summer weather events in Sanders County.

Exposure to severe summer weather is relatively uniform throughout the county. Variability in vulnerability throughout the county depends on the distribution of assets (Section P.3.2) and the susceptibility of each type of asset to severe summer weather hazards (base plan, Section 4). The greatest property losses are likely to occur in the City of Thompson Falls, where people and infrastructure are concentrated.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the severe summer weather risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.11 Severe Winter Weather**

Severe winter weather is rated a medium significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5).

The Lower Clark Fork Zone experienced the greatest number of recorded severe winter weather events in the Western Region and the NRI rated Sanders County as one of the six counties with a "relatively moderate" risk index rating for winter weather.

Exposure to severe winter weather is relatively uniform throughout the county. Variability in vulnerability throughout the county depends on the distribution of assets (Section P.3.2) and the susceptibility of each type of asset to severe winter weather hazards (base plan, Section 4). The greatest property losses are likely to occur in the City of Thompson Falls, where people and infrastructure are concentrated.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the severe winter weather risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.12 Human Conflict**

Human conflict is rated as an overall medium significance for Sanders County, along with nearly all other counties in the Western Region. In total, three terrorist attacks occurred between 1970-2020, 221 civil unrest/protest events between January 2017 and January 2021, and no active shooter events occurred in the Montana Western Region. While none of these events took place in Sanders County, the planning team believes that due to potential for future events, the hazard should be rated as medium. All jurisdictions in the county are vulnerable to experiencing a human conflict event in the future.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the human conflict risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.13 Tornadoes & Windstorms**

Tornadoes and windstorms are rated medium significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5).

The Flathead/Bitterroot Valleys Zone experienced the 11th greatest number of high wind and strong wind events in the Western Region, with 56 total events. Additionally, Sanders County experienced the sixth least number of thunderstorm wind events and tornado events. Sanders County experienced relatively low property and crop losses due to thunderstorm wind events when compared to other Western Region counties. There were no recorded property and crop losses due to thunderstorm wind events and tornado events. All people and property are vulnerable to tornado and windstorms in Sanders County.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the tornadoes and windstorms risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.14 Transportation Accidents**

Sanders County rated transportation accidents as an overall medium significance. Sanders County has seen 1,330 roadway crashes during the four-year period from 2016-2020, an average of 332 per year. While transportation accidents can occur along any type of transportation route in the county and region, a greater frequency of accidents occur along heavily traveled roadways, such as State Highway 200 which runs through the county and towns of Thompson Falls and Plains. This roadway also is the only connection for the county to the state of Idaho and the rest of Montana, via connections to highways 135 and 93. Transportation accidents and subsequent disruptions to transportation and shipping are likely to continue to occur in the county, due to the dependence on this roadway as the only land route out of the county.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the transportation accident risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### **P.4.15 Volcanic Ash**

All counties in the Western Region and all jurisdictions within Sanders County rated volcanic ash as an overall low significance hazard (Table P-5).

Exposure to volcanic ash hazards is relatively uniform throughout the county is dependent on the scale of volcanic activity impacting the region. Vulnerability depends on the distribution of assets throughout the county (Section P.3.2) and the susceptibility of asset classes to volcanic ash hazards (Section 4 of the base plan). Vulnerability is likely higher in towns and cities where assets are more concentrated.

Refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of the volcanic ash risk relative to Sanders County and the Western Region.

#### P.4.16 Wildfire

Wildfire is rated a high significance hazard for Sanders County, Thompson Falls, Hot Springs, and Plains (Table P-5). Virtually the entire population of Sanders County lives within a designated zone of high wildfire risk or greater. 4,235 people in Sanders County live in a designated extreme wildfire risk, 36% of the county population. This includes 1,268 in Thompson Falls (85%), 773 in Plains (76%), and 699 people in Hot Springs. This exceeds the population of Hot Springs and indicates widespread exposure that includes many additional seasonally-occupied homes and/or short term rental properties.

The SoVI-based rating of social vulnerability in Sanders County is relatively high (Section P.2.4 *Social Vulnerability*), largely due to a high relatively proportion of the population living with disabilities, near or at the poverty level, and with a high burden from the cost of housing. Sanders County residents are also have a considerably older average age and attain a lower level of education than in other Montana counties (Table P-2). Wildfire can be devastating both financially and emotionally. Socio-economic vulnerability amplifies the financial and mental stress of wildfire hazards and often makes it difficult for people to recover. Wildfire may result in injuries or fatalities in situations with limited warning or when evacuation orders are not adhered to. Access and functional needs populations may have challenges with evacuations.

According to GIS analysis, Sanders County has approximately 11,381 individuals residing in wildfire risk areas. Figure P-15 below displays the wildfire risk in Sanders County. While the map indicates large swaths of the County do not have wildfire risk, much of the available data shows that areas of very high and extreme wildfire risk are heavily concentrated in the populated and developed areas of the County, which are relatively concentrated around State Highways 200 and 28. According to the vulnerability analysis, 93% of Sanders County's building inventory is exposed to high, very high, or extreme wildfire risk, which is the 8<sup>th</sup> highest ratio of all counties in the region.

Sanders County has experienced five federal disaster declarations involving wildfire. Two of these occurred in the summer of 2000, one in 2003, and two in the summer of 2017. As detailed in the regional base plan, trends indicate the wildfires are becoming larger, more frequent, and more numerous in Montana. Given this, coupled with the extensive amount of Sanders County's population, buildings, assets, and infrastructure potentially exposed to this hazard, wildfires in coming years may pose a very significant threat to the county and its municipalities. Since wildfires typically result in a total building loss including contents and 93% of the county's inventory is exposed, as mentioned above, a large future wildfire presents a potentially devastating scenario for the entire county. Table P-14 below summarizes the estimated exposed value of improvements in each wildfire risk category. As shown, approximately 6,068 buildings totaling \$1.5 billion in value are exposed to high, very high, or extreme wildfire risk. See Chapter 4 in the base plan for details on the methodology of this analysis.

