

New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan



Photo courtesy of the Greenfield Recorder/Paul Franz

Adopted by the New Salem Select Board on August 9, 2021
Approved by FEMA on October 22, 2021

Prepared by
**New Salem Hazard Mitigation and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning
Committee**

and

Franklin Regional Council of Governments
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*This project was funded by a grant received from the Massachusetts Office of Energy and
Environmental Affairs' (EEA) Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program (MVP)..*



U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA Region I
99 High Street, Sixth Floor
Boston, MA 02110-2132

FEMA

October 22, 2021

Samantha C. Phillips, Director
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
400 Worcester Road
Framingham, Massachusetts 01702-5399

Dear Director Phillips:

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region I Mitigation Division has approved the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan effective **October 21, 2021** through **October 20, 2026** in accordance with the planning requirements of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), as amended, the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended, and Title 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 201.

With this plan approval, the jurisdiction is eligible to apply to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency for mitigation grants administered by FEMA. Requests for funding will be evaluated according to the eligibility requirements identified for each of these programs. A specific mitigation activity or project identified in this community's plan may not meet the eligibility requirements for FEMA funding; even eligible mitigation activities or projects are not automatically approved.

The plan must be updated and resubmitted to the FEMA Region I Mitigation Division for approval every five years to remain eligible for FEMA mitigation grant funding.

Thank you for your continued commitment and dedication to risk reduction demonstrated by preparing and adopting a strategy for reducing future disaster losses. Should you have any questions, please contact Brigitte Ndikum-Nyada at (617) 378-7951 or brigitte.ndikum-nyada@fema.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

Paul F. Ford
Acting Regional Administrator
DHS, FEMA Region I

PFF: bnn

cc: Jeffrey Zukowski, Hazard Mitigation Planner, MEMA
Marybeth Groff, CFM, Hazard Mitigation & Climate Adaptation Coordinator
Beth Dubrawski, Hazard Mitigation Contract Specialist, MEMA



**CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION
NEW SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS
SELECTMEN**

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE TOWN OF NEW SALEM
HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN AND MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY
PREPAREDNESS (MVP) RESILIENCY PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Town of New Salem participated in the MVP Community Resilience Building Workshop on September 16, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Town of New Salem MVP Resiliency Plan contains several potential future projects to mitigate potential impacts from climate change and to mitigate future hazards in the Town of New Salem, and

WHEREAS, a duly-noticed public meeting was held by the Selectmen on August 9, 2021, and

WHEREAS, the Town of New Salem authorizes responsible departments and/or agencies to execute their responsibilities demonstrated in the plan, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of New Salem Selectmen, adopts the Hazard Mitigation Plan and MVP Resiliency Plan, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40.

ADOPTED AND SIGNED this August 9, 2021.

Randy Gordon

Wayne Hachey

Hugh Mackay

Acknowledgements

The New Salem Select Board thanks the New Salem Core Team (Local Planning Team) for their work on this project.

Joe Cuneo, New Salem Fire Chief
Nancy Aldrich, New Salem Town Coordinator
Jacob Cooley, New Salem Highway Superintendent
Wayne Hachey, New Salem Select Board
Jean Derderian, New Salem Select Board
David Cramer, New Salem Planning Board
Cameron Dunbar, New Salem Fire Department
Edward Smith, New Salem Police Department
Mary Ellen Kennedy, Municipal Light Plan
Fletcher Harrington, Mount Grace Land Trust
Ivan Ussach, Millers River Watershed Council
Jennifer Culkeen, Union #28/Superintendent
Kelley Sullivan, Principal of Swift River School
Pam Harris, Orange Oil

The New Salem Select Boards offer thanks to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for developing the 2018 Massachusetts Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, which served as a resource for this plan. Technical assistance was provided by staff of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

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Recommended Citation

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1 PLANNING PROCESS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) define Hazard Mitigation as any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural hazards such as flooding, storms, high winds, hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, etc. Mitigation efforts undertaken by communities will help to minimize damages to buildings and infrastructure, such as water supplies, sewers, and utility transmission lines, as well as natural, cultural and historic resources. Through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant program (MVP), the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) provides support for towns to begin the process of planning for climate change resiliency and implementing priority projects. The state awards communities with funding to complete vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented resiliency plans. Communities who complete the MVP program become certified as an MVP community and are eligible for MVP Action grant funding and other opportunities. This plan covers the elements of hazard mitigation planning, as well as MVP planning to ensure the Town of New Salem is building resilience against the impacts of climate change.

Planning efforts, like the one undertaken by the New Salem, make mitigation a proactive process. Pre-disaster planning emphasizes actions that can be taken before a natural disaster occurs. Future property damage and loss of life can be reduced or prevented by a mitigation program that addresses the unique geography, demography, economy, and land use of a community within the context of each of the specific potential natural hazards that may threaten a community. In this combined plan, the vulnerability assessment produced through multi-hazard mitigation planning is complemented by the MVP process, which also inventories the emergency preparedness and response capacities of the two towns.

Preparing, and updating a hazard mitigation plan every five years, can save the community money and facilitate post-disaster funding. Costly repairs or replacement of buildings and infrastructure, as well as the high cost of providing emergency services and rescue/recovery operations, can be avoided or significantly lessened if a community implements the mitigation measures detailed in the plan.

FEMA requires that a community adopt a pre-disaster mitigation plan as a condition for mitigation funding. For example, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMA), and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program are programs with this requirement.

1.2 CORE TEAM

Producing the New Salem Community Resilience Building and Hazard Mitigation Regional plan involved a core team comprised of the following members:

- Joe Cuneo, New Salem Fire Chief
- Nancy Aldrich, New Salem Town Coordinator
- Joe Cuneo, New Salem Fire Chief
- Nancy Aldrich, New Salem Town Coordinator
- Jacob Cooley, New Salem Highway Superintendent
- Wayne Hachey, New Salem Select Board
- Jean Derderian, New Salem Select Board
- David Cramer, New Salem Planning Board
- Cameron Dunbar, New Salem Fire Department
- Edward Smith, New Salem Police Department
- Mary Ellen Kennedy, Municipal Light Plan
- Fletcher Harrington, Mount Grace Land Trust
- Ivan Ussach, Millers River Watershed Council
- Jennifer Culkeen, Union #28/Superintendent
- Kelley Sullivan, Principal of Swift River School
- Pam Harris, Orange Oil

The Planning process for the Town included the following tasks:

- Conducting community outreach and hosting a Community Resilience Building (CRB) workshop with local and regional stakeholders who identified New Salem's key natural and man-made hazard vulnerabilities and strengths and proposed actions to build infrastructural, social, and environmental resilience to climate change.
- Reviewing and incorporating existing plans and other information including changes in development in the years since the Town's previous Hazard Mitigation planning process
- Updating the natural hazards that may impact the community from the previous plan
- Conducting a Vulnerability/Risk Assessment to identify the infrastructure and populations at the highest risk for being damaged by the identified natural hazards, particularly flooding
- Identifying and assessing the policies, programs, and regulations the community is currently implementing to protect against future disaster damages
- Identifying deficiencies in the current Hazard Mitigation strategies and establishing goals for updating, revising or adopting new strategies
- Adopting and implementing the final updated Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan

The key products of this planning process are the development of Summary of Findings Report, an Action Plan with a Prioritized Implementation Schedule, a set of maps and matrices summarizing strengths and vulnerabilities of the Towns' infrastructure, societal, and natural resource risk profiles, and prioritized community actions that reduce or eliminate long term vulnerability to identified hazards and climate change.

Meetings

Meetings of the Core Team were held on the dates listed below. Agendas for these meetings are included in Appendix A. All meetings followed Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and were open to the public.

February 19, 2020

The Core Team met to kick off the project, plan for the MVP workshop, and begin updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

February 26, 2020

The Core Team met to complete FEMA's Capability Assessment Worksheet and discuss the Town's capacity to respond to hazard events.

March 11, 2020

A public meeting was held at the Town Hall to introduce the joint Hazard Mitigation and Municipal Vulnerability Planning Process. The Core Team was present, in addition to Select Board members, school staff, emergency responders, and local business owners. During the meeting, participants presented their top concerns, and marked up the Critical Infrastructure and Environmental Resources maps.

September 16, 2020

Held a Community Resilience Building workshop as part of New Salem's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) designation process. The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Present findings from community outreach
- Define the top natural and climate-related hazards of local concern
- Identify existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities
- Develop prioritized actions for the community
- Identify immediate opportunities to collaboratively advance actions to increase resilience.

February 17, 2021

Work group reviewed the draft 2021 Action Plan and draft sections of the updated plan.

March 31 – April 14, 2021

A public review period for the draft plan was open from March 31, 2021 through April 14, 2021. A Public Forum was held on March 31st, 2021 via Zoom to elicit feedback on the draft mitigation strategies and plan.

Agendas and sign-in sheets for each meeting can be found in Appendix A. While not all members of the Core Team were able to attend each meeting, all members collaborated on the plan and were updated on progress by fellow team members after meetings occurred.

1.3 PARTICIPATION BY STAKEHOLDERS

A variety of stakeholders were provided with an opportunity to be involved in the update of the New Salem Community Resilience Building and Hazard Mitigation Regional Plan. The different categories of stakeholders that were involved, and the engagement activities that occurred, are described below.

Community Resilience Building Workshop & Community Outreach Participants

The list below includes all participants who were invited to the kickoff meeting, workshop, or contacted for an interview as a part of the community outreach completed for this Plan. The columns on the far right indicate which events participant attended.

Name	Department/Board/Representative	Kickoff	Workshop	Interview
Nancy Aldrich	Town Coordinator	X	X	X
Joe Cuneo	Fire Chief		X	X
Cameron Dunbar	Fire Department Lieutenant		X	
Chris Bouda	Conservation Committee			
Zara Dowling	Energy Committee			X
Jean Derderian	Selectboard + Historical Commission	X	X	
Wayne Hachey	Selectboard	X	X	X
Jacob Cooley	New Salem Highway Department	X		
Edward Smith	New Salem Police Department	X		X
MaryEllen Kennedy	Municipal Light Plan		X	
Jenny Potee	New Salem Board of Health			
Ta Mara Conde	New Salem Cemetery Commission			
Amy Lovell	Agriculture Commission & Community Garden			
David Cramer	New Salem Planning Board	X		
Lisa Finestone	Town Resident and Tree Committee		X	
Sue Cloutier	Town Resident		X	
Fletcher Harrington	Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust	X	X	X
Ivan Ussach	Millers River Watershed Council		X	X
Jennifer Culkeen	Swift River School/ Union #28	X		X
Kelley Sullivan	Swift River School/ Union #28	X		
Rick Oliver	New Salem General Store	X		
Pam Harris	Orange Oil Company	X		X
	Swift River Valley Historical Society			X

Name	Department/Board/Representative	Kickoff	Workshop	Interview
	Mahar Regional School District			
	Central Congregational Church			
	North Quabbin Community Coalition			
	North Congregational Church of New Salem			
	New Salem Preserves & Orchards			X
	Quabbin Sky Vineyard			
	Cooleyville Farm			X
	Whittier Plumbing and Heating			

Local and Regional Agencies Involved in Planning Activities

In addition to the Hazard Mitigation and MVP process, FRCOG regularly engages with the Town of New Salem as part of its regional planning efforts, which include the following:

- Developing the Sustainable Franklin County Plan, which advocates for sustainable land use throughout the region and consideration of the impact of flooding and other natural hazards on development.
- Developing and implementing the Franklin County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which includes goals and strategies to build the region's economic resilience.
- Developing the Franklin County Regional Transportation Plan, which includes a focus on sustainability and climate resilience, and implementing the Franklin County Transportation Improvement Program to complete transportation improvements in our region.
- FRCOG Emergency Preparedness Program staff work with four regional committees: the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition, the Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee, the Franklin County Emergency Communications System Oversight Committee, and the Western Mass. Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition. Working with these committees and with local governments, the FRCOG works to provide integrated planning and technical assistance to improve and enhance our communities' ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made disasters.

All of these FRCOG initiatives consider the impact of natural hazards on the region and strategies for reducing their impact to people and property through hazard mitigation activities. The facilitation of the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan by FRCOG ensured that information from these plans and initiatives were incorporated into the Hazard Mitigation Planning process.

Agencies that Have the Authority to Regulate Development

The Planning Board is the primary Town agency responsible for regulating development in town. Feedback to the Planning Board was ensured through the participation of a planning board member on the Core Team. In addition, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, as a regional planning authority, works with all agencies that regulate development in New Salem, including the municipal entities listed above and state agencies, such as the Department of Conservation and Recreation and MassDOT. This regular involvement ensured that during the development of the New Salem Community Resilience Building and Hazard Mitigation Regional Plan, the operational policies and any mitigation strategies or identified hazards from these entities were incorporated.

Participation by the Public, Businesses, and Neighboring Communities

The plan development and public meetings were advertised on the Town's website and were posted at the Town Hall and at other designated public notice buildings. A copy of the draft plan was available to the public at the Town Hall, and on the Town's website at <https://newsalemma.org/>.

A public forum was held on March 31, 2021 and provided an opportunity for the public and other stakeholders to provide input on the mitigation strategies and to prioritize action items. Stakeholder letters were sent to Town boards, committees, and departments, and to all neighboring communities, inviting them to the public forum and to review the plan and provide comments. The public forum and subsequent comment period was advertised via a press release in the Greenfield Recorder and on the Town website. The final public Comment Period was held from March 31, 2021 to April 14, 2021 (See Appendix A, Public Participation Process, for copies of all press releases and stakeholder letters mailed to solicit comments on the draft Plan). Comments, if received, were reviewed by the Committee and incorporated into the final plan, as appropriate.

The Committee and FRCOG staff reviewed and incorporated the following existing plans, studies, reports and technical information, which are cited in footnotes throughout this plan:

- New Salem Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)
- 2004 New Salem Open Space and Recreation Plan
- 2020 Town of New Salem Culvert Assessment
- 2018 Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan
- Resilient MA Climate Change Clearinghouse for the Commonwealth
- Additional data sources cited in footnotes throughout this Plan

2 LOCAL PROFILE AND PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 COMMUNITY SETTING

A rural recreational town on the primary corridor between Amherst and Orange, New Salem is located in the central uplands of the Connecticut River Valley. The fertile Swift River Valley (now flooded by the Quabbin Reservoir) was likely the focal point of native horticulture, and likely home to the Nipmuc and Wabanaki Confederacy. New Salem supported moderate to large seasonal native hunting and fishing sites with major transportation routes running from the Connecticut River to the Quabbin Valley. A relatively substantial native population was likely present in New Salem/the Swift River Valley until a colonial population arrived in the late 1730s.

