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For Immediate Release

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Members of Government, Stakeholders, and Citizens join to Mitigate Disaster

With recent events such as the flooding in Tennessee and North Dakota, the wildfires in the Southwest, and the earthquakes that have occurred throughout the world as a wake-up call, Gem County is coordinating efforts to update its Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The definition of mitigation is the continuing effort to lessen the impact disasters have on people and property, so the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update is aimed to meet the needs and concerns of community partners, individually, and as a whole by addressing the following types of events.

- Dam/Canal Failures
- Earthquakes
- Floods
- Landslide
- Severe Weather
- Wildfire

“Government’s most important role is to protect its citizens and preparing for a disaster is a vital part of that role,” said Sharon Church-Pratt, Commissioner of Gem County. Anita Taylor, Gem County Emergency Manager, adds “Gem County is coordinating this effort and has established a steering committee to guide the process.”

In response to the federal mandates in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, a Steering Committee was formed to pool resources and to create a uniform hazard mitigation strategy. The Steering Committee is composed of citizens, local stakeholders, schools, planning partners, and representative from Gem County and the City of Emmett.

Gem County has contracted Keller Associates, Inc. and Tetra Tech Inc. to assist the County through the mitigation planning process. Funding for this process is made possible by a grant secured by Gem County from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Progress on the Hazard Mitigation Update, public meeting agendas, public opinion questionnaires, and current editions of the joint jurisdictional County and State Hazard Plans will be available at: <http://www.co.gem.id.us/disaster-services/AHMP/default.htm>

“We strongly encourage public involvement and invite you to complete the web-based questionnaire available on the website,” said Bill Buttici, City of Emmett Mayor.

Public meetings will be held at the completion of the hazard analysis and at the completion of the draft update. The website along with local media outlets will carry information about these events. Public opinion will be gathered through the web-based questionnaire and at public meetings. The questionnaire can be completed by clicking on the link at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GemCountyhazmit>

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