**Table P-14 Sanders County Parcels at Risk to Wildfire by Jurisdiction and Risk Rating**

At Risk Rating	Jurisdiction	Improved Parcels	Improved Value	Content Value	Total Value	Population
At Risk to Extreme Wildfire Hazards	Flathead Reservation	56	\$4,633,490	\$2,465,635	\$7,099,125	116
	Hot Springs	338	\$28,763,844	\$15,189,070	\$43,952,914	699
	Plains	382	\$44,218,953	\$24,789,364	\$69,008,317	773
	Thompson Falls	600	\$73,295,798	\$40,621,219	\$113,917,017	1,268

At Risk Rating	Jurisdiction	Improved Parcels	Improved Value	Content Value	Total Value	Population
At Risk to Very High Wildfire Hazards	Sanders County	675	\$91,361,951	\$48,786,203	\$140,148,154	1,380
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,051</b>	<b>\$242,274,036</b>	<b>\$131,851,490</b>	<b>\$374,125,526</b>	<b>4,235</b>
	Flathead Reservation	259	\$27,289,156	\$16,690,831	\$43,979,987	462
	Hot Springs	2	\$201,240	\$100,620	\$301,860	4
	Plains	146	\$20,323,172	\$11,027,283	\$31,350,455	287
	Thompson Falls	40	\$7,699,406	\$3,957,978	\$11,657,384	85
	Sanders County	3,300	\$592,104,570	\$352,742,570	\$944,847,140	5,926
At Risk to High Wildfire Hazards	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,747</b>	<b>\$647,617,544</b>	<b>\$384,519,281</b>	<b>\$1,032,136,825</b>	<b>6,765</b>
	Flathead Reservation	45	\$4,848,446	\$3,473,040	\$8,321,486	57
	Sanders County	225	\$42,971,969	\$32,185,075	\$75,157,044	324
	<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>\$47,820,415</b>	<b>\$35,658,115</b>	<b>\$83,478,530</b>	<b>381</b>

Source: MSDI 2022, MWRA

Table P-15 summarizes the potential impact of wildfire on critical facilities and lifelines in Sanders County and its associated jurisdictions. The table highlights the type and number of facilities in each jurisdiction in the County in Wildfire risk areas. See Chapter 4 for the methodology of the critical facilities at risk analysis.

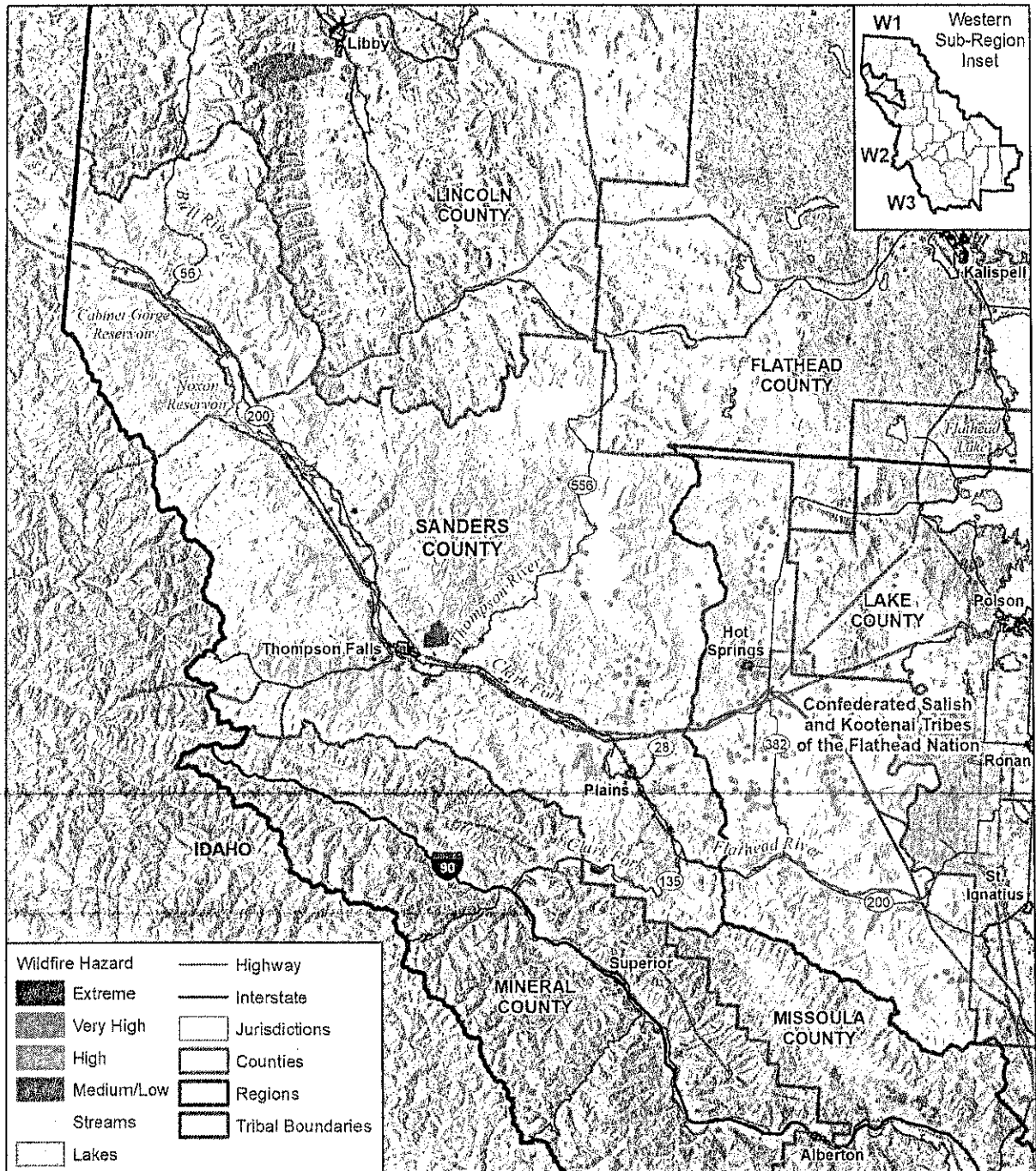
**Table P-15 Critical Facilities at Risk to Wildfire Hazards by Jurisdiction, Facility Type, and Risk Rating**

At Risk Rating	Jurisdiction	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Materials	Health & Medical	Safety & Security	Transportation	Total
At Risk to Extreme Wildfire Hazards	Flathead Reservation	5	5	-	-	-	-	1	11
	Hot Springs	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	3
	Plains	1	-	1	-	1	5	1	9
	Thompson Falls	3	-	3	-	3	8	-	17
	Sanders County	31	7	3	-	1	7	4	53