New Salem was one of a number of period upland towns established in the Connecticut River Valley through land grants made during King Phillip's War and later to American Frontier War veterans. The Town was settled by colonists in 1737 and the first meetinghouse was constructed in 1739. The town was officially incorporated in 1753. The settlement's Baptist population was part of a Baptist faction scattered throughout New Salem and the nearby communities of Leverett, Montague, and possibly Sunderland.¹ New Salem was on the route taken by Captain Daniel Shays in 1787 on the way to his famous rebellion. Route 202, which runs through the town, is named after Captain Shays.

Early years of isolation were brought to a close with the opening of New Salem Academy in 1795. Until it closed in 1968, the school provided secondary education for area residents. The early 19th Century was the most prosperous for the town, with farming, lumber and small industrial operations bringing the town's population to an all-time high. Over the next 100 years, New Salem's population decreased and small farms became the norm.

In the 1930s, the face of the town changed dramatically with the construction of the Quabbin Reservoir. The 39-square mile reservoir is the largest body of water in Massachusetts and was created in the 1930s by damming up the Swift River. It is replenished by a watershed area of approximately 80,000 acres and is the major water supply for communities in the Boston area. The towns of Dana, Prescott, Enfield and Greenwich were taken for its creation, and the land once in Prescott was annexed to New Salem. The 12,100 acre Prescott Peninsula comprises the southern half of New Salem and is a Restricted Area that is reserved to protect the public water supply. This area is closed to the public and only limited access is allowed for research. The state-owned lands in and around the Quabbin Reservoir are under the authority of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).² The Town is listed with the National Register of Historic Places and is home to an extensive collection of artifacts from the four towns submerged when the Quabbin was created.

¹ MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: New Salem.

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/townreports/CT-Valley/nsa.pdf>

² New Salem Reconnaissance Report, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/new-salem/download>

Over the last two decades, New Salem’s rural landscape and pace have led to a 9% increase in population in the town. The town’s lack of commercial amenities has kept it predominantly residential in makeup.

The majority of the 504 housing units in New Salem are single-family, owner-occupied homes. According to the 2019 American Community Survey data, 96% or 486 of the 504 housing units in New Salem are single-family units. As for the age of the housing stock, 40% of the housing units were built prior to 1970. The overall demographics in New Salem indicate higher household incomes and lower poverty rates compared to other areas in the region.

As New Salem is not home to many businesses, the majority of residents work outside of New Salem. The largest employers in the community include the Swift River School, the New Salem Fire Department, the New Salem Police Department, and Orange Oil Company.

In May 2019, MassGIS released a new land cover/land use dataset. This statewide dataset contains a combination of land cover mapping from 2016 aerial and satellite imagery, LiDAR and other data sources. Land use mapping is derived from standardized assessor parcel information for Massachusetts. This land cover/land use dataset does not conform to the classification schemes or polygon delineation of previous land use data from MassGIS (1951-1999; 2005) so comparisons of land use change over time cannot be made using this current data.³ The data are presented below in Table 2-1; residents or those knowledgeable about New Salem will not be surprised to learn that the majority of the land Town is forested.

Table 2-1: New Salem 2016 MassGIS Land Cover and Land Use Data				
Total Acres = 37,576.02				
Land Cover	Acres		Land Use	Acres
Bare Land	339.18		Agriculture	621.16
Cultivated	121.84		Commercial	5.38
Deciduous Forest	12,970.46		Forest	969.68
Developed Open Space	283.83		Industrial	16.97
Evergreen Forest	12,130.34		Mixed use, other	82.59
Grassland	1,104.85		Mixed use, primarily residential	0.86
Impervious	281.57		Open land	1,534.84
Palustrine Aquatic Bed	209.76		Recreation	124.95
Palustrine Emergent Wetland	552.59		Residential - multi-family	356.64
Palustrine Forested Wetland	624.67		Residential - single family	2,327.53
Palustrine Scrub/Shrub Wetland	113.13		Right-of-way	336.14
Pasture/Hay	245.51		Tax exempt	3,647.28
Scrub/Shrub	203.41		Unknown*	18,681.41

³ <https://docs.digital.mass.gov/dataset/massgis-data-2016-land-coverland-use>

Table 2-1: New Salem 2016 MassGIS Land Cover and Land Use Data				
Total Acres = 37,576.02				
Land Cover	Acres		Land Use	Acres
Water	8,394.88		Water	8,870.59

*According to MassGIS' documentation for the 2016 Land Use/Land Cover data, the land use data were derived from assessors' records. It is possible land owned by the DCR did not show up on these reports, and therefore the "Unknown" land use category is forest.

According to the 2016 MassGIS data approximately 68 percent of New Salem's land cover is forest and 22 percent of the Town's land cover is classified as water due to the presence of the Quabbin Reservoir. However, the land in New Salem can more accurately be described as approximately 88% forested; this figure was derived by analyzing 2016 MassGIS data and FEMA floodplain data to estimate how much of New Salem's "land" is covered by the Quabbin Reservoir. Approximately 2 percent of the town is classified as agricultural land use, and 7 percent of the town is classified as residential land use. Residential development is decentralized throughout the town, and the historic civic center is located on South Main Street. There are no major residential subdivisions in Town. Although the town developed as a farming center, only a few small farms remain in operation. Less than 1 percent of the total area in town is comprised of commercial or industrial land uses.

Population Characteristics

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there were 990 residents in New Salem (a 6.5% increase since 2000). As of 2019, New Salem's total population is estimated to be 1,009 (a 2% increase from 2010).⁴

Environmental Justice Populations

The State of Massachusetts defines an environmental justice community if any of the following conditions are met:

- Block group whose annual median household income is equal to or less than 65 percent of the statewide median (\$62,072 in 2010); or
- 25% or more of the residents identifying as minority; or
- 25% or more of households having no one over the age of 14 who speaks English only or very well - Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

According to these criteria, the Town of New Salem does not currently have any environmental justice populations based on race, income, or language proficiency. Approximately 92% of the Town's population is White with the next largest racial group identified as "Other" at 1% of the total population. In terms of income, the annual median household income of New Salem is \$66,063, which is above 65% of the State's annual median household income. In addition, according to the latest U.S. Census's American Community Survey, there are no households that have Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Current Development Trends

New Salem's land use pattern is that of a very rural town, with a modest Town Center comprised of the Town Offices, a public library, church, and a meeting house. On Route 202, to the west of the Town Center, there is a small country store. The residential population is scattered throughout New Salem. According to the Town's Zoning Bylaws, the entire Town is designated as a "Primarily Residential-Agricultural District".

Additionally, because about two-thirds of the land in New Salem is permanently protected due to the Quabbin Reservoir, the Town is relatively well insulated from the development pressures nearby communities are currently facing. There are no pending changes in industry, no proposed large housing or retail development, and no major highway or public transit improvements pending for New Salem. The Committee noted that the largest change in Town as of late has been an increase in the number of homes for sale, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ability for more workers to conduct their jobs at home and the installation of broadband service in New Salem has allowed for quick sales to buyers moving to the region. The other primary change has been a decrease in the number of large scale farming operations, as several farms have closed down in recent years. Overall, the Committee indicated the probability of any significant development in Town is very low – particularly since there is no public water or sewer. Table 2-2 provides a summary of new residential permits issued over the past five years.

Table 2-2: New residential permits issued in New Salem 2015-2019	
Year	# of building permits issued
2015	1
2016	1
2017	0
2018	2
2019	3
Total	7

According to information provided by the New Salem Building Inspector, between January 2015 and December 2019, seven (7) residential building permits for new construction were issued. FRCOG staff reviewed the addresses of the remaining building permits and determined the majority of them were located outside of known hazard areas, and followed the current pattern of development.

According to 2005 MassGIS Land Use/Land Cover data, 1,568 acres lie within the 100-year floodplain in New Salem and seven (7) dwelling units are located in the floodplain. Newer Mass GIS land use/land cover data from 2016 indicate 10,585 acres lie within the 100-year floodplain in New Salem, but this figure includes the Quabbin Reservoir as a floodplain area. The two land use data sets – 2005 and 2016 – utilize different methodologies and cannot be directly compared and a review of the Town's land use/land cover maps indicate no actual change and no change in the number of dwelling units located within the floodplain. However, Franklin County does not have digital floodplain maps. FRCOG's analysis

is limited by the lack of digital floodplain maps. As noted below, FEMA is currently updating the floodplain maps for New Salem. Once the update is complete, a more accurate understanding of any recent development within the floodplain will be possible.

The small amount of development that has occurred in New Salem since the previously approved plan is outside known hazard prone areas and is not expected to increase the Town's overall vulnerability to flooding or other hazards. To assess and update the community's vulnerability to hazard events, the Committee completed an exercise to discuss the results of the Risk Assessment (see Section 3) and used the results to update the Overall Hazard Vulnerability Rating for each hazard. The ranking is qualitative and is based, in part, on local knowledge of past experiences with each type of hazard, the anticipated probability of occurrence, severity of impacts, and area of occurrence for each hazard given historical and climate change data, and a discussion of the type and location of current development trends and new development in Town, and other local knowledge.

National Flood Insurance Program Status

New Salem is a participating member of the National Flood Insurance Program. Currently there are no flood insurance policies in effect in New Salem. New Salem does not have any repetitive loss properties. New Salem's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is from 1987.⁵

Roads and Highways

The major arteries running through New Salem are Route 202 and Route 122, which connect New Salem with nearby towns and urban centers. The closest access to I-91, Franklin County's major north/south route, is in Greenfield. Route 2, Franklin County's major east-west artery, is accessible in neighboring Orange.

About 57 miles (nearly 50 percent) of New Salem's roads are gravel. The town has a total of approximately 118 miles of roads.⁶

Rail

New Salem does not have rail service.

Public Transportation

New Salem does not have fixed route service. The closest public transportation is the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) and Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) G-Link weekday service, which makes scheduled stops in Orange.

The Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) also has weekly demand response door-to-door transit service for seniors and the disabled for a small fee.

⁵ National Flood Insurance Statistics for Franklin County as of December 18, 2018

⁶2007 FRCOG Franklin County Gravel Roads Summary and 2017 FRCOG Road Inventory

Public Drinking Water Supply

The Department of Environmental Protection identifies five public water supply systems in the Town of New Salem, all of which are noncommunity systems. They are the Swift River Elementary School, a nontransient, noncommunity system and Hamilton Orchards and New Salem General Store, which are transient noncommunity public water systems. There are also two transient noncommunity public water systems associated with the Morgan Memorial Camp.

There is no community public water supply in New Salem and there are no plans to build one in the near future. Private individual wells provide water for the town residents. However, as discussed throughout the summary of findings for the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan Workshop, residents are increasingly interested in the Town installing a well to serve as a backup water supply for residents during times of drought or other emergencies.

Sewer Service

New Salem does not have a public sewer system. Most residences and businesses in the town are served by individual septic systems.

Emergency Shelters

During an emergency situation, prolonged power outage, or disaster situations, New Salem's Fire Department serves as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for New Salem and Wendell. The EOC serves as a warming shelter and a charging station for residents who need to power up their cell phones or medical devices. The Town's larger designated sheltering facility is the Swift River School, but it is in need of a generator, showers, and a commercial kitchen upgrade. For the most part, residents choose to shelter in place but the Town makes resources available as needed. The New Salem Fire Department has a practice of completing door to door checks after severe storms to make sure residents are safe. The Town participates in regional planning efforts to support the REPC's regional shelter, which provides another sheltering resource for residents.

Natural Resources

New Salem's topography is hilly, with elevations ranging from 524 feet above sea level to 1,281 feet above sea level. Slopes in the town can be as steep as forty-five percent and average eight to fifteen percent. New Salem residents prize the ability to enjoy views of the night sky unclouded by electric lights. The most outstanding natural feature in the town is the Quabbin Reservoir, the state's most important water resource.

Large blocks of contiguous forestland such as these are important regional resources for several reasons. First they represent an area with a low degree of fragmentation. Wildlife species that require a certain amount of deep forest cover separate from people's daily activities tend to migrate out of fragmenting landscapes. New frontage lots and subdivisions can often result in a widening of human activity, an increase in the populations of plants and animals that thrive alongside humans (i.e. raccoons

and squirrels) and a reduction in the species that have larger home ranges and unique habitat needs. When these large blocks of forest are protected from development they help to protect and provide clean water, air, and healthy wildlife populations. In addition, areas of unfragmented forest are more suitable for active forest management.

Water Resources

The majority of the Town lies within the Chicopee River watershed. The remainder lies within the Millers River watershed.

New Salem has about 1,290 acres covered by wetlands, which are fed by nearby brooks and rivers.⁷ Wetlands are essential for promoting human health and safety by improving water quality, providing flood storage capacity and biodiversity of both plant and animal species.

The town also has approximately 8,860 acres of open water within its borders, much of which is the Quabbin Reservoir. Small brooks in the western part of Town form the Middle Branch of the Swift River that drain into the Quabbin Reservoir and the West Branch of the Swift River flows from Shutesbury and forms a border between the two towns. Most of the streams in New Salem are too small to navigate, but are scenic and offer good trout fishing. The northeast corner of Town has small brooks and four ponds (Bassett Pond, South Spectacle Pond, North Spectacle Pond, and Eagleville Pond/Lake Rohunta) that drain north into the Millers River Watershed. The northeastern corner of Town is not part of the Quabbin drainage, but is located over an aquifer that supplies a large public well field for the neighboring Town of Orange.⁸ The rivers and wetlands in New Salem are buffered in accordance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. The Quabbin Reservoir as well as all streams which flow into it are also buffered by the Watershed Protection Act.

Cultural and Historic Resources

The importance of integrating cultural resource and historic property considerations into hazard mitigation planning is demonstrated by disasters that have occurred in recent years, such as the Northridge earthquake in California, Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, or floods in the Midwest. The effects of a disaster can be extensive—from human casualty to property and crop damage to the disruption of governmental, social, and economic activity. Often not measured, however, are the possibly devastating impacts of disasters on historic properties and cultural resources. Historic structures, artwork, monuments, family heirlooms, and historic documents are often irreplaceable, and may be lost forever in a disaster if not considered in the mitigation planning process. The loss of these resources is all the more painful and ironic considering how often residents rely on their presence after a disaster, to reinforce connections with neighbors and the larger community, and to seek comfort in the aftermath of a disaster.⁹

⁷ 20016 Mass GIS Land Use Data

⁸ New Salem Reconnaissance Report, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/new-salem/download>

⁹ Integrating Historic Property and Cultural Resource Considerations Into Hazard Mitigation Planning, State and

Historic properties and cultural resources can be important economic assets, often increasing property values and attracting businesses and tourists to a community. While preservation of historic and cultural assets can require funding, it can also stimulate economic development and revitalization. Hazard mitigation planning can help forecast and plan for the protection of historic properties and cultural resources.

Cultural and historic resources help define the character of a community and reflect its past. These resources may be vulnerable to natural hazards due to their location in a potential hazard area, such as a river corridor, or because of old or unstable structures. The Committee verified that the significant cultural and/or historic resources listed in the latest version of the New Salem Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) are vulnerable to hazard events. Some of these structures house historic documents and cultural artifacts (Table 2-3).

Table 2-3: New Salem eCEMP Cultural Resources			
Resource Name	Resource Location	Resource Type	Materials Contained
1794 Meeting House	26 South Main Street	Historical Building, Historical Landscape	N/A
Old Academy Building	Academy Drive	Historical Building	N/A
Swift River Valley Historical Society	40 Elm Street	Historical Building, Historical Landscape, Museum	Archives, Artifacts
The Old Public Library	24 South Main Street	Historical Building, Library	N/A

Source: New Salem CEMP

The Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) lists a total of 141 areas, buildings, burial grounds, objects, and structures of cultural and/or historic significance in New Salem.¹⁰ These sites include the New Salem Poor Farm, the North Congregational Church, historic houses, and cemeteries.

Designation on the MACRIS list does not provide any protective measures for the historic resources but designated sites may qualify for federal and state funding if damaged during a natural or manmade hazard. MACRIS data are compiled from a variety of records and files maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), including but not limited to, the Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth, National Register of Historic Places nominations, State Register of Historic Places listings, and local historic district study reports.

Community Facilities and Resources

A community's critical facilities include important municipal structures (i.e., town hall), emergency

Local Mitigation Planning How-To Guide, FEMA 386-6 / May 2005.

¹⁰ <https://mhc-macris.net>

service structures (i.e., municipal public safety complex, shelters, and medical centers), and locations of populations that may need special assistance (i.e., nursing homes, day cares, schools, prisons) and major employers or other areas where there is a dense concentration of people. In New Salem, the identified critical shown on the Critical Facilities and Infrastructure Map at the end of Section 2 and in Table 2-4 below.





Table 2-4: New Salem Critical Infrastructure	
Resource Type	Resource Location
Police Headquarters	19 South Main Street
Fire Station	33 South Main Street
Hagerville Fire Station	Old North Dana Road
Cellular Communications Tower	Blueberry Hill Road
Cellular Communications Tower	51 Wendell Road
Town Hall	15 South Main Street
Post Office	410 Daniel Shays Highway
Stowell Building	19 South Main Street
DPW Headquarters	22 Wendell Road

2.2 IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Greater variation and extremes in temperature and weather due to climate change has already begun to impact New Salem, and must be accounted for in planning for the mitigation of future hazard events. In 2017, the Commonwealth launched the Massachusetts Climate Change Clearinghouse (Resilient MA), an online gateway for policymakers, planners, and the public to identify and access climate data, maps, websites, tools, and documents on climate change adaptation and mitigation. The goal of Resilient MA is to support scientifically sound and cost-effective decision-making, and to enable users to plan and prepare for climate change impacts. Climate projections for Franklin County available through Resilient MA are summarized in this section. Additional information about the data and climate models is available on the resilient MA website: <http://resilientma.org/>.

Figure 2-1 identifies primary climate change impacts and how they interact with natural hazards assessed in the State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. Following is a summary of the three primary impacts of climate change on Franklin County: rising temperatures, changes in precipitation, and extreme weather. How these impacts affect individual hazards is discussed in more detail within Section 3: Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment.

Figure 2-1: Climate Change and Natural Hazard Interactions from the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan

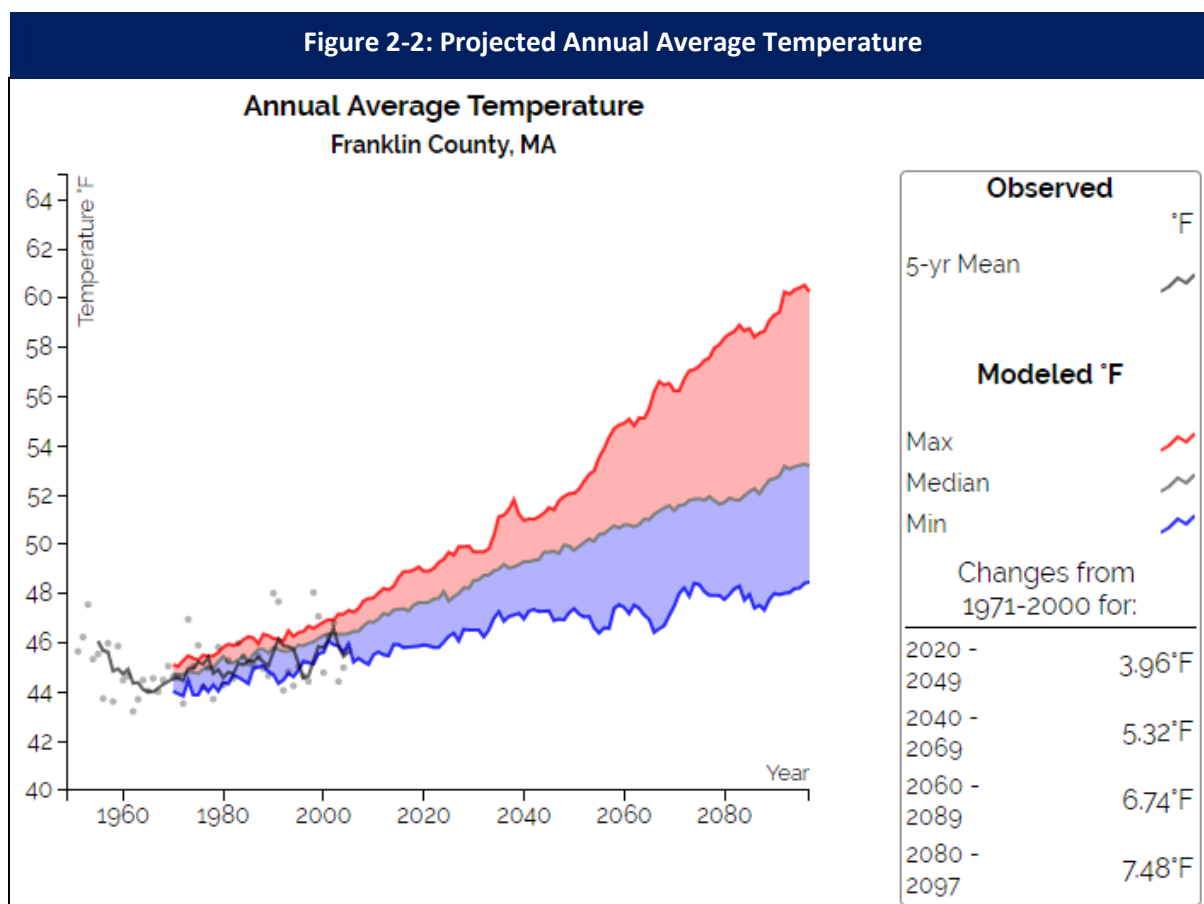
Primary Climate Change Interaction	Natural Hazard	Other Climate Change Interactions	Representative Climate Change Impacts
 Changes in Precipitation	Inland Flooding	Extreme Weather	Flash flooding, urban flooding, drainage system impacts (natural and human-made), lack of groundwater recharge, impacts to drinking water supply, public health impacts from mold and worsened indoor air quality, vector-borne diseases from stagnant water, episodic drought, changes in snow-rain ratios, changes in extent and duration of snow cover, degradation of stream channels and wetland
	Drought	Rising Temperatures, Extreme Weather	
	Landslide	Rising Temperatures, Extreme Weather	
 Sea Level Rise	Coastal Flooding	Extreme Weather	Increase in tidal and coastal floods, storm surge, coastal erosion, marsh migration, inundation of coastal and marine ecosystems, loss and subsidence of wetlands
	Coastal Erosion	Changes in Precipitation, Extreme Precipitation	
	Tsunami	Rising Temperatures	
 Rising Temperatures	Average/Extreme Temperatures	N/A	Shifting in seasons (longer summer, early spring, including earlier timing of spring peak flow), increase in length of growing season, increase of invasive species, ecosystem stress, energy brownouts from higher energy demands, more intense heat waves, public health impacts from high heat exposure and poor outdoor air quality, drying of streams and wetlands, eutrophication of lakes and ponds
	Wildfires	Changes in Precipitation	
	Invasive Species	Changes in Precipitation, Extreme Weather	
 Extreme Weather	Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	Rising Temperatures, Changes in Precipitation	Increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, resulting in greater damage to natural resources, property, and infrastructure, as well as increased potential for loss of life
	Severe Winter Storm / Nor'easter	Rising Temperatures, Changes in Precipitation	
	Tornadoes	Rising Temperatures, Changes in Precipitation	
	Other Severe Weather (Including Strong Wind and Extreme Precipitation)	Rising Temperatures, Changes in Precipitation	
Non-Climate-Influenced Hazards	Earthquake	Not Applicable	There is no established correlation between climate change and this hazard

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Rising Temperatures

Average global temperatures have risen steadily in the last 50 years, and scientists warn that the trend will continue unless greenhouse gas emissions are significantly reduced. The nine warmest years on record all occurred in the last 20 years (2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2010, 2009, 2005, and 1998), according to the U.S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The average, maximum, and minimum temperatures in Franklin County are likely to increase significantly over the next century (resilient MA, 2018). Figure 2-2 displays the projected increase in annual temperature by mid-century and the end of this century, compared to the observed annual average temperature from 1971-2000. The average annual temperature is projected to increase from 45.3 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) to 50.6°F (5.32°F change) by mid-century, and to 52.8°F (7.48°F change) by the end of this century. The variation in the amount of change in temperature shown in Figure 2-4 is due to projections that assume different amounts of future GHG emissions, with greater change occurring under a higher emissions scenario, and less change occurring under a lower emissions scenario. For example, under a high emission scenario, the annual average temperature by the end of the century could be as high as 60°F.

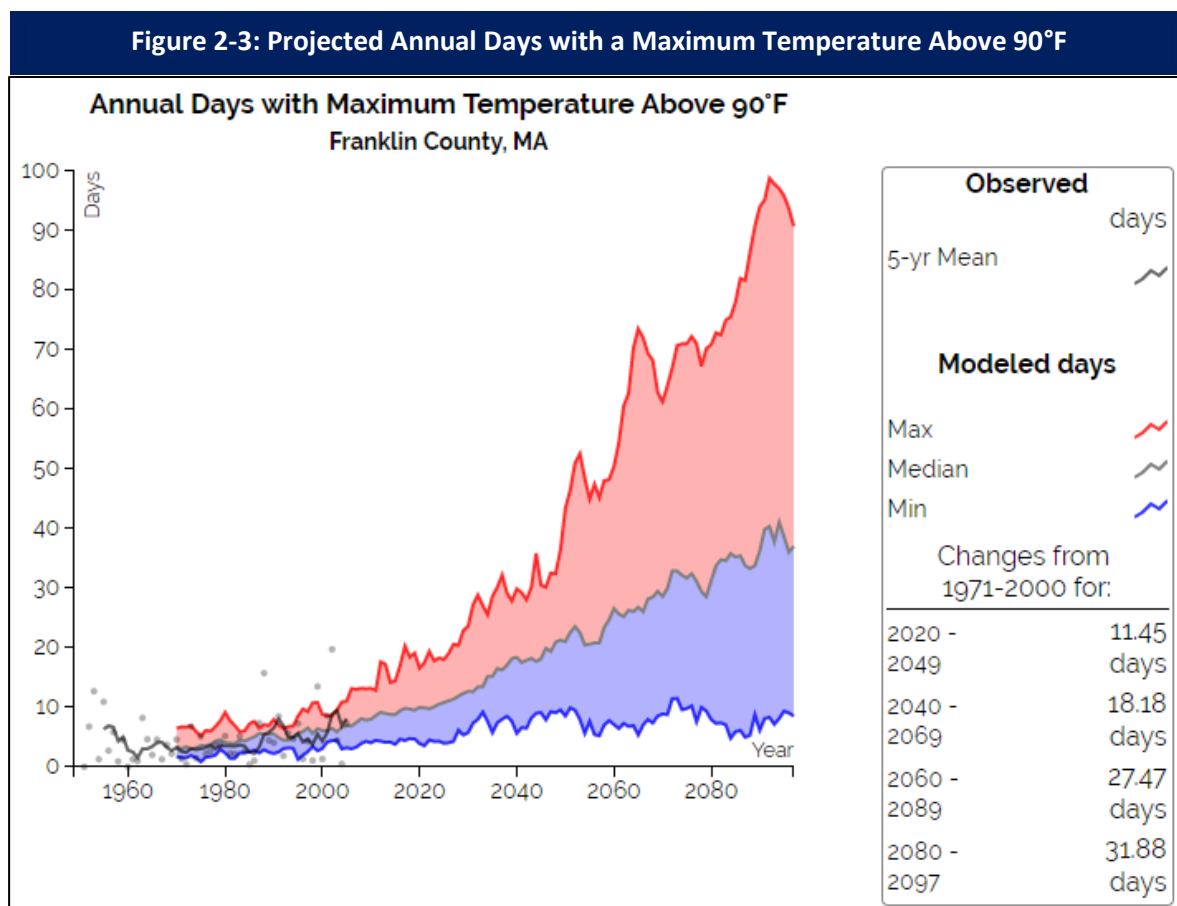


Source: Resilient MA

Winter temperatures are projected to increase at a greater rate than spring, summer, or fall. Currently Franklin County experiences an average of 169 days per year with a minimum temperature below freezing (32°F). The number of days per year with daily minimum temperatures below freezing is projected to decrease anywhere from 13 to 40 days by the 2050s, and by 15 to as many as 82 days (down to 87 days total) by the 2090s.