At Risk Rating	Jurisdiction	Communications	Energy	Food, Water, Shelter	Hazardous Materials	Health & Medical	Safety & Security	Transportation	Total
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>At Risk to Very High Wildfire Hazards</b>	Flathead Reservation	-	-	1	-	-	3	9	13
	Plains	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Thompson Falls	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
	Sanders County	1	2	-	1	2	6	33	45
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>At Risk to High Wildfire Hazards</b>	Flathead Reservation	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
	Sanders County	1	-	1	1	-	-	7	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>

Source: HIFLD 2022, Montana DES, NBI, MWRA

Figure P-15 Sanders County Wildfire Hazard



Map compiled 9/2022;  
intended for planning purposes only.  
Data Source: Montana State Library, MWRA

## P.5 Mitigation Capabilities Assessment

As part of the regional plan development, the Region and participating jurisdictions developed a mitigation capability assessment. Capabilities are those plans, policies and procedures that are currently in place that contribute to reducing hazard losses. Combining the risk assessment with the mitigation capability assessment results in "net vulnerability" to disasters and more accurately focuses the goals, objectives, and proposed actions of this plan. The County Planning Team (CPT) used a two-step approach to conduct this assessment. First, an inventory of common mitigation activities was made using a matrix. The purpose of this effort was to identify policies and programs that were either in place or could be undertaken, if appropriate. Second, the CPT conducted an inventory and review of existing policies, regulations, plans, projects, and programs to determine if they contribute to reducing hazard related losses.

### P.5.1 Regulatory Mitigation Capabilities

Table P-16 lists planning and land management tools typically used by local jurisdictions to implement hazard mitigation activities and indicates those that are in place in the Western Region and each participating jurisdiction.

**Table P-16 Sanders County and Jurisdictions Regulatory Mitigation Capabilities**

Plans and Regulations	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
Building Codes	No, State Building Codes	No, State Building Codes	No, State Building Codes	No, State Building Codes
Building Codes Year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BCEGS Rating	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Improvements Program (CIP) or Plan	No	No	No	No
Community Rating System (CRS)	No	No	No	No
Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)	Yes, 2012	Yes, County Plan	Yes, County Plan	Yes, County Plan
Comprehensive, Master, or General Plan	No	Yes, Downtown Master Plan 2015	No	No
Economic Development Plan	No	No	No	No
Elevation Certificates	No	No	No	No
Emergency Operations Plan	No	No	No	No
Erosion/Sediment Control Program	No	No	No	No
Floodplain Management Plan	Yes, 2016	Yes, County Regulations	Yes, County Regulations	Yes, County Regulations
Flood Insurance Study	No	No	No	No
Growth Management Ordinance	No	No	Yes, 2014	Yes, 2014
Hazard-Specific Ordinance or Plan (Floodplain, Steep Slope, Wildfire)	No	No	No	No
National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)	Yes, 3/1/1996	No, Sanctioned 2/7/1976	Yes, 10/15/1985	Yes, 4/15/1986
Site Plan Review Requirements	No	No	No	No



Plans and Regulations	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
Stormwater Program, Plan, or Ordinance	Yes, 2017	No	No	No
Zoning Code or Ordinance	No	No	Yes	No
Other?	N/A			N/A

#### Discussion on Existing Regulatory Mitigation Capabilities

The CPT noted that Sanders County has no specific ordinances pertaining to land use and development in and around hazards other than floodplains and the county CWPP. Sanders County does not have a building department and as such, does not enforce building codes. The State of Montana does building inspections in Sanders County for commercial construction and residential four-plex units or larger. Building codes have not been adopted by Sanders County or the communities of Thompson Falls or Plains. The State of Montana's Building Codes are used in lieu of local codes.

The county and municipalities do have limited regulatory capabilities in place which may help with the goals of hazard mitigation. Landowners wishing to subdivide tracts of land in or out of incorporated communities must follow the subdivision regulation process outlined by the 2013 Sanders County Subdivision Regulations. The City of Thompson Falls does not have subdivision regulations. The Towns of Plains and Hot Springs have adopted the State of Montana's model subdivision regulations. In most cases the properties have to have Subdivision approvals in order to be developed. The planning department is responsible for giving guidance and approvals of subdivisions.

Additionally, the Town of Hot Springs has building codes including a Fire Prevention Code and Flood Protection Code. The Fire Prevention Code stipulates the Town of Hot Springs endorses the most recent version of the National Fire Protection Association Fire Code and violations are subject to penalty. The Flood Protection Code states that the town shall participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and the adopts the most recent edition of the Flood Insurance Rate Map as the basis for determining designated floodplain areas.

#### Discussion on NFIP Participation and Compliance

Sanders County, the Town of Hot Springs, and the Town of Plains are participants of the National Flood Insurance Program. The County Floodplain Administrator is appointed by the Office of Land Service, the Floodplain Administrator for Hot Springs is appointed by the Office of Zoning, and the Floodplain Administrator for the Town of Plains is the Town Mayor. Each floodplain administrator enforces local floodplain regulations and NFIP requirements and adopted updated flood insurance rate maps in 2012.

The 2016 Sanders County Floodplain Regulations, Town of Hot Spring's Flood Plain Hazard Management Regulations, and Town of Plains' Floodplain Regulations include provisions for restricting, prohibiting, or guiding development activities in special flood hazard areas. All permit applications are required to undergo thorough review, utilizing the best available base flood elevation and floodway data from federal, state, and local sources. This ensures that sites are reasonably safe from flooding, that all necessary permits have been obtained, and that proposed development doesn't adversely affect the flood carrying capacity of flood-prone areas.

According to each jurisdiction's floodplain regulations, the Floodplain Administrator is to inform structure owners about the potential need for a permit before initiating repair or reconstruction, particularly for structures exceeding 30% in flood damages. Additionally, structures that have suffered substantial damage or will undergo significant improvements (defined as 50 percent of market value of the structure before damage) require permits and must be upgraded to meet minimum building standards. The Floodplain

Administrator also collaborates with various agencies to coordinate assistance and provide information on Hazard Mitigation and Recovery measures to structure owners. Sanders County does not have any properties classified under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) as Repetitive Loss (RL) or Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL).

The City of Thompson Falls is the only municipality in Sanders County which does not participate in the NFIP, and it has not participated since the city was sanctioned by the NFIP in 1976. The city has not sought to participate in the NFIP since, due to the fact that very little of the city and no identified structures are located in the floodplain. Additionally, the water level in this area is regulated by a Northwest Energy dam, meaning the City of Thompson Falls is not particularly vulnerable to flooding.