Although minimum temperatures are projected to increase at a greater rate than maximum

temperatures in all seasons, significant increases in maximum temperatures are anticipated, particularly under a higher GHG emissions scenario. Figure 2-3 displays the projected increase in the number of days per year over 90°F. The number of days per year with daily maximum temperatures over 90°F is projected to increase by 18 days by the 2050s, and by 32 days by the end of the century (for a total of 36 days over 90°F), compared to the average observed range from 1971 to 2000 of 4 days per year. Under a high emissions scenario, however, there could be as many as 100 days with a maximum temperature above 90°F by the end of the century.

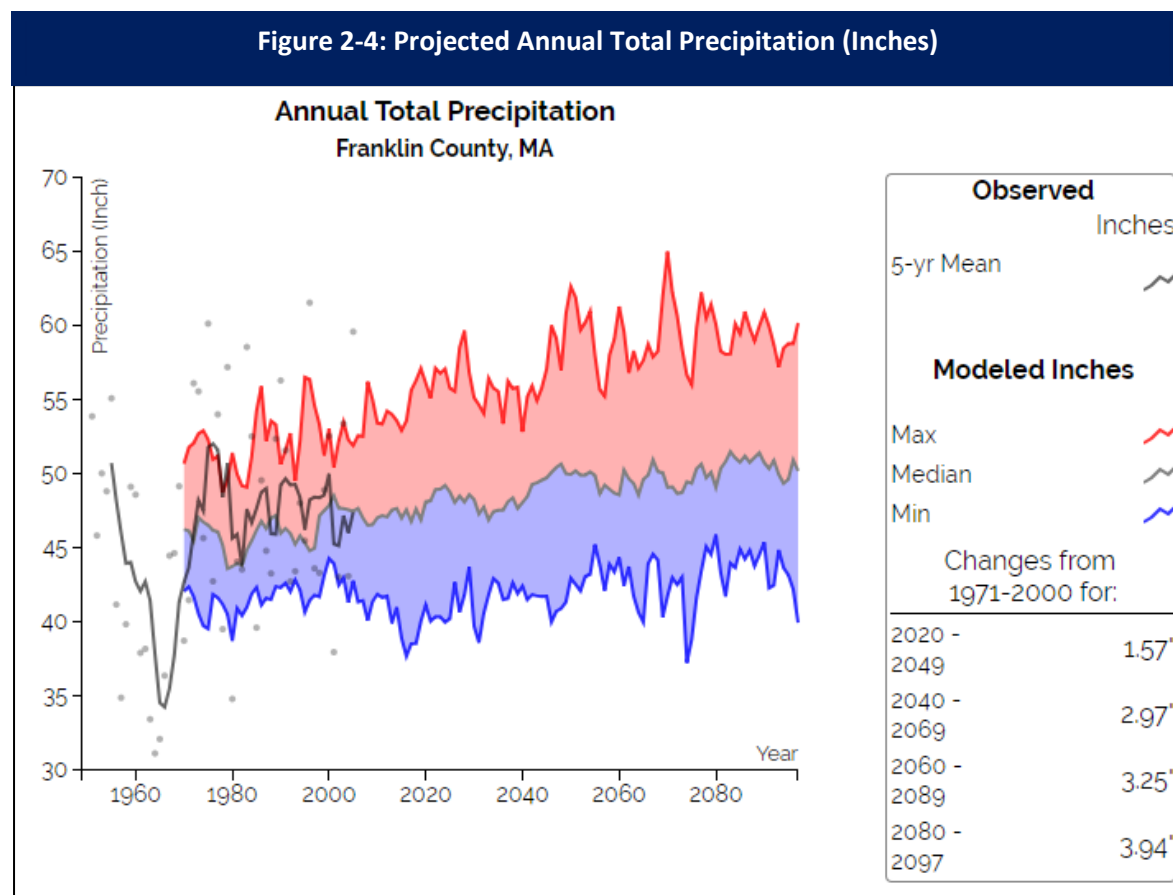


Source: Resilient MA

Changes in Precipitation

Changes in the amount, frequency, and timing of precipitation—including both rainfall and snowfall—are occurring across the globe as temperatures rise and other climate patterns shift in response. Precipitation is expected to increase over this century in Franklin County. Total annual precipitation is projected to increase by 3 inches by mid-century, and by 4 inches by the end of this century (see Figure 2-6). This will result in up to 52 inches of rain per year, compared to the 1971-2001 average annual precipitation rate of 48 inches per year in Franklin County. Precipitation during winter and spring is expected to increase, while precipitation during summer and fall is expected to decrease over this

century. In general, precipitation projections are more uncertain than temperature projections.¹¹



Source: Resilient MA

Extreme Weather

Climate change is expected to increase extreme weather events across the globe, as well as right here in Massachusetts. There is strong evidence that storms—from heavy downpours and blizzards to tropical cyclones and hurricanes—are becoming more intense and damaging, and can lead to devastating impacts for residents across the state. Climate change leads to extreme weather because of warmer air and ocean temperatures and changing air currents. Warmer air leads to more evaporation from large water bodies and holds more moisture, so when clouds release their precipitation, there is more of it. In addition, changes in atmospheric air currents like jet streams and ocean currents can cause changes in the intensity and duration of stormy weather.

In Franklin County, recent events such as Tropical Storm Irene (August 29-30, 2011), and the February tornado in Conway in 2018, are examples of extreme weather events that are projected to become more frequent occurrences due to climate change. While it is difficult to connect one storm to a changing climate, scientists point to the northeastern United States as one of the regions that is most

¹¹ <http://resilientma.org/datagrapher/?c=Temp/county/pcpn/ANN/25011/>

vulnerable to an increase in extreme weather driven by climate change.

2.3 SUMMARY OF MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP FINDINGS

2.3.1 COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BUILDING WORKSHOP

In the face of the changes outlined in the previous section, municipalities are working to increase their resilience and adapt to natural hazards and extreme weather events. Recent events in Franklin County have reinforced the need for resiliency planning and compelled communities like the Town of New Salem to proactively plan and mitigate potential risks. This type of planning will reduce the vulnerability of New Salem's people, infrastructure and natural resources, and will empower New Salem's officials and citizens to take steps to protect themselves and their community.

As a State-certified MVP Provider, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments helped New Salem engage in a community-driven process that brought together climate change information and local knowledge to conduct community outreach and the Community Resilience Building (CRB) workshop, whose central objectives were to:

- Define top local natural and climate-related hazards of concern;
- Identify existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities;
- Develop prioritized actions for the community;
- Identify immediate opportunities to collaboratively advance actions to increase resilience.

Workshop participants considered climate change impacts most likely to affect New Salem, including rising and extreme temperatures, extreme weather events and increased precipitation, both in quantity and intensity.

The workshop was critical to enabling participants to think about and engage with people from different sectors. People representing emergency management, fire, administration, select board, local conservation groups, the municipal light plant, and interested residents came together to discuss the most threatening hazards to the Town of New Salem and to agree upon high priorities and actions to address them.

2.3.2 STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

The Town of New Salem planned to hold their Community Resilience Building Workshop in late April 2020, but the meeting was ultimately cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In place of an all-day in-person workshop, the Committee devised a plan to remotely complete some of the objectives of the MVP Planning process, coupled with a shorter, in-person meeting held outdoors. The Town was committed to gathering input from community members in order to build the recommendations presented in the plan.

The Committee compiled a list of twenty-four community members, which was representative of New Salem's local businesses, municipal departments and boards, residents, and local conservation organizations. Informational packets about the MVP program, risks associated with climate change, and sample interview questions were sent out to each stakeholder.



Committee members then called each stakeholder to conduct an interview to learn more about how their services, business, or personal property (as applicable) had already been impacted by climate change and what their concerns are for the future considering Massachusetts' changing climate. Interviews were conducted with twelve (12) stakeholders, which revealed a wide variety of concerns. Responses recorded during the interviews allowed the Committee to characterize the hazards impacting New Salem, and the data gathered were presented during an abbreviated Community Resilience Building Workshop held outdoors in September. Outreach packets, interviews, the Community Resilience Building Matrix and workshop materials are presented in the Appendix.

2.3.3 TOP HAZARDS AND VULNERABLE AREAS

Workshop participants discussed a number of hazards that impact New Salem, deliberating on how frequent, how intense and how widespread each hazard has been and could potentially be in the future. Hazards discussed included: dam failures, severe winter storms/ice storms, earthquakes, hurricanes, wind storms/microbursts, tornados, ice jams, floods, wild fires, landslides, droughts, human-made hazards and extreme temperatures. Top hazards identified by the participants are as follows:



2.3.4 AREAS OF CONCERN

Infrastructure and Transportation: Lack of backup water supplies for firefighting; limited emergency access routes for firefighting; prolonged power outages; downed trees on power lines; culverts in need of repairs or upgrades; stormwater erosion and poor drainage on dirt roads; Town Buildings in need of repair and upgrades to improve resilience.

Facilities and businesses: Economic impacts of flooding, extreme heat, and drought on small orchards and farms, economic impacts of severe storms on local businesses, undersized generator at the Fire Station, which serves as the Emergency Operations Center.

Public health: Insect-borne diseases such as Lyme disease; respiratory illness associated with higher temperatures; lack of a backup potable water supply; residents on private wells at risk of losing their water supply during a drought.

People: Elders throughout Town; seniors on fixed incomes who may not be able to make costly repairs due to damage from flooding or severe storms; homes in the wildland urban interface; lack of public transportation on a fixed route; limited number of farms in Town which may pose a risk for food resiliency; need for heating and cooling shelters; significant improvements are needed for the Swift River School to serve as a community shelter; need for increased Reverse 911 signups.

Ecosystems and natural resources: Dead tree stands throughout Town; decline in Oak, Ash, and Hemlock trees due to pest infestations; increase of invasive species on private and public property; increased severity of brushfires due to drier conditions; sedimentation in the Millers River due to large scale development in the watershed; concerns with regard to water quality due to an increase in stormwater runoff.



Top: An image from a brushfire that broke out in New Salem in 2018. The size of the fire required assistance from a mutual aid team to extinguish it.

Bottom: A downed pole on West Street after a snow storm. *Photos courtesy of the New Salem Fire Department.*

2.3.5 CURRENT CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES PRESENTED BY HAZARDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Community members and participants in the workshop discussed a number of hazards that have affected the community in recent years, such as:

- Changes in precipitation including more ice and rain in the winter and increased amounts of precipitation falling in a short period;
- Short-term, acute weather events including severe wind events, extreme and erratic temperatures;
- Prolonged periods of drought and dry conditions, which increase the potential for a wildfire outbreak.

Participants in the workshop expressed concern about the impacts of severe storms, with an emphasis on the impacts of severe wind events and heavy rain events. Community members recalled recent severe wind events that led to prolonged power outages and downed trees, as well as heavy precipitation events that have caused road washouts. Power in New Salem comes from several directions, so depending on where the lines are cut residents can be left without power for multiple days after an event. New Salem's recently installed broadband infrastructure is similarly vulnerable to severe storms that cause power outages. When this occurs, residents with internet-based phone service will not be able to make or receive calls on their home phone. Additionally, road washouts can pose a risk for residents trying to evacuate Town after heavy rain events or even just to transport schoolchildren on buses after storms.

Temperature extremes, such as high heat and freezing temperatures were another top concern. The elderly are particularly vulnerable to extreme temperatures and may lack air conditioning or ways to adequately heat their homes. Extreme heat can also contribute to poor air quality by trapping emitted pollutants close to the ground, affecting people with asthma and other respiratory diseases as well as young children and the elderly. Additionally, a delayed frost in Fall can lead to a longer habitable period for pests such as mosquitoes and deer ticks, which is a public health concern. Community members commented on the lasting implications of Lyme disease, such as poor mental health, and noted that there is a need for more public education surrounding these issues.

While large wildfires have not recently occurred in New Salem, community members and workshop participants are concerned that the combination of increasingly dry conditions, large stands of trees killed by pests, and large tracts of contiguous forest could lead to a wildfire in the future. Small brushfires can worsen due to drier conditions, and it can be very difficult to get fires out once they get going, especially during periods of drought and extreme heat. Nearby Towns in Franklin County such as Leverett and Orange experienced wildfires during the Summer of 2020 which burned a total of more than 60 acres of land in each Town. These fires demonstrated how even mild drought conditions can increase the threat of wildfires. Workshop participants reflected on the drought that occurred in September 2016 as an event that impacted the community; wells at several households ran dry, one of which supported livestock on the property.

2.3.6 SPECIFIC CATEGORIES OF CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES

Road Drainage and Bridge/Culvert Replacements: Approximately 50% of New Salem’s roads are gravel¹², which are more vulnerable to washouts during heavy precipitation events. Workshop participants discussed concerns about stormwater runoff causing hazardous erosion, sometimes making roads impassable in locations throughout the town. Concern about this challenge has increased with the impacts of more frequent and intense precipitation events. The Highway Department regularly clears out culverts and drainage ditches throughout town to ensure proper drainage, but flash flooding, washouts and mudding occur regularly, and they can only do so much work with limited funding. Key areas of concern include Cooleyville Road, Moose Horn Road, and Wendell Road.

New Salem is currently working with the FRCOG on determining which stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) could be applied in the Town to improve road conditions and reduce stormwater erosion and its associated hazards. These projects were discussed at the workshop as solutions that could create a more resilient roadway, save the town funding from repetitive repairs, and help protect the water quality of the many streams that run alongside the Town’s roads. Two sites on Cooleyville Road were assessed due to issues with excess runoff. Recommendations include re-crowning the road surface, installing two interconnected deep sump catch basins at the top of Cooleyville Road, and installing erosion resistant waterways lined with rip rap and check dams along both sides of the road.

Energy Resilience: New Salem’s power grid and broadband infrastructure were considered by MVP workshop participants to be vulnerable to natural hazard impacts, such as severe storms that topple trees and bring broken branches down on power lines. Snow has been less of an issue compared to ice storms causing power outages in recent years. While many residents have generators, others are vulnerable to long term power outages, and nearly 25% of New Salem residents are senior citizens. Additionally, residents who rely on medical devices that require power but do not have backup may be vulnerable during a severe storm event. New Salem is in the process of connecting residents with broadband internet service to their homes. Participants during the workshop voiced concerns about those with a VOIP phone, as they will have no phone service during a power outage. As a result, energy resilience is a major concern for safeguarding residents as well as town buildings and operations during power outages.

MassDOT is in the process of completing tree cutbacks along Route 202 to safeguard powerlines. However, the cutting abruptly stopped in Shutesbury and did not continue into New Salem until the Town Clerk and local legislators called for the important work to continue north into New Salem. Another strategy brought up at the workshop to address energy resiliency was focusing on immediate threats to the power grid and other critical infrastructure, such as aging trees. The Tree Warden completed an assessment of trees located near the Town’s buildings and has a list of trees that need to be removed or pruned. Workshop participants suggested additional DPW staff should be trained on how

¹² 2007 FRCOG Franklin County Gravel Roads Summary and 2017 FRCOG Road Mileage Inventory

to conduct these types of assessments to ensure any issues are proactively addressed. The Tree Warden is currently working on appointing a Deputy Warden to help complete identified projects.

The Fire Station in Town serves as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for residents in New Salem and Wendell. The current generator at the station is undersized, and the Fire Chief is interested in remediating this issue to better serve residents during an emergency. In the past, residents have been able to come in to the EOC and charge their phones or other necessary devices. The Fire Station is also in a good position to be evaluated for a battery storage system, as there is already a solar array on site. As previously noted, when power lines are knocked out residents are often left without power for days, ensuring the EOC has a source of backup power is of utmost importance to the Town's Emergency Management Team.

Vulnerabilities related to wildfire: Participants also voiced concerns with regard to the possibility of a wildfire outbreak and the Town's ability to manage a fire. New Salem is approximately 88% forest cover, which includes approximately 12,100 acres of the Prescott Peninsula, an area that is permanently protected forest to preserve the water quality in the Quabbin Reservoir and under the control of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The large tracts of contiguous forest increases the Town's vulnerabilities to a wildfire outbreak. Combined with other factors such as more frequent and prolonged droughts, stands of dying Eastern Hemlock trees, and unmaintained private forestland, wildfire could spread very quickly throughout the Town.

The DCR previously maintained firebreaks on state owned land. The purpose of firebreaks are to allow for the removal and management of fuel to prevent the progress of forest fires.¹³ Without the presence of firebreaks, a wildfire outbreak on the Prescott Peninsula would pose a threat to the rest of the Town. The Fire Department is interested in working with the DCR to coordinate on reestablishing firebreaks within heavily forested areas, and on coordinating the removal of slash left behind by logging operations.

Another primary concern related to the Town's ability to manage a wildfire is a lack of functioning dry hydrants. According to the Fire Chief, restoring the dry hydrants on Meechum Road and Old N. Dana Road, and upgrading the water supply tank at the Fire Station is an urgent need. Additional funding is also needed in order to purchase a Utility Task Vehicle, which would have a greater capacity to truck in water for firefighting purposes than the Department's current equipment.

Impacts of Drought and need for Water Resilience: At the time of the MVP Workshop in mid-September 2020, New Salem was in the grips of a Stage 3: Critical Level Drought. This was of great concern to workshop participants, as all residents use private wells as their water supply and the Town does not have a source of potable water that could be distributed during an emergency. If private wells were to run dry, residents would need to purchase backup supplies of their own. During the workshop, participants discussed past attempts to develop a municipal water supply for emergency purposes. In

¹³ United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, State of New York. https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ny/technical/cp/?cid=nrcs144p2_027147

the past, a private landowner agreed to install a well for the Town on their property, but ultimately did not move forward with the project due to concerns about liability. The Town is interested in installing a well, but municipal officials have voiced concerns with how difficult it is to properly site a public water supply. For example, the well would need to be located at least 300 feet from a road or septic system; no parcels of land currently owned by the Town meet those criteria so the project would require land acquisition. The Town is interested in investigating opportunities to have a backup water supply for residents to access during an emergency.

Shelter in Place: Workshop participants also discussed how climate change may impact the ability of many residents to shelter in place, especially seniors, who comprise 25% of the Town's population. Severe storms are noted to have damaged homes in New Salem, which can be costly to repair. Seniors on fixed incomes may not be able to afford needed repairs. The Town no longer qualifies for CDBG funding due to income thresholds; this funding was previously used to assist homeowners with storm proofing and rehabilitation of existing homes. Additionally, concerns were raised about some seniors not having air conditioning in the summer months, and during the winter they may be reluctant to turn on the heat due to the high cost of fuel. Loss of drinking water and household water supplies is an additional threat to seniors in homes with shallow wells that are vulnerable to drought.

At the same time, New Salem residents understand the importance of being self-reliant and pride themselves on being prepared and able to take care of themselves and one another. The Fire Department has a practice of checking in on isolated residents after a storm, but otherwise New Salem residents are typically prepared to shelter in place. Therefore, community outreach and education for residents to learn how to increase their own resilience to natural hazards is a fitting strategy for the Town. After the Town's last Hazard Mitigation Plan was completed, emergency preparedness booklets were sent out to all households. The Town would like to update the materials, post relevant information on their website, and increase signups for the CodeRED system to improve residential emergency preparedness. Residents should also be guided to access regional and county public health information sources, such as mass.gov and MEMA, to become informed and prepared in the face of new vector-borne diseases and pandemics such as COVID-19, which threaten public health.

Invasive species: Workshop participants explained that a variety of landscapes in New Salem - from home gardens and roadsides, to forests and wetlands - have become increasingly susceptible to invasive species. These non-native plants pose an ecological risk by crowding out native plants, decreasing the availability of food, forage, and nesting habitat for insects, including wild native pollinators, which are keystone species that are vital to sustaining the whole ecosystem. Invasive species also threaten transportation infrastructure in Town by overwhelming roadsides, and destabilizing drainage areas. Overall forest health was perhaps of greatest concern to participants, who noted die-offs due to the hemlock wooly adelgid and the emerald ash borer. Bittersweet was also reported to be dominating vegetation in some areas of Town. Additionally, workshop participants recalled severe damage to the Town's roadside oak trees from gypsy moths in recent years. In order to address this issue or come up with a management plan, the Town will need to coordinate with the DCR, as the State owns approximately two-thirds of the land in New Salem.

Lack of Local Food: Over the last decade, the majority of large agricultural operations in New Salem have ceased to operate. Workshop participants discussed that some residents have small vegetable gardens, but there is no longer a community garden. Options to increase food resiliency include advocating for a regional canning center that residents in the Quabbin area could have access to, or partnering with the Town of Wendell to use the kitchen in their Town Hall. New Salem residents are already able to participate in the Good Neighbors program through the Town of Wendell, which is a volunteer driven food pantry.

Pandemics and Tick-borne illness: New Salem has had 11 cases of COVID since the pandemic began, with numerous residents identified as close contacts and required to quarantine. As of February 23 2021, Franklin County has had 1,959 COVID cases since early with 101 deaths. The experience of the global coronavirus pandemic in Franklin County and more broadly across the State of Massachusetts is like a multi-layered hazard that requires a great deal of planning and response. Not only is there a high health cost to those who are infected and the loss of life for those who succumb, but the economic disaster that was precipitated by the shutdown, and the mental health challenges faced by those at home, out of work, and unable to go to school, are all parts of this disaster.

With separate Boards of Health managing local pandemic responses in each community, many small rural towns including New Salem have very small numbers of staff and limited resources for meeting contemporary pandemic response best practices. Individual Boards of Health can easily be stretched thin and overwhelmed by the task of enacting completely separate municipal COVID responses with different teams, different priorities, different communication strategies, and different resources. Without shared health departments and services it is also challenging to assure consistent enforcement, disease management, and response to complaints.

Responding to a public health pandemic requires a number of things, including:

- A well-funded, adequately staffed, and properly trained health department to manage the infectious disease investigation, isolation and quarantine of those impacted, and enforcement of state and federal orders that apply to businesses, schools, and public buildings. The swift and effective prevention of coronavirus transmission requires 24/7 public health nursing coverage and a familiarity with the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiological Network (MAVEN).
- Good working relationships between the board of health, health agents and public health nurses and more traditional first responders like police, ambulance, and emergency management directors are a vital part of responding to a pandemic, and have been identified as an area of improvement in the FRCOG's State of Emergency Preparedness Report (page 8, 2019). Ideally these important partners would already be working together. Ensuring these roles work together regularly and operationalize template plans is an important part of pandemic preparedness. The Town had prepared to some extent through emergency dispensing site drills

and other public health preparedness activities, but the pandemic is/was nonetheless a huge challenge for the elected and appointed volunteers in these roles.

- Risk communication skills and effective local communication channels are essential tools in changing public health practices and beliefs, like mask wearing, social distancing, and vaccine acceptance. Towns need to have newsletters, mailing list, automatic telephone call systems, cable TV channels, etc. In responding to the coronavirus pandemic the Town would have benefited from having more of these channels readily available and more training in risk communication for staff and volunteers.

Vulnerability of Town records: No redundancy or digital backup exists for Town documents and many historical records. If the Town Hall were to be damaged during a storm, it is likely that the Town's records would be damaged or destroyed. It is of interest to the Town to work on backing up records, but noted the financial pressures are incredibly high and it would be a time intensive process.

2.3.7 CURRENT STRENGTHS AND ASSETS

The New Salem community has a variety of social, environmental and infrastructural resources to draw upon to see it through natural hazard events. The Town is familiar with its vulnerabilities, but also its strengths and actions to address these vulnerabilities. Participants cited several strengths and assets that help keep their community resilient in the face of climate change and other challenges. They include:



Emergency Operations Center: The New Salem Fire Department provides a centralized EOC for the Towns of New Salem and neighboring Wendell. There are several ways to get there, making access easy, even if one road is closed. When activated, the EOC serves as a warming shelter and charging station that is open to all residents in need. New Salem residents are also adept at being self-reliant in the face of natural hazards. The Fire Department does wellness checks following up on the safety and needs of residents, especially elder adults. Additionally, the Fire Department works with staff at the Swift River Elementary School to help with emergency preparedness planning.

Residential Emergency Preparedness: The Fire Department and Town actively promote residential emergency preparedness, and have prepared educational materials for the community in the past. The Town is looking forward to updating these materials with more information about what residents should

do in different types of emergencies and how they can safeguard personal property. With the addition of the Town's new broadband system, residents are now able to communicate more effectively in an emergency event.

Proactive Highway Department and Tree Warden: The Highway Department routinely fixes and upgrades culverts throughout Town to mitigate stormwater runoff and improve road drainage. The Tree Warden has completed an assessment of trees located near the Town's buildings and has a list of trees that need to be removed or pruned.

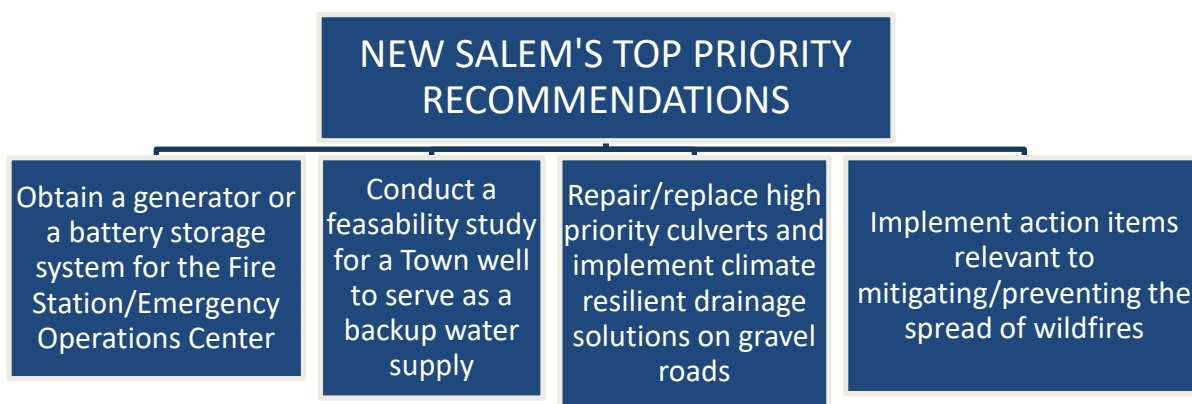
Permanently Protected Open Space and Contiguous Forest: Land in New Salem is well conserved and there are large tracts of intact habitats. Conserved land is important for climate resiliency, as it can serve as a buffer, provide storage for floodwaters, sequester carbon, and support biodiversity.

Active Community Groups and Volunteers: The Energy Committee has been working on increasing energy efficiency for municipal buildings and for residents. Recent projects include weatherization improvements at the Swift River School. New Salem also has an active Conservation Commission, which has helped to monitor and resolve beaver issues throughout Town.

A complete list of the Town's strengths is included in Section 4 of this plan, and a completed copy of FEMA's Capability Assessment Worksheet is included in Appendix C.

2.3.8 TOP RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE

During New Salem's in-person MVP workshop, participants prioritized the resiliency actions brainstormed during the meeting. Action items were consolidated as appropriate to develop New Salem's top priority recommendations as shown below. Recommendations address key vulnerabilities while building upon current strengths.



Obtaining a generator or a battery storage system for the EOC is the Town's highest priority. As previously mentioned, the EOC serves residents in both New Salem and Wendell. The station's current generator is undersized.

Conducting a feasibility study for a municipal backup water supply was another high priority agreed upon by workshop participants. The drought during the summer of 2020 and the threat of additional, prolonged droughts raised concerns as all New Salem residents are on private wells.