## P.5.2 Administrative and Technical Mitigation Capabilities

Table P-17 identifies the County and participating jurisdictions personnel responsible for activities related to mitigation and loss prevention in Sanders County.

**Table P-17 Sanders County Jurisdictions Administrative/Technical Mitigation Capabilities**

<b>Administrative and Technical</b>	<b>Sanders County</b>	<b>City of Thompson Falls</b>	<b>Town of Hot Springs</b>	<b>Town of Plains</b>
Emergency Manager	Yes	No	No	No
Floodplain Administrator/ Position/ Department	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Community Planning:	Yes	No	No	No
- Planner/Engineer (Land Development)	Yes	No	No	No
- Planner/Engineer/ Scientist (Natural Hazards)	No	No	No	No
- Engineer/Professional (Construction)	No	No	No	No
- Resiliency Planner	No	No	No	No
- Transportation Planner	No	No	No	No
Full-Time Building Official	No	No	No	No
GIS Specialist and Capability	No	No	No	No
Grant Manager, Writer, or Specialist	No	No	No	No
Housing Authority	No	No	No	No
Warning Systems: (list the hazards each system is used for)	No	No	No	No
- Sirens	No	No	No	No
- Reverse 911	No	No	No	No
- IPAWS/Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)	No	No	No	No
- Opt-In Notifications (CodeRed, Everbridge, etc.)	No	No	No	No

Administrative and Technical	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
- Other system	No	No	No	No
Other?				

### P.5.3 Financial Capabilities

Table P-18 identifies the County and participating jurisdictions financial tools or resources that the jurisdictions have access or are eligible to use and could potentially be used to help fund mitigation activities.

**Table P-18 Sanders County Jurisdictions Financial Capabilities**

Financial Capabilities	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
Ability to fund projects through Capital Improvements funding	No	No	No	No
Ability to incur debt through general obligation bonds	Yes	No	No	No
Ability to incur debt through private activities	Yes	No	No	No
Ability to incur debt through special tax bonds	Yes	No	No	No
Authority to levy taxes for a specific purpose with voter approval	Yes	No	No	No
Authority to withhold spending in hazard prone areas	No	No	No	No
Community Development Block Grants	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grants	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FEMA Public Assistance funds	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stormwater Service Fees	No	No	No	No
System Development Fee	No	No	No	No
Utility fees (water, sewer, gas, electric, etc.)	Yes	No	No	No
Other?	N/A			

### FEMA and Other Grant Funding Leveraged for Hazard Mitigation

Funding for the proposed mitigation projects may come from a variety of sources. Below is a list of funding possibilities. This list is not tied directly to each proposed project; however, these programs could work for specific projects or multiple projects.

- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants including:
  - Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)
  - Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMA).
  - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).
- US Army Corp of Engineers funding

- USDA Environmental Quality Incentive Program.
- USDA Conservation Reserve and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.
- USDA Small Watersheds (NRCS).

There are many more potential funding opportunities available to the municipalities and county. Funding research will be done during the scoping process for each project. New funding mechanisms may be present that were not before. Sanders County and its jurisdictions have participated in several of these hazard mitigation assistance projects, summarized in the Table P-19 below.

**Table P-19 Sanders County Hazard Mitigation Assistance Projects**

Program	Date Approved	Project Type	Status	Location
PDM	2011-08-10	91.1: Local Multi-hazard Mitigation Plan; 93.1: Tribal (Local) Multi-hazard Mitigation Plan	Closed	Sanders
PDM	2018-06-15	91.5: Local Multijurisdictional Multi-hazard Mitigation Plan - UPDATE	Closed	Sanders
BRIC	2020-12-11	402.3: Infrastructure Protective Measures	Obligated	Sanders

Source: FEMA Opendata

#### P.5.4 Education and Outreach Capabilities

Table P-20 identifies the education and outreach programs in place at the County and participating jurisdictions are or could be used to help promote mitigation activities.

**Table P-20 Sanders County Education and Outreach Capabilities**

Education & Outreach Programs	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
Ongoing public education programs (fire safety, responsible water use, household preparedness, etc)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Local citizen groups that communicate hazard risks	No	Yes	No	No
Firewise or other fire mitigation program	No	Yes	No	No
National Weather Service StormReady	No	Yes	No	No

The Sanders County CPT notes that they have an active Local Emergency Planning Committee, however, education and public outreach efforts for specific hazards, particularly wildfire, could be improved on.

#### P.5.5 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Mitigation Partnerships

Table P-21 shows the local chapters partnered with the County and participating jurisdictions.

**Table P-21 Sanders County Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
American Red Cross	No	No	No	No

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	Sanders County	City of Thompson Falls	Town of Hot Springs	Town of Plains
Chamber of Commerce	Yes, Thompson Falls Chamber	Yes	Yes, Thompson Falls Chamber	Yes, Thompson Falls Chamber
Community Organizations (Lions, Kiwanis, etc.)	No	No	No	No
Environmental Groups	No	No	No	No
Homeowner Associations	No	No	No	No
Neighborhood Associations	No	No	No	No
Salvation Army	No	No	No	No
Veterans Groups	No	No	No	No
Other?				

### P.5.6 Opportunities for Enhancement

Based on the capabilities assessment, Sanders County has several existing mechanisms in place that already help to mitigate hazards. There are also opportunities for the County to expand or improve on their policies, programs and fiscal capabilities and further protect the community. Future improvements may include providing training for staff members related to hazards or hazard mitigation grant funding in partnership with the County and DHSEM. Additional training opportunities will help to inform County and local government staff members on how best to integrate hazard information and mitigation projects into their departments. Continuing to train staff on mitigation and the hazards that pose a risk to Sanders County will lead to more informed staff members who can better communicate this information to the public. Another opportunity for enhancement is to increase public education and outreach on hazards. Creating ongoing public education programs or becoming Firewise and StormReady communities can increase the community's preparedness for hazard events. Improved cross-jurisdictional communication on evacuation and awareness to mitigate life safety impacts during dam incidents, floods, or wildfires including the development of brochures and using existing communication capabilities through social media or other media. Other specific opportunities for improvement include:

- Sanders County:
  - Consider adopting building codes and or a Zoning Ordinance
  - Work with Local Emergency Planning Committee to expand public education and outreach opportunities about hazards impacting the County
  - Consider joining FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) to lower the cost of flood insurance
  - Consider adopting a Hazard Specific Ordinance or Plan
  - Additional partnerships with area agencies to further develop hazard mitigation programs.
- City of Thompson Falls:
  - Expand City website to include more details on hazards impacting the City and access to emergency resources
  - Work with County Fire department to develop a public outreach campaign about the WUI and dangers of increasing development in these high risk areas
  - Consider adopting a zoning ordinance

- Town of Hot Springs:
  - Consider adopting a system for emergency notification and warnings
  - Consider adopting a Hazard Specific Ordinance or Plan
  - Consider the preparation of an up-to-date comprehensive, master, or general plan
  - Additional partnerships with area agencies to further develop hazard mitigation programs
- Town of Plains
  - Consider adopting a zoning ordinance
  - Consider adopting a Hazard Specific Ordinance or Plan
  - Consider the preparation of an up-to-date comprehensive, master, or general plan
  - Additional partnerships with area agencies to further develop hazard mitigation programs

## **P.6 Mitigation Strategy**

This section describes the mitigation strategy and mitigation action plan for Sanders County. See Chapter 5 of the base plan for more details on the process used to develop the mitigation strategy.

### **P.6.1 Goals**

During the creation of the 2023 Regional Plan, the counties in the Montana Western Region decided to collaborate and develop a set of new, uniform goals, which were adopted by all counties in the Region and move away from hazard-specific goals. The adopted goals are as follows:

- Goal 1: Reduce impacts to people, property, the environment, and the economy from hazards.
- Goal 2: Protect community lifelines and critical infrastructure to ensure the continuity of essential services.
- Goal 3: Increase public awareness and participation in hazard mitigation.
- Goal 4: Sustain and enhance jurisdictional capabilities to enact mitigation activities.
- Goal 5: Integrate hazard mitigation into other plans, processes, and regulations.
- Goal 6: Promote regional cooperation and leverage partnerships in mitigation solutions where possible.

The 2019 Sanders County Hazard Mitigation Plan outlined the following goals:

- Goal 1: Reduce Impacts from Wildfire
- Goal 2: Reduce Impacts from Transportation Accidents & Haz-Mat Incidents
- Goal 3: Reduce Impacts from Severe Weather and Drought
- Goal 4: Reduce Impacts from Flooding
- Goal 5: Reduce Impacts from Terrorism, Violence, Civil Unrest & Cyber Security
- Goal 6: Reduce Impacts from Communicable Disease
- Goal 7: Reduce Impacts from Landslides
- Goal 8: Reduce Impacts from Dam Failure
- Goal 9: Reduce Impacts from All Hazards

### **P.6.2 Progress on Previous Actions**

During the 2023 planning process, the Sanders County Planning Team reviewed all the mitigation actions from the 2014 plan. While progress has been made on several of the previous plans actions, none have been fully completed at this time. Additionally, the county has not elected to remove any of the previous actions. All 53 mitigation actions identified in 2014 will be carried forward for 2023, as shown in Table P-22 below.

### P.6.3 NFIP Continued Compliance.

Also important to reducing losses to future development is continued compliance with the NFIP. All the jurisdictions will continue to make every effort to remain in good standing with the program. This includes continuing to comply with the NFIP regarding adopting floodplain maps and implementing, maintaining, and updating floodplain ordinances. See Section 5.4.2 in the base plan for more discussion on NFIP compliance.

### P.6.4 Mitigation Action Plan

As a part of the 2023 regional planning process, the CPT developed an updated list of hazard mitigation actions or projects specific to Sanders County and its jurisdictions. The process used to identify, develop, and prioritize these actions is described in Chapter 5 of the base plan. Sanders County has 53 uncompleted mitigation actions carried over from the previous plan and has added an additional 4 new actions.

Table P-22 lists the 2023 Mitigation Action Plan for Sanders County and its participating jurisdictions. The CPT identified and prioritized the following mitigation actions based on the risk assessment and goals, and objectives. It is grouped by hazard(s) mitigated). Background information as well as information on how the action will be implemented and administered, such as ideas for implementation, responsible office (indicated with **bold** font), partners, potential funding, estimated cost, and timeline also are described. Per the DMA requirement, actions have been identified that address reducing losses to existing development as well as future development. The Cost Estimate column describes the estimated project costs using the following categories:

- Little to no cost
- Low: Less than \$10,000
- Moderate: \$10,000-\$100,000
- High: \$100,000-\$1,000,000
- Very High: More than \$1,000,000

The Timeline column describes the estimated time of completion for each project using the following categories:

- Short Term: 1-2 years
- Medium Term: 3-5 years
- Long Term: 5+ years
- Ongoing: action is implemented every year

The Status/Implementation Notes column describes the progress made on the actions so far using the following categories:

- Not Started: project is carried over from the previous Sanders County Plan; little to no work has been completed.
- In Progress: project is carried over from the previous Sanders County Plan; work has begun on the project and is proceeding.
- Annual: project is carried over from the previous Sanders County Plan and is implemented every year on an ongoing basis.
- New in 2023: The action is new to this plan update; little to no work has been completed.

Table P-22 below lists the mitigation actions for each participating jurisdiction in Sanders County. All jurisdictions have developed mitigation actions for each identified hazard in the HMP.





Table P-22 Mitigation Actions by Hazard and Jurisdiction Summary

ID	Mitigation Action Description	Hazards Mitigated	Jurisdictions	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status of Implementation Notes
1	Promote additional training opportunities for firefighters.	Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Individual Fire Chiefs, <b>Fire Association</b>	Low	County General Funds, DNRC, Fire Service Training School, FP&S Grants	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
2	Encourage local fire depts/districts to assess and purchase necessary equipment through available grants	Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Individual Fire Chiefs, <b>Fire Association</b>	Moderate	County General Funds, Fire Department General Funds, Staff Time, FP&S Grants	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
3	Assist fire departments/districts in identifying grant opportunities and assist them in grant writing.	Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, DNRC, Individual Fire Chiefs	Low	Individual Rural Fire Districts/City Dept. General Funds, OEM General Funds, Staff Time, Volunteers	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
4	Upgrade the water supply in communities as needed to more effectively assist with wildfire suppression.	Drought, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County Environmental Health, <b>Community Water Boards</b> , City/Town Councils	High	BRIC Grants, County General Funds, EPA Healthy Watersheds Consortium (HWC) Grant, CWSRF Grants, BRIC, USDA Rural Development Grants, USDA Rural Utilities Service Grants	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - In Progress
5	Support efforts by USFS to perform fuel mitigation on federal lands adjacent to the WUL.	Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	Commissioners, <b>Sanders County OEM</b> , Collaborative Wildfire Group, City/Town Councils	High	USFS, DNRC, County General Funds, HMGP Grants, USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG)	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
6	Continue to fund landowner fuel reduction grants program.	Wildfire	County	<b>Sanders County OEM</b>	High	USFS, DNRC, County General Funds, HMGP Grants, USDA	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation

ID	Action Name & Description	Hazards Mitigated	At-Risk Areas	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
						Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG), Title II Grant			
7	Improve existing access routes for evacuation and firefighter safety (i.e. Cherry Creek Road, River Road West, and others).	Multi: Dam Failure, Drought, Hazmat, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County	County Road Dept.	Very High	County General Funds, Staff Time,	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started
8	Provide outreach to citizens on wildfire mitigation techniques.	Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Fire Council, DNRC, City/Town Councils	High	USFS, DNRC, County General Funds, HMGP Grants, USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG), FireSafe Montana	Ongoing	High	Continue - Not Started
9	Ensure timeliness of smoke messaging to protect vulnerable populations.	Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Schools, Medical Facilities, City/Town Councils	Little to no cost	County General Funds, Staff Time, DEQ	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started
10	Maintain Sanders County Wildland Fire Information Facebook page.	Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Sanders Co. Collaborative Wildfire Group, City/Town Councils	Little to no cost	County General Funds, Staff/Volunteer Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
11	Update Community Wildfire Protection Plan.	Wildfire	County	Planning Dept., OEM	Low	HMGP Grants, USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG), OEM General Funds	Ongoing	High	Continue - In Progress

ID	Action Name & Description	Hazards Mitigated	Jurisdiction	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
12	Develop database to track landowner assessments and fuel reduction accomplishments.	Wildfire	County	OEM, GIS	Little to no cost	USFS, DNRC, County General Funds, HMGP Grants, USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG), FireSafe Montana	Short term	High	Annual Implementation
13	Develop database with mapping of water supplies and access points to share amongst first responders.	Drought, Wildfire	County	Fire Districts, Planning, GIS	Little to no cost	County General Funds, Staff Time	Short term	High	Annual Implementation
14	Continue to update subdivision regulations with requirements that reduce wildfire losses.	Wildfire	County	Planning Dept	Little to no cost	County General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
15	Encourage local emergency responders to have adequate training to respond to hazardous material events consistent with local capabilities.	Hazmat, Transportation Accidents	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	Rural Fire Districts, City Fire Depts., City/Town Councils, OEM	Low	Fire Dept. Operating Budgets, AFG Grants, Safer Grants, VFA Grants, FP&S Grants, HMGP Grants, BRIC	Ongoing	Medium	Annual Implementation
16	Increase awareness of first responders and medical community on common hazardous materials either stored, used or transported through the area.	Hazmat, Transportation Accidents	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Rural Fire Districts, City Fire Depts., City/Town Councils, LEPC, P66, MRL, Hospital, Salish Kootenai College	Low	County General Funds, MRL, P66, Hospital	Ongoing	Medium	Annual Implementation
17	Conduct ongoing awareness training to schools on hazmat exposure and shelter in place.	Hazmat, Transportation Accidents	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Rural Fire Districts, City Fire Depts., City/Town Councils, LEPC, P66, MRL, Schools	Moderate	Fire Department General Funds, Staff Time, School District Partnerships, AFG Grants, Safer Grants, VFA Grants	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started

ID	Action Name & Description	Hazards Mitigated	Locations	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status or Implementation Notes
18	Support drought programs implemented through the Conservation District, DNR, FSA, NRCS, NWS, and MSU Extension.	Drought	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	Conservation Districts, Public Works, DEQ, OES, FSA, MSU, County Extension Agent, Drought Committee, Hot Springs Town Council	Moderate	Conservation District General Funds, US Dept. of Interior LWCF, MSU Extension Funding, Staff Time	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started
19	Continue to make available educational material on winter weather survival.	Multi: Avalanche, Dam Failure, Drought, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, DES, NWS, City/Town Councils	Little to no cost	OEM General Funds, Staff Time, NWS Partnership	Ongoing	High	Continue - Not Started
20	Promote the National Weather Service's messaging on severe weather preparedness.	Multi: Dam Failure, Drought, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, DES, NWS, City/Town Councils	Little to no cost	OEM General Funds, Staff Time, NWS Partnership		High	Continue - Not Started
21	Partner with the National Weather Service on the Weather Ready Nation Ambassador Program and increase participation in program.	Multi: Dam Failure, Drought, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	LEPC, DES, NWS, City/Town Councils	Little to no cost	OEM General Funds, Staff Time, NWS Partnership	Ongoing	High	Continue - Not Started

Item	Action Name & Description	Hazards Mitigated	Geographies	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
22	Continue coordinated management for de-icing roads, plowing snow, clearing roads of fallen trees, and clearing debris from public property.	Multi: Avalanche, Dam Failure, Drought, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	City/Town Public Works, County Road Dept.	Moderate	HMGP Grants, State Grant Funding, County Road Dept. General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
23	Supports Sanders County Drought Committee and their recommendations.	Drought	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County Extension Agent, County Commissioners, City/Town Councils, NWS, DNRC, FSA, NRCS	Little to no cost	Conservation District General Funds, US Dept. of Interior LWCF, MSU Extension Funding, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Continue - Not Started
24	Continue to resize and upgrade culverts and bridges and elevate roadways in various locations to improve conveyance of flood waters.	Flooding	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County Road Dept., City/Town Public Works Depts., MDT	High	County Road Dept. General Funds, BRIC, MDT General Funds	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
25	Maintain and improve the existing stormwater infrastructure to reduce impacts from flooding.	Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather	Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	City/Town Public Works Depts.	Very High	CWSRF Grants, BRIC, USDA Rural Development Grants, USDA Rural Utilities Service Grants	Ongoing	High	Continue - Not Started
26	Educate homeowners on purchasing flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program.	Flooding	County, Plains, Hot Springs	County Floodplain Administrator, City/Town Floodplain Administrators, MT DNRC, MT DES, FEMA	Low	County and City Planning Department/Floodplain Admin. General Funds, Staff Time, FEMA NFIP CAP	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
27	Coordinate with the National Weather Service on flood preparedness and disseminate information to public.	Flooding	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, NWS, DES, City/Town Councils	Little to no cost	County General Funds, NWS	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation

ID	Activity Name & Description	Hazard Mitigated	Locations	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
28	Support NRCS committee that's looking at flood mitigation projects and completion of Phase I Treatment Plan for the Plains Reach of the Clark Fork River from Henry to Lynch Creeks.	Flooding	County, Plains	County Land Services, Town of Plains, Landowners, NRCS	Very High	County Land Services Dept. General Funds, NRCS, USDA Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Grant, USDA NRCS Conservation Programs, USDA Water Processes and Water Resources Grants	Long-term	Medium	Annual Implementation
29	Work towards certifying the levee on the Garrison property with the USACE.	Flooding	County	County, USACE	High	USACE authorities, Silver Jackets	Mid-term	Medium	Annual Implementation
30	Continue awareness and training on active shooters	Human Conflict	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	DES, Law Enforcement, Schools, City/Town Councils	Low	HSGP, EMPG, Law Enforcement Agency General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Continue - In Progress
31	Review Crisis Action Plans in all schools and hospitals to ensure they include adequate security measures.	Human Conflict	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, LEPC, School Resource Officers, Hospitals, City/Town Councils	Low	County General Funds, Schools & Hospital Staff Time	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - In Progress
32	Continue awareness training with county-city staff on cyber security.	Cyber Attack	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County IT Dept, City/Town IT Depts.	Low	HSGP Grants, State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
33	Consider physical hardening of critical facilities (i.e. anti-vehicle barricades / interior barricades for locking doors [door kicks, door stops] / perimeter fencing / controlled access gates).	Human Conflict	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Law Enforcement, DHS, City/Town Councils	Moderate	County, City, & Town General Funds, Schools, Hospitals, HMGP	Mid-term	High	Annual Implementation



ID	Hazard Name & Description	Hazard Mitigation	Jurisdiction	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
34	Continue to implement recommendations from cyber vulnerability assessments.	Cyber Attack	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County IT Dept., City/Town Councils	Moderate	HSGP Grants, State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started
35	Provide outreach to senior citizens on cyber security.	Cyber Attack	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County IT Dept., City/Town Councils	Moderate	HSGP Grants, State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started
36	Continue to prevent and control communicable disease by surveillance.	Communicable Disease	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County Public Health, City/Town Councils	Low	CDC Grants, Public Health Dept. General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
37	Continue to prevent and control communicable disease by activities to raise and sustain vaccine coverage in all populations.	Communicable Disease	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County Public Health, City/Town Councils	Low	CDC Grants, Public Health Dept. General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
38	Continue to conduct risk-based inspections of all food service establishments.	Communicable Disease	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County Environmental Health, City/Town Councils	Low	CDC Grants, Public Health Dept. General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
39	Continue to promote public education on preventing communicable disease. Public Education and Awareness Projects to Reduce Impacts from Communicable Disease	Communicable Disease	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County Public Health, City/Town Councils	Low	CDC Grants, Public Health Dept. General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
40	Continue to identify and document landslide prone areas.	Landslide	County	County Road Dept., County Land Services, City/Town Planning	Low	FEMA Post-fire HMA Grants, BRIC, MDT	Ongoing	High	Continue - Not Started

ID	Activity Name & Description	Hazard Category	Locations	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
				Departments; Montana Department of Transportation		General Funds, County CIP Funds			
41	Support continued preservation and stabilization of slide-prone areas impacting roads.	Landslide	County	County Road Dept., County Planning and Zoning, City Planning Departments; Montana Department of Transportation	Moderate	FEMA Post-fire HMA Grants, BRIC, MDT General Funds, County CIP Funds	Ongoing	Medium	Annual Implementation
42	Promote the benefit of using mass notification to alert downstream residents of dam failure hazards.	Dam Failure	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, City/Town First Responder Agencies	Low	County General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
43	Provide outreach to residents on siren warning system for dam failure.	Dam Failure	County	OEM, AVISTA	Moderate	County General Funds, Staff Time, AVISTA	Ongoing	Medium	Annual Implementation
44	Continue to participate in exercises with dam owners.	Dam Failure	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	County OEM, Montana Dam Safety Program, Dam Owners, LEPC	Low	County General Funds, DNRC Dam Safety Program Funds, Dam Safety State Assistance Grant, EMPG Grant	Ongoing	High	Continue - In Progress

id	Action Name & Description	Hazards Impacted	Subregions	Lead Agency/Lead Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
45	Continue to recruit and provide training to first responders and EMS volunteers.	Multi: Avalanche, Dam Failure, Earthquake, Flooding, Hazmat, Landslide, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Transportation Accidents, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Individual Fire and Ambulance Districts, City/Town First Responder Agencies	Moderate	EMPG Grants, County OEM General Funds, Fire/PD Depts. Staff Time	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation
46	Coordinate emergency response activities between railroad, Tribes, counties, municipalities, and state and federal agencies.	Multi: Avalanche, Dam Failure, Earthquake, Flooding, Hazmat, Landslide, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Transportation Accidents, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, LEPC/TREC, City/Town First Responder Agencies, 911 Dispatch, Fire Chiefs	Moderate	County & Tribal General Funds, BNSF	Ongoing	High	Annual Implementation

ID	Action Item & Description	Hazard Description	Interjurisdiction	Lead Agency and Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
47	Obtain generators and install generator hookups at critical facilities and shelters, as needed.	Multi: Cyber-Attack, Dam Failure, Earthquake, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, LEPC, City/Town First Responder Agencies	Moderate	County General Funds, EMPG ARPA Grant, FEMA PDM Grant, FEMA HMGP Grant	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started
48	Update communication equipment, as appropriate.	Multi: Cyber-Attack, Dam Failure, Earthquake, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, City/Town First Responder/Law Enforcement Agencies	Moderate	Fire Dept. Operating Budgets, Fire Service Training School, AFG Grants, Safer Grants, VFA Grants, FP&S Grants	Ongoing	Medium	Annual Implementation
49	Identify location for new dispatch center.	Multi: Cyber-Attack, Dam Failure, Earthquake, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, County Commissioners, City/Town First Responder/Law Enforcement Agencies	Low	County CIP Funds, OEM General Funds, BRIC	Short-term	Medium	Continue - In Progress