Implementing action items relevant to mitigating/preventing the spread of wildfires is also important to New Salem, especially considering land in Town is nearly 90% forested. Action items developed by workshop participants include:

- Identifying Town-owned forested areas that are at higher risk for wildfires to implement climate resilient forest management practices, including the removal of slash;
- Working with the state to minimize or prohibit the cutting of trees on Quabbin Reservoir lands to alleviate the risk of wildfires igniting from logging slash; and
- Obtaining funding to restore and repair dry hydrants throughout Town and upgrade the water tank at the Fire Department's Main Station.

Repairing or replacing high priority culverts and improving storm water drainage on gravel roads is also considered a top priority recommendation. Flash flooding is an ongoing issue affecting the extensive network of gravel roads in the Town, which can be addressed by developing nature based solutions such as green stormwater BMPs in combination with conventional strategies to mitigate runoff and erosion. The FRCOG recently drafted two pilot projects that could reduce stormwater erosion on Cooleyville Road, and completed a full culvert assessment for the Town. The results of the culvert assessment can be used to prioritize needed repairs and upgrades.

The Community Resilience Building matrix was used as a tool during the workshop, and a completed copy is presented in Appendix B. All High, Medium, and Low priority action items are listed below. Section 4 of this Plan includes prioritized Action Tables for Hazard Mitigation Action Items and Preparedness and Response Action Items (Tables 4-3 and 4-4). Please reference those tables for information about the current status of each action item, responsible departments, and potential funding sources.

High Priority Action Items

- Seek and obtain funding for a new backup generator for the Fire Station, which serves as the Town's Emergency Operations Center.
- Seek and obtain funding for a battery storage system for the solar PV system already present at the Fire Department's main station.
- Obtain funding to restore and repair dry hydrants throughout Town and upgrade the water supply tank at the Fire Station. Additionally, seek funding for a utility vehicle that could be used to truck in water for fire suppression efforts.
- Hire a consultant to conduct a feasibility study for Town well as a backup water supply. All residents are on wells; creating a municipal backup source of potable for the Town will increase resiliency.
- Provide information to residents via Town website and the New Salem Newsletter on 'home

survival kits' in the event of a severe hazard. Access printable materials and online information at www.ready.gov. Prepare extra home survival kits that can be housed at the Fire Station and distributed to residents.

- Identify Town-owned forested areas that are at higher risk for wildfires (near residential areas, high-wire utilities, etc.) to implement climate resilient forest management practices that reduce the risk of fire hazards (such as the removal of slash). Coordinate with utility company for tree clearing work.
- Inventory and map areas of logging slash in Town. Work with landowners as needed to develop a plan to remove slash to decrease the risk of wildfires.
- Work with the state to minimize or prohibit the cutting of trees on Quabbin Reservoir lands to alleviate the risk of wildfires igniting from logging slash. Request the state add slash removal and the re-establishment of fire breaks to the maintenance plan for the Quabbin Reservoir.
- Use the results from FRCOG's 2020 *Town of New Salem Culvert Assessment* to prioritize repairs and replacements of culverts to build resiliency to severe storms and flooding events. Seek funding for the design and construction of high priority culverts.
- Obtain funding to implement the stormwater BMP projects identified for Cooleyville Road.
- Coordinate with MassDOT to cut down trees on Route 202 to mitigate risks associated with downed trees on powerlines. MassDOT is responsible for tree cutting on Route 202, but their work typically stops in Shutesbury and Orange.
- Publicize the Town's reverse 911 emergency notification system to increase signups. Post information about the system on the Town website, and put a notice in the New Salem News newsletter.
- To mitigate the impacts of natural hazards on New Salem residents, complete upgrades at the Swift River elementary school. Disseminate information on this shelter to appropriate Town Officials and to the public.
- Create or join a cross-jurisdictional sharing program for local boards of health to share nursing staff, reduce costs, qualify for funding, and expand capacity to meet current and future pandemic preparedness best practices.

Medium Priority Action Items

- Develop a program to provide professional assessments of the health and stability of large trees located adjacent to town-owned buildings and private homes, and critical infrastructure. Based on the assessment results, conduct tree trimming or removal where trees are determined to pose a high risk of causing property damage and/or injury or loss of life if compromised by microbursts or thunderstorm winds or other high wind events. Train DPW staff on how to conduct trimming and tree health assessments so this work can be carried forward on an annual basis.
- Hire a consultant to develop an invasive species management plan. The plan should map where invasive species are located and identify priority areas to address, treatment options, and state relative cost estimates.
- Publicize the Good Neighbors food distribution program to New Salem residents through a

mailing, on the Town website, and in the New Salem News newsletter.

Low Priority Action Items

- Conduct public education and outreach about vector-borne diseases such as Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis/Ehrlichiosis, Babesiosis, Powassan, Chikungunya, Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), Zika and West Nile Virus. Tick-borne diseases are the greatest concern for the Town.
- Support initiatives to increase food resiliency, as there are not many local farms in New Salem and residents need to travel out of Town to get to a grocery store. Options include coordinating on the development of a regional canning center with other Towns in Franklin County and revamping Community Gardening efforts.
- Identify municipal records at risk of being damaged during a hazard event and prioritize them for digitization.
- Continue to upgrade municipal buildings to make them more energy efficient. Buildings used as heating or cooling shelters should be prioritized.
- Request information from the FRCOG and the Franklin County REPC on any programs being developed to research appropriate vulnerability assessment models for fixed facility and transportation hazardous materials accidents. Once the model has been developed, collect relevant data, and populate model to further prioritize manmade hazard action items.
- Continue to participate in the Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC), which is currently working to complete and operationalize the Debris Management Plan. Coordinate with state and regional agencies to identify a location(s) in the Town for the temporary storage of contaminated and/or hazardous flood debris.
- Support local and regional, watershed-wide open space protection efforts, particularly in floodplain areas by participating in a group such as Friends of the Quabbin or Millers River Watershed Council.
- Continue to review and update land use regulations to include climate resiliency provisions such as Best Management Practices for River Corridor areas (FRCOG's River Corridor Toolkit), further restricting or limiting new development within the 100-year floodplain and River Corridor, Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater practices, etc.
- Review and amend existing land use regulations (zoning bylaws, general bylaws and subdivision regulations) as needed to include requirements that direct new development to stable slopes and soils, sets limits on land clearing to maintain stable slopes to reduce the risk of landslides, and protect existing development from potential landslides by ensuring that surface water and groundwater are properly managed.
- Preserve New Salem's agricultural capacity by working with willing landowners on permanently protecting the remaining parcels of active farmland and those with prime agricultural soils in the action items for food resiliency.

2.4 PROBLEM STATEMENTS

Based on findings from community outreach, Community Resilience Building Workshop, and working meetings the Committee developed problem statements and/or a list of key issues for each hazard to summarize the vulnerability of New Salem's structures, systems, populations and other community assets identified as vulnerable to damage and loss from a hazard event. These problem statements were used to inform the vulnerability assessment for each hazard (Section 3) and identify the Town's greatest vulnerabilities that will be addressed in the mitigation strategy (Section 4). Problem statements are presented in Table 2-5 below.

Table 2-5: New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning Problem Statements	
Applicable Hazards	Problem Statement
All Hazards	The generator at New Salem's Emergency Operations Center is undersized and needs to be replaced and upgraded.
Wildfire	Many residents in New Salem live within or adjacent to heavily forested areas in "intermix" and "interface" zones. This increases the risk of impacts to the population from a wildfire.
Wildfire	Logging in the Quabbin State Reservoir forests leave a significant amount of slash, which increases the Town's vulnerability to wildfires. There are also areas of logging slash on privately owned wooded parcels.
Wildfire, Extreme Temperatures, Drought	Extreme heat may worsen risk of wildfires and the availability of local water supplies for firefighting. Firefighters may already lack sufficient water volume, pressure, and/or infrastructure across town to fight wildfires. Several dry hydrants in Town are in need of repair/restoration.
Wildfire, Drought	Most towns in the region rely on volunteer fire departments and mutual aid to assist in firefighting; during dry spells or drought, firefighting resources in New Salem and surrounding towns can be strained if multiple wildfires break out at the same time.
Drought, Extreme Temperatures, Invasive Species	New Salem's forests make up approximately 88% of the Town's land and are vulnerable to extended drought, which could also increase the risk to other hazards including wildfire and pests.
Drought, Extreme Temperatures	All of New Salem's residents are serviced by private wells that run the risk of going dry during prolonged drought. The Town does not yet have a municipal well that could serve as a backup water supply during an emergency.
Drought, Extreme Temperatures, Wildfire	Firebreaks are no longer maintained on forested land managed by the DCR, which may increase the Town's vulnerability to a wildfire.
Flooding	FEMA floodplain maps are of primary importance for mitigating the flood inundation hazards but are critically out of date and do not represent present day landform data or climate change models.
Flooding, Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms, Tornadoes	Some of New Salem's historically valuable resources may not be adequately flood proofed, or may be located in buildings susceptible to damage from storms with high winds.
Flooding, Dam Failure, Earthquakes,	The REPC is working to identify options for regional and local debris management. The regional plan approved by MassDEP several years ago was never implemented because the communities that would serve as regional sites

Table 2-5: New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning Problem Statements	
Applicable Hazards	Problem Statement
Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms, Tornadoes	did not execute MOUs. The Town is being urged by MassDEP to select and provide disaster debris storage/disposal location(s).
Flooding, Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	Culvert maintenance is continuously needed throughout the Town; 19% of New Salem's culverts were found to be in critical condition during a study conducted by the FRCOG in the Fall of 2019.
Flooding, Extreme Temperatures	Approximately 50% of the roads in New Salem are unpaved, which can exacerbate already present issues with flooding, and become increasingly churned during quick freeze/thaw periods. Climate resilient drainage solutions are needed on the Town's dirt roads.
Flooding, Wildfire, Earthquakes, Landslides, Hurricanes, Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Severe Thunderstorms	The Town's evacuation routes may be impacted by flooding. There are areas of Town where residents might become isolated if roads, bridges, or culverts were blocked or damaged during a flood.
Flooding, Wildfire, Earthquakes, Landslides, Hurricanes, Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Extreme Temperatures, Severe Thunderstorms	Emergency shelters may not be adequately staffed or supplied with water, food, and first aid supplies. There is a need to inventory the supplies currently available at New Salem shelters.
Flooding, Wildfire, Earthquakes, Landslides, Hurricanes, Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Extreme Temperatures	Although the Town has a Reverse 911 Warning System, there is a need to expand the system and increase subscription among residents and businesses. Some residents have dropped their landlines and have not signed up for the system with their current number. Additionally, education and outreach are needed to ensure that all residents are aware of emergency situations and have access to evacuation and sheltering instructions, including options for residents with specialized medical needs, and pet sheltering options.
Flooding, Wildfire, Earthquakes, Landslides, Hurricanes, Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes	Existing communication infrastructure issues and vulnerabilities could be exacerbated by severe winter storm hazards impacts.
Wildfire, Hurricanes, Severe Winter Storms	The Town has an assessment of trees that are located close to Town buildings or critical infrastructure; additional training of Highway Department or other Town staff is needed to routinely prune or cut trees located close to critical infrastructure.
Hurricanes, Severe Winter Storms,	An estimated 37% of homes in New Salem were built prior to the first State building code in 1975, potentially making them more vulnerable to damages

Table 2-5: New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning Problem Statements	
Applicable Hazards	Problem Statement
Tornados, Severe Thunderstorms, Earthquakes	from high winds or earthquakes.
Severe Winter Storms, Extreme Temperatures	Extreme cold temperatures combined with power outages, even short duration, can result in frozen and burst pipes for properties without back-up power.
Severe Winter Storms, Extreme Temperatures	Elderly, disabled and low-income residents are more vulnerable to extreme temperatures and may lack A/C or adequate heating systems in their homes.
Invasive Species, Extreme Temperatures	Residents may not be familiar with how to deal with or prevent diseases associated with increasing average temperatures (e.g., tick and mosquito borne diseases).
Invasive Species	New Salem's forests rely on biodiverse ecosystems and are experiencing negative impacts due to invasive species. The scope of successfully controlling invasives long-term is often beyond the reach of what foresters and landowners can manage on their own.
Invasive Species	Vector-borne disease can have a significant negative impact on public health and the local and regional outdoor recreation economy.
Invasive Species, Extreme Temperatures	Climate change will increase the number of disease carrying vectors (ticks and mosquitoes) and increase demands on our public health system for symptom management and care for infected people. There is a need for a cross-jurisdictional sharing program for local boards of health to share nursing staff, reduce costs, qualify for funding, and expand capacity to meet the demands of current and future public health crises.
Extreme Temperatures	Extreme temperatures create a risk of "brown-outs" in the power grid, where electricity supply may dip due to excess demand on the system and can affect vulnerable populations and municipal operations dependent on a consistent and uninterrupted power supply.
Extreme Temperatures	Changing climate has resulted in an annual decrease in days below freezing, a trend that will progress over the next century. Fewer days below freezing and deep frosts occurring later in the season are some of the contributing factors for larger tick and mosquito populations and longer seasons for both. This increases risk to New Salem residents from insect borne diseases.
Multiple Hazards	Zoning bylaws, general bylaws, and subdivision regulations need to be assessed and updated to ensure they include climate resiliency provisions.