ID	Action Name & Description	Hazard Mitigation	Jurisdiction	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
50	Identify emergency fuel supply and equip with generator.	Multi: Cyber-Attack, Dam Failure, Earthquake, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, City/Town First Responder/Law Enforcement Agencies	Moderate	County General Funds, EMPG ARPA Grant, FEMA PDM Grant, FEMA HMGP Grant	Mid-term	High	Continue - Not Started
51	Provide awareness on developing a family disaster plan and disaster supply kit.	Multi: Communicable Disease, Cyber-Attack, Dam Failure, Drought, Earthquake, Flooding, Hazmat, Landslide, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Transportation Accidents, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, LEPC, Chamber of Commerce, City/Town Councils	Low	OEM General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started

ID	Action Name & Description	Hazards Mitigated	Jurisdictions	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
52	Promote registration of cell phones for County's Emergency Notification System.	Multi: Communicable Disease, Cyber-Attack, Dam Failure, Drought, Earthquake, Flooding, Hazmat, Landslide, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Transportation Accidents, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, Dispatch, City/Town Councils	Low	OEM General Funds, Staff Time	Ongoing	Low	Annual Implementation
53	Obtain electric signs that can be used for various emergency related situations.	Multi: Cyber-Attack, Dam Failure, Earthquake, Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather, Human Conflict, Tornado/Wind, Volcanic Ash, Wildfire	County, Thompson Falls, Plains, Hot Springs	OEM, County Road Dept., City/Town Councils	Moderate	HMGP Grants, County Road Dept. General Funds	Ongoing	Medium	Continue - Not Started
54	Railroad overpass/underpass. Thompson Falls. Put in overpass so there is escape route if train blocks crossing and reduce time if train is blocking crossing. Plains underpass for same layout as above	Wildfire, Hazmat, Transportation Accidents	Sanders County	MDT, County, ATG, Railroad	Very High	MDT General Funds, County Road & Bridge General Funds, BRIC	Medium Term	Medium	New in 2023

ID	Action Name & Description	Hazards Mitigated	Jurisdictions	Lead Agency and Partners	Cost Estimate	Potential Funding	Timeline	Priority	Status & Implementation Notes
55	Riverbank Stabilization of Clark Fork River. River flow starting just upriver from plains flowing into diversion areas that have impacted water problems to river road west and also the flow to the old sewer lagoons area. The lagoons have been relocated so are not in danger now.	Flooding	City of Plains	City of Plains, USACE	High	USDA Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Grant, USDA NRCS Conservation Programs, USDA Water Processes and Water Resources Grants	Medium Term	High	New in 2023
56	Storm water collection treatment distribution. Town on hill erosion of streets, road base, flood houses, flood tracks, run off to highway	Flooding, Summer Weather, Winter Weather	City of Thompson Falls	City of Thompson Falls Public Works, RXR, DOT, DEQ for treatment	High	SRF, DNRC, Thompson Falls CIP, CWSRF Grants, BRIC, USDA Rural Development Grants, USDA Rural Utilities Service Grants	Short term	Medium	New in 2023
57	Coordinate with State Dam Safety Program and dam owners to monitor conditions of high and significant hazard dams and identify mitigation actions as needed.	Dam Failure	Sanders County	County OEM, Montana Dam Safety Program, Dam Owners	Low	County General Funds, DNRC Dam Safety Program Funds, Dam Safety State Assistance Grant, BRIC, EMPG Grant	Annual Implementation	Low	New in 2023



## **P.7 Plan Implementation and Maintenance**

Moving forward the Sanders County CPT will use the mitigation action table in the previous section to track progress on implementation of each project. Implementation of the plan overall is discussed in Chapter 6 of the base plan.

### **P.7.1 Integration into Existing Planning Mechanisms**

As described in the capability assessment, the County already implements policies and programs to reduce losses to life and property from hazards. This plan builds upon the momentum developed through previous and related planning efforts and mitigation programs and recommends implementing actions, where possible, through these other program mechanisms. Where applicable, these existing mechanisms could include:

Sanders County:

- Sanders County Emergency Operations Plan
- Sanders County Flood Insurance Study
- Sanders County Floodplain Regulations
- Sanders County Subdivision Regulations

City of Thompson Falls:

- City of Thompson Falls Subdivision Regulations
- City of Thompson Falls Subdivision Regulations

Town of Hot Springs:

- Town of Hot Springs Floodplain Regulations
- Town of Hot Springs Growth Policy
- Town of Hot Springs Subdivision Regulations

Town of Plains:

- Town of Plains Floodplain Regulations
- Town of Plains Growth Policy
- Town of Plains Zoning Ordinance

The jurisdictions did not meaningfully integrate the 2019 Sanders County MHMP into other planning mechanisms, which has been noted as an area of improvement for the next five years. The CPT has noted that this plan will be useful for future planning and grant opportunities for future development of county assets. When the opportunity arises, each jurisdiction will follow the process outlined in Section 6.3.3 of the base plan to integrate information from the Regional HMP into these mechanisms. This integration may encompass cross-referencing the HMP where applicable, or it may involve including data, goals, or actions from the HMP. The CPT will coordinate with the staff responsible for the above plans or programs.

### **P.7.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Updating the Plan**

Sanders County will follow the procedures to review and update this plan in accordance with Montana Western Region as outlined in Chapter 6 of the Regional Plan. The County and municipalities realize that it is important to review and update this plan regularly and update it on a five-year cycle. The Sanders County Annex to the Montana Western Region Plan will be evaluated on a regular basis to determine the effectiveness of programs, and to reflect changes in land development or programs that may affect mitigation priorities.

### **P.7.3 Continued Public Involvement**

Sanders County is committed to involving the public in the review and updates of the HMP. The public will have multiple opportunities to provide feedback. Hard copies of the plan will be available at County and City of Thompson, and Towns of Hot Springs and Plains municipal offices, with an electronic copy on the County website. The locations of the hard copies will be publicized online. The County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will track public comments on the plan.

The public will be invited to LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee) meetings where the HMP is discussed, providing a forum for expressing concerns, opinions, or ideas. The OEM Director will use County resources to publicize these meetings and maintain public involvement through newspapers, radio, and the Internet.

The CPT will continuously observe and evaluate public outreach processes, making necessary changes during plan updates. Continued public outreach will be followed as outlined in Chapter 6 of the base plan, with an emphasis on vulnerable populations or groups that could have been missed during the 2023 process.