Hazards and Infrastructure, New Salem, Massachusetts

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Flood Related | Dam | School |
| 100 YR Flood Plain | Library | Town Hall |
| Millers River Dam Inundation Zone | Fire Station | Police Station |
| Localized Flooding | DPW | Ambulance |
| Evacuation Route | Bridge Ownership | |
| Alternative | MassDOT | Municipal |
| Primary | Gravel Road | Local Road |
| Secondary | Radio Tower | Public Water Supply |
| Tertiary | Sewage Treatment Plant | Chemical Facility |
| Gas Station | Transmission Line | Rail Line |
| Forest Land Cover | | |



Hazards and Infrastructure, New Salem, Massachusetts

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



Flood Related

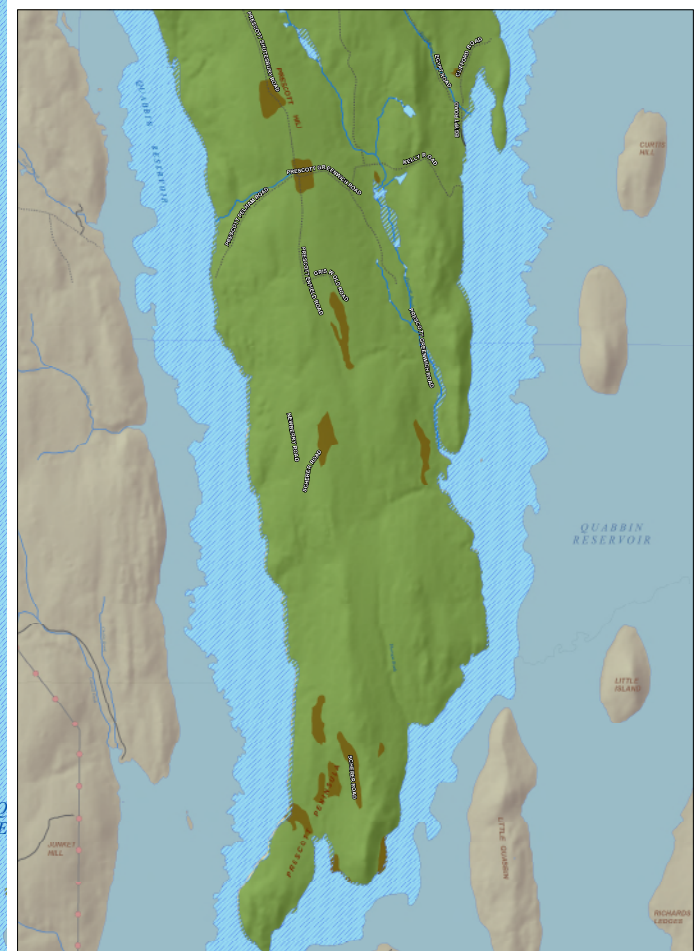
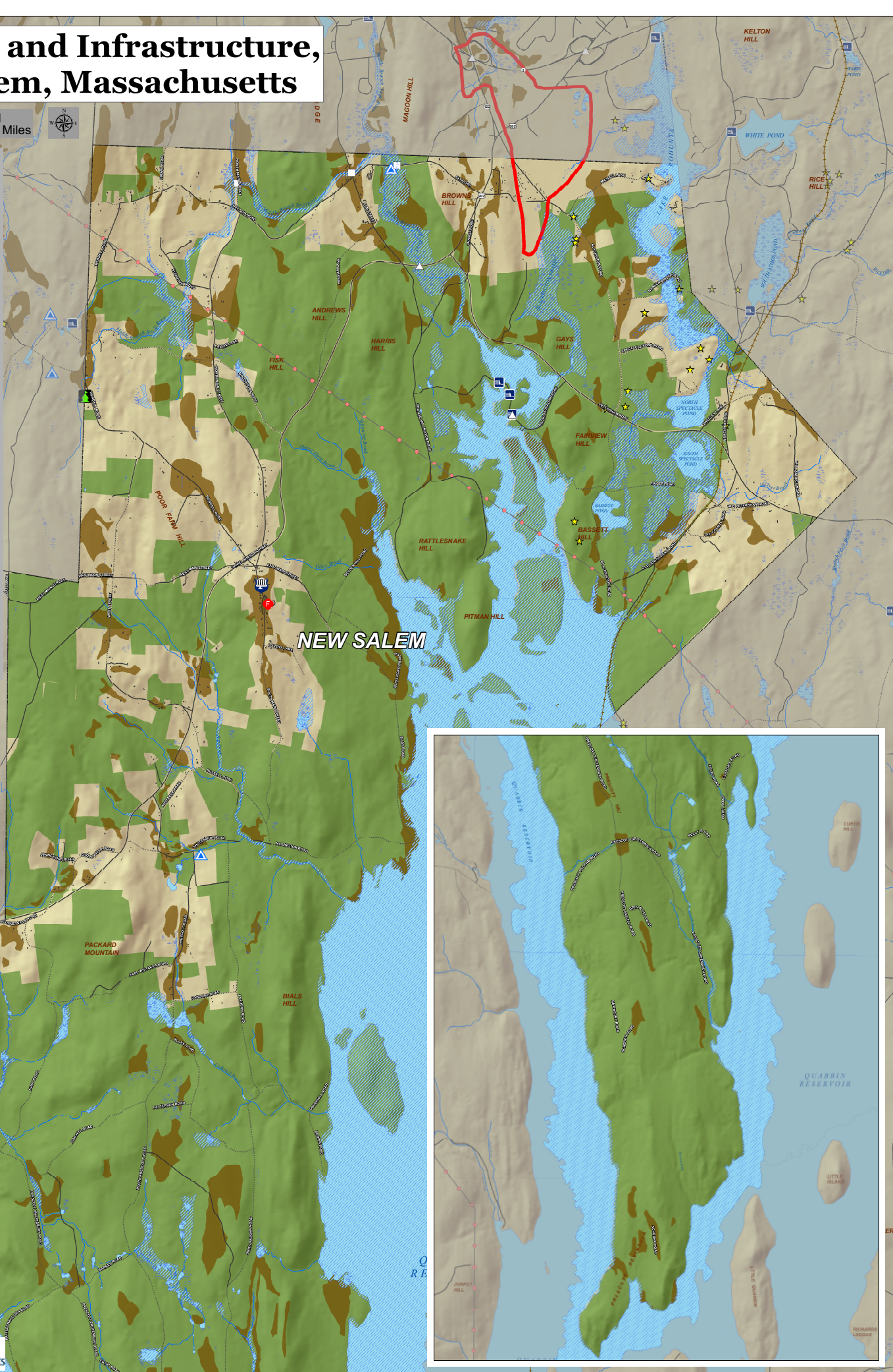
- Dam
- 100 YR Flood Plain
- Millers River Dam Inundation Zone
- Localized Flooding

Environmental

- Wetland
- Slope > 25%
- Prime Farmland Soils
- Zone II Water Supply Protection Area
- Permanently Protected Open Space
- Certified Vernal Pool (NHESP)

Bridge Ownership

- MassDOT
- Municipal
- Transmission Line
- Town Hall
- Fire Station
- Police Station
- Major Road
- Gravel Road
- Local Road
- River, Stream
- Water
- Town Boundary
- Building Footprint



Sources: Map produced by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments Planning Department.
GIS data sources include MassDOT, MassGIS, and FRCOG.
Depicted boundaries are approximate and are intended for planning purposes only. Not to be used for survey.

3 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following section includes a summary of disasters that have affected or could affect New Salem. Historical research, conversations with local officials and emergency management personnel, available hazard mapping and other weather-related databases were used to develop this list.

The Hazard Mitigation Committee referred to the *Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan* (September 2018) as a starting point for determining the relevant hazards in New Salem. The table below illustrates a comparison between the relevant hazards in the State plan, in New Salem's Hazard Mitigation plans, and the New Salem Community Resilience Building Workshop.





Table 3-1: Comparison of hazards in the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the New Salem Community Resilience Building Plan		
Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (2018)	New Salem Relevance	New Salem Community Resilience Building Workshop Top Priority Hazard
 Inland Flooding	NO	NO
 Drought	YES	YES
 Landslide	YES	NO
 Coastal Flooding	NO	N/A

Table 3-1: Comparison of hazards in the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the New Salem Community Resilience Building Plan











Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (2018)	New Salem Relevance	New Salem Community Resilience Building Workshop Top Priority Hazard
 Coastal Erosion	NO	N/A
 Tsunami	NO	N/A
 Average/Extreme Temperatures	YES	YES
 Wildfires	YES	NO
 Invasive Species	YES	YES
 Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	YES	NO
 Severe Winter Storm	YES	NO
 Tornadoes	YES	NO

Table 3-1: Comparison of hazards in the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the New Salem Community Resilience Building Plan		
Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (2018)	New Salem Relevance	New Salem Community Resilience Building Workshop Top Priority Hazard
	YES	YES
	YES	NO

3.2 NATURAL HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This chapter examines the hazards in the *Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan*, which are identified as likely to affect New Salem. The analysis is organized into the following sections: Hazard Description, Location, Extent, Previous Occurrences, Probability of Future Events, Impact, and Vulnerability. A description of each of these analysis categories is provided below.

Hazard Description

The natural hazards identified for New Salem are: severe winter storms, flooding, tornado, dam failure, hurricanes/tropical storms, severe thunderstorms/wind/microbursts, extreme temperatures, earthquakes, landslides, drought, wildfire, and invasive species. Many of these hazards result in similar impacts to a community. For example, hurricanes, tornados and severe snowstorms may cause wind-related damage.

Location

Location (Table 3-2) refers to the geographic areas within the planning area that are affected by the hazard. Some hazards affect the entire planning area universally, while others apply to a specific portion, such as a floodplain or area that is susceptible to wild fires. Classifications are based on the area that would potentially be affected by the hazard, on the following scale:

Table 3-2: Location of Occurrence Rating Scale	
Classification	Percentage of Town Impacted
Large	More than 50% of the town affected
Medium	10 to 50% of the town affected
Isolated	Less than 10% of the town affected

Extent

Extent describes the strength or magnitude of a hazard. Where appropriate, extent is described using an established scientific scale or measurement system. Other descriptions of extent include water depth, wind speed, and duration.

Previous Occurrences

Previous hazard events that have occurred are described. Depending on the nature of the hazard, events listed may have occurred on a local, state-wide, or regional level.

Probability of Future Events

The likelihood of a future event for each natural hazard was classified according to the following scale:

Table 3-3: Probability of Occurrence Rating Scale	
Classification	Probability of Future Events
Very High	Events that occur at least once each 1-2 years (50%-100% probability in the next year)
High	Events that occur from once in 2 years to once in 4 years (25%-50% probability in the next year)
Moderate	Events that occur from once in 5 years to once in 50 years (2%-25% probability in the next year)
Low	Events that occur from once in 50 years to once in 100 years (1-2% probability in the next year)
Very Low	Events that occur less frequently than once in 100 years (less than 1% probability in the next year)

Impact

Impact refers to the effect that a hazard may have on the people and property in the community, based on the assessment of extent described previously. Impacts are classified according to the following scale:

Table 3-4: Impacts Rating Scale	
Classification	Magnitude of Multiple Impacts
Catastrophic	Multiple deaths and injuries possible. More than 50% of property in affected area damaged or destroyed. Complete shutdown of facilities for 30 days or more.
Critical	Multiple injuries possible. More than 25% of property in affected area damaged or destroyed. Complete shutdown of facilities for more than 1 week.

Limited	Minor injuries only. More than 10% of property in affected area damaged or destroyed. Complete shutdown of facilities for more than 1 day.
Minor	Very few injuries, if any. Only minor property damage and minimal disruption of quality of life. Temporary shutdown of facilities.

Vulnerability

Based on the above metrics, a hazard vulnerability rating was determined for each hazard. The hazard vulnerability ratings are based on a scale of 1 through 3 as follows:

- 1 – High risk
- 2 – Medium risk
- 3 – Low risk

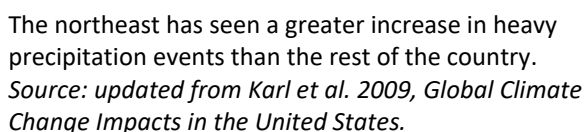
The ranking is qualitative and is based, in part, on local knowledge of past experiences with each type of hazard, review of available data, and the work of the Committee. The size and impacts of a natural hazard can be unpredictable. However, many of the mitigation strategies currently in place and many of those proposed for implementation can be applied to the expected natural hazards, regardless of their unpredictability.

Table 3-5: Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis				
Type of Hazard	Location of Occurrence	Probability of Future Events	Impact	Overall Hazard Vulnerability Rating
Severe Winter Storms	Large	Very High	Critical	1 - High
Flooding	Isolated	High	Limited	3 - Low
Tornadoes	Isolated	Low	Critical	3 - Low
Dam Failure	Medium	Moderate	Critical	3 - Low
Hurricanes / Tropical Storms	Large	High	Critical	2 - Medium
Severe Thunderstorms / Wind / Microbursts	Medium	Very High	Critical	1 - High
Extreme Temperatures	Large	Very High	Limited	1 - High
Earthquakes	Large	Low	Minor-Catastrophic	3 - Low

Table 3-5: Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis				
Type of Hazard	Location of Occurrence	Probability of Future Events	Impact	Overall Hazard Vulnerability Rating
Landslides	Isolated	Moderate	Limited	3 - Low
Drought	Large	Very High	Critical	1 - High
Wildfires	Large	Very High	Critical	1 - High
Invasive Species	Medium	Very High	Limited	2 - Medium




In Massachusetts, annual precipitation amounts have increased at a rate of over 1 inch per decade since the late 1800s, and are projected to continue to increase largely due to more intense precipitation events. The Northeast has experienced a greater increase in extreme precipitation events than the rest of the U.S. in the past several decades (Figure 3-1). Although overall precipitation is expected to increase as the climate warms, it will occur more in heavy, short intervals, with a greater potential for dry, drought conditions in between.

The Climate Data Grapher tool on the ResilientMA website contains down-scaled climate data for Franklin County (discussed in Section 2) and for the Chicopee River Watershed, which is where the majority of New Salem lies. Observed annual precipitation over the last several decades (1970-2005) is approximately 45 inches. By 2050, the model predicts that 41 inches per year would be the minimum annual precipitation; the median (middle value of the model predictions) could be 47 inches/year with a maximum of 59 inches per year. Neighboring watersheds, such as the Millers River watershed, are predicted to see even greater increases in precipitation. In general, precipitation projections are more uncertain than temperature projections.¹⁴



¹⁴ <https://resilientma.org/map/>

Figure 3-2: Effects of Climate Change on Flooding

Potential Effects of Climate Change		
	CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION → MORE INTENSE AND FREQUENT DOWNPOURS	More intense downpours often lead to inland flooding as soils become saturated and stop absorbing more water, river flows rise, and urban stormwater systems become overwhelmed. Flooding may occur as a result of heavy rainfall, snowmelt or coastal flooding associated with high wind and storm surge.
	EXTREME WEATHER → MORE FREQUENT SEVERE STORMS	Climate change is expected to result in an increased frequency of severe storm events. This would directly increase the frequency of flooding events, and could increase the chance that subsequent precipitation will cause flooding if water stages are still elevated.
	CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION → EPISODIC DROUGHTS	Vegetated ground cover has been shown to significantly reduce runoff. If drought causes vegetation to die off, this flood-mitigating capacity is diminished.

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

Nationally, inland flooding causes more damage annually than any other severe weather event (U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit, 2017). Between 2007 and 2014, the average annual cost of flood damages in Massachusetts was more than \$9.1 million (NOAA, 2014). Flooding is the result of moderate precipitation over several days, intense precipitation over a short period, or melting snowpack (U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit, 2017). Developed, impervious areas can contribute to and exacerbate flooding by concentrating and channeling stormwater runoff into nearby waterbodies. Increases in precipitation and extreme storm events from climate change are already resulting in increased flooding. Common types of flooding are described in the following subsections.

Riverine Flooding

Riverine flooding often occurs after heavy rain. Areas with high slopes and minimal soil cover (such as found in many areas of New Salem and Franklin County) are particularly susceptible to flash flooding caused by rapid runoff that occurs in heavy precipitation events and in combination with spring snowmelt, which can contribute to riverine flooding. Frozen ground conditions can also contribute to low rainfall infiltration and high runoff events that may result in riverine flooding. Some of the worst riverine flooding in Massachusetts' history occurred as a result of strong nor'easters and tropical storms in which snowmelt was not a factor. Tropical storms can produce very high rainfall rates and volumes of rain that can generate high runoff when soil infiltration rates are exceeded. Inland flooding in Massachusetts is forecast and classified by the National Weather Service's (NWS) Northeast River Forecast Center as minor, moderate, or severe based upon the types of impacts that occur. Minor flooding is considered a "nuisance only" degree of flooding that causes impacts such as road closures and flooding of recreational areas and farmland. Moderate flooding can involve land with structures becoming inundated. Major flooding is a widespread, life-threatening event. River forecasts are made at many locations in the state where there are United States Geological Survey (USGS) river gauges that have established flood elevations and levels corresponding to each of the degrees of flooding.

- Overbank flooding occurs when water in rivers and streams flows into the surrounding floodplain or into “any area of land susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters from any source,” according to FEMA.
- Flash floods are characterized by “rapid and extreme flow of high water into a normally dry area, or a rapid rise in a stream or creek above a predetermined flood level,” according to FEMA.

Fluvial Erosion

Fluvial erosion is the process in which the river undercuts a bank, usually on the outside bend of a meander, causing sloughing and collapse of the riverbank. Fluvial erosion can also include scouring and down-cutting of the stream bottom, which can be a problem around bridge piers and abutments. In hillier terrain where streams may lack a floodplain, such as in many areas of New Salem, fluvial erosion may cause more property damage than inundation. Furthermore, fluvial erosion can often occur in areas that are not part of the 100- or 500-year floodplain.

Fluvial erosion hazard (FEH) zones are mapped areas along rivers and streams that are susceptible to bank erosion caused by flash flooding. Any area within a mapped FEH zone is considered susceptible to bank erosion during a single severe flood or after many years of slow channel migration. As noted above, while the areas of the FEH zones often overlap with areas mapped within the 100-year floodplain on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) or Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBMs), the FIRMs or FHBMs only show areas that are likely to be inundated by floodwaters that overtop the riverbanks during a severe flood. However, much flood-related property damage and injuries is the result of bank erosion that can undermine roads, bridges, building foundations and other infrastructure. Consequently, FEH zones are sometimes outside of the 100-year floodplain shown on FIRMs or FHBMs. FEH zones can be mapped using fluvial geomorphic assessment data as well as historic data on past flood events. Both the FIRMs and FEH maps should be used in concert to understand and avoid both inundation and erosion hazards, respectively.¹⁵

Urban Drainage Flooding

Urban drainage flooding entails floods caused by increased water runoff due to urban development and drainage systems that are not capable of conveying high flows. Drainage systems are designed to remove surface water from developed areas as quickly as possible to prevent localized flooding on streets and other urban areas. They make use of a closed conveyance system that channels water away from an urban area to surrounding streams, bypassing natural processes of water infiltration into the ground, groundwater storage, and evapotranspiration (plant water uptake and respiration). Since drainage systems reduce the amount of time the surface water takes to reach surrounding streams, flooding can occur more quickly and reach greater depths than if there were no urban development at all. In urban areas, basement, roadway, and infrastructure flooding can result in significant damage due to poor or insufficient stormwater drainage.

¹⁵ *Ammonoosuc River Fluvial Erosion Hazard Map for Littleton, NH*. Field Geology Services, 2010.

Ground Failures

Flooding and flood-related erosion can result from various types of ground failures, which include mud floods and mudflows, and to a much lesser degree, subsidence, liquefaction, and fluvial erosion (discussed above).

Mud floods are floods that carry large amounts of sediment, which can at times exceed 50 percent of the mass of the flood, and often occur in drainage channels and adjacent to mountainous areas.

Mudflows are a specific type of landslide that contains large amounts of water and can carry debris as large as boulders. Both mudflows and mud floods result from rain falling on exposed terrain, such as terrain impacted by wildfires or logging. Mud floods and mudflows can lead to large sediment deposits in drainage channels. In addition to causing damage, these events can exacerbate subsequent flooding by filling in rivers and streams.

Subsidence is the process where the ground surface is lowered from natural processes, such as consolidation of subsurface materials and movements in the Earth's crust, or from manmade activities, such as mining, inadequate fill after construction activity, and oil or water extraction. When ground subsides, it can lead to flooding by exposing low-lying areas to groundwater, tides, storm surges, and areas with a high likelihood of overbank flooding.

Liquefaction, or when water-laden sediment behaves like a liquid during an earthquake, can result in floods of saturated soil, debris, and water if it occurs on slopes. Floods from liquefaction are especially common near very steep slopes.

Ice Jam

An ice jam is an accumulation of ice that acts as a natural dam and restricts the flow of a body of water. There are two types of ice jams: a freeze-up jam and a breakup jam. A freeze-up jam usually occurs in early winter to midwinter during extremely cold weather when super-cooled water and ice formations extend to nearly the entire depth of the river channel. This type of jam can act as a dam and begin to back up the flowing water behind it. The second type, a breakup jam, forms as a result of the breakup of the ice cover at ice-out, causing large pieces of ice to move downstream, potentially piling up at culverts, around bridge abutments, and at curves in river channels. Breakup ice jams occur when warm temperatures and heavy rains cause rapid snowmelt. The melting snow, combined with the heavy rain, causes frozen rivers to swell. The rising water breaks the ice layers into large chunks, which float downstream and often pile up near narrow passages and obstructions (bridges and dams). Ice jams may build up to a thickness great enough to raise the water level and cause flooding upstream of the obstruction. The Ice Jam Database, maintained by the Ice Engineering Group at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory currently consists of more than 18,000 records from across the U.S.

Dam Failure

A dam is an artificial barrier that has the ability to impound water, wastewater, or any liquid-borne material for the purpose of storage or control of water. There are two primary types of dam failure:

catastrophic failure, characterized by the sudden, rapid, and uncontrolled release of impounded water, or design failure, which occurs as a result of minor overflow events. Dam overtopping is caused by floods that exceed the capacity of the dam, and it can occur because of inadequate spillway design, settlement of the dam crest, blockage of spillways, and other factors. Overtopping accounts for 34 percent of all dam failures in the U.S.

There are a number of ways in which climate change could alter the flow behavior of a river, causing conditions to deviate from what the dam was designed to handle. For example, more extreme precipitation events could increase the frequency of intentional discharges. Many other climate impacts—including shifts in seasonal and geographic rainfall patterns—could also cause the flow behavior of rivers to deviate from previous hydrographs. When flows are greater than expected, spillway overflow events (often referred to as “design failures”) can occur. These overflows result in increased discharges downstream and increased flooding potential. Therefore, although climate change will not increase the probability of catastrophic dam failure, it may increase the probability of design failures. Impacts and New Salem’s vulnerability to dam failure is discussed in more detail in the Dam Failure section of this plan.

Additional Causes of Flooding

Additional causes of flooding include beaver dams or levee failure. Beaver dams obstruct the flow of water and cause water levels to rise. Significant downstream flooding can occur if beaver dams break.

Floodplains

Floodplains by nature are vulnerable to inland flooding. Floodplains are the low, flat, and periodically flooded lands adjacent to rivers, lakes, and oceans. These areas are subject to geomorphic (land-shaping) and hydrologic (water flow) processes. Floodplains may be broad, as when a river crosses an extensive flat landscape, or narrow, as when a river is confined in a canyon. These areas form a complex physical and biological system that not only supports a variety of natural resources, but also provides natural flood storage and erosion control. When a river is separated from its floodplain by levees and other flood control facilities, these natural benefits are lost, altered, or significantly reduced. When floodwaters recede after a flood event, they leave behind layers of rock and mud. These gradually build up to create a new floor of the floodplain. Floodplains generally contain unconsolidated sediments known as alluvium (accumulations of sand, gravel, loam, silt, and/or clay), often extending below the bed of the stream. These sediments provide a natural filtering system, with water percolating back into the ground and replenishing groundwater supplies.

Flooding is a natural and important part of wetland ecosystems that form along rivers and streams. Floodplains can support ecosystems that are rich in plant and animal species. Wetting the floodplain soil releases an immediate surge of nutrients from the rapid decomposition of organic matter that has accumulated over time. When this occurs, microscopic organisms thrive and larger species enter a rapid breeding cycle. Opportunistic feeders (particularly fish or birds) often utilize the increased food supply. The production of nutrients peaks and falls away quickly, but the surge of new growth that results endures for some time. Species growing in floodplains are markedly different from those that grow

outside floodplains. For instance, riparian trees (trees that grow in floodplains) tend to be very tolerant of root disturbance and grow quickly in comparison to non-riparian trees.

Location

A floodplain is the relatively flat, lowland area adjacent to a river, lake or stream. Floodplains serve an important function, acting like large “sponges” to absorb and slowly release floodwaters back to surface waters and groundwater. Over time, sediments that are deposited in floodplains develop into fertile, productive farmland like that found in the Connecticut River valley. In the past, floodplain areas were also often seen as prime locations for development. Industries were located on the banks of rivers for access to hydropower. Residential and commercial development occurred in floodplains because of their scenic qualities and proximity to the water, and because these areas were easier to develop than the hilly, rocky terrain characteristic of many towns in the county. Although periodic flooding of a floodplain area is a natural occurrence, past and current development and alteration of these areas can result in flooding that is a costly and frequent hazard.

There is very little residential development in the 100-year floodplain, which is scattered in pockets throughout the town, most notably in the Bow Brook/Willow Brook corridor. In New Salem, the 100-year floodplain covers about 1,568 acres, or approximately 4.1% of the town¹⁶. There are an estimated seven acres of developed residential land in the floodplain.

In addition to the 100-year floodplain, areas upstream from major rivers play an important role in flood mitigation. Upland areas and the small tributary streams that drain them are particularly vulnerable to impacts from development, which can increase the amount of flooding downstream. These areas are critical for absorbing, infiltrating, and slowing the flow of stormwater. When these areas are left in a natural vegetated state (forested or forested floodplain), they act as “green infrastructure,” providing flood storage and mitigation through natural processes.

Fragmentation and development in upland areas, including roads that commonly were built along stream and river corridors, can alter this natural process and result in increased amounts of stormwater runoff into streams. For example, the channels of many of these streams were altered centuries ago as a result of widespread deforestation for agriculture and lumber. The many small mills that used to dot the landscape built dams on the streams to generate power. Many of these streams are still unstable and flashy during storm events, generating high volumes of runoff and transporting sediment to the lower, flatter reaches of the watershed.

In addition, stressors to forests such as drought, extreme weather, and invasive species, can result in the loss of forest cover in upland areas. In particular, cold water streams shaded by dense hemlock stands are particularly vulnerable due to the hemlock woolly adelgid that is causing widespread mortality of these trees in the region.

¹⁶ 2005 MassGIS Land Use/Land Cover Data

The Committee identified one location of chronic flooding on Fay Road in the northernmost part of Town and is shown on the Critical Facilities Map. Fay Road was noted to be a generally “swampy” area and is prone to frequent flooding, but does not interfere with emergency access routes.

New Salem has many dirt roads throughout Town that become difficult for residents to traverse during heavy precipitation events. West Street and Cooleyville Road were noted to be of greatest concern due to past issues with stormwater erosion on these roads, and because they both connect to the Town’s primary evacuation route. In recent years, school buses have been stuck on West Street, so concerns were raised with regard to the ability of residents being able to evacuate safely during an emergency.

Despite the issues related to stormwater erosion on gravel roads in Town, the Committee noted flooding is generally not an issue in New Salem. There are few areas in Town with chronic flooding issues, and issues related to flooding from beaver dams have recently been resolved. New Salem’s unique topography generally insulates the Town from persistent flooding issues.

Based on this assessment, flooding has a “Isolated” area of occurrence, with less than 10% percent of the town affected.

Extent

The principal factors affecting the strength and magnitude of flood damage are flood depth and velocity. The deeper and faster that flood flows become, the more damage they can cause. Shallow flooding with high velocities can cause as much damage as deep flooding with slow velocity. This is especially true when a channel migrates over a broad floodplain, redirecting high-velocity flows and transporting debris and sediment.

The frequency and severity of flooding are measured using a discharge probability, which is the probability that a certain river discharge (flow) will be equaled or exceeded in a given year. Flood studies use historical records to determine the probability of occurrence for the different discharge levels. The flood frequency equals 100 divided by the discharge probability. For example, the 100-year discharge (discussed further in the following subsection) has a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The “annual flood” is the greatest flood event expected to occur in a typical year. These measurements reflect statistical averages only; it is possible for two or more floods with a 100-year or higher recurrence interval to occur in a short time period. The same flood can have different recurrence intervals at different points on a river.

Floods can be classified as one of two types: flash floods and general floods.

Flash Floods

Flash floods are the product of heavy, localized precipitation in a short time period over a given location. Flash flooding events typically occur within minutes or hours after a period of heavy precipitation, after a dam or levee failure, or from a sudden release of water from an ice jam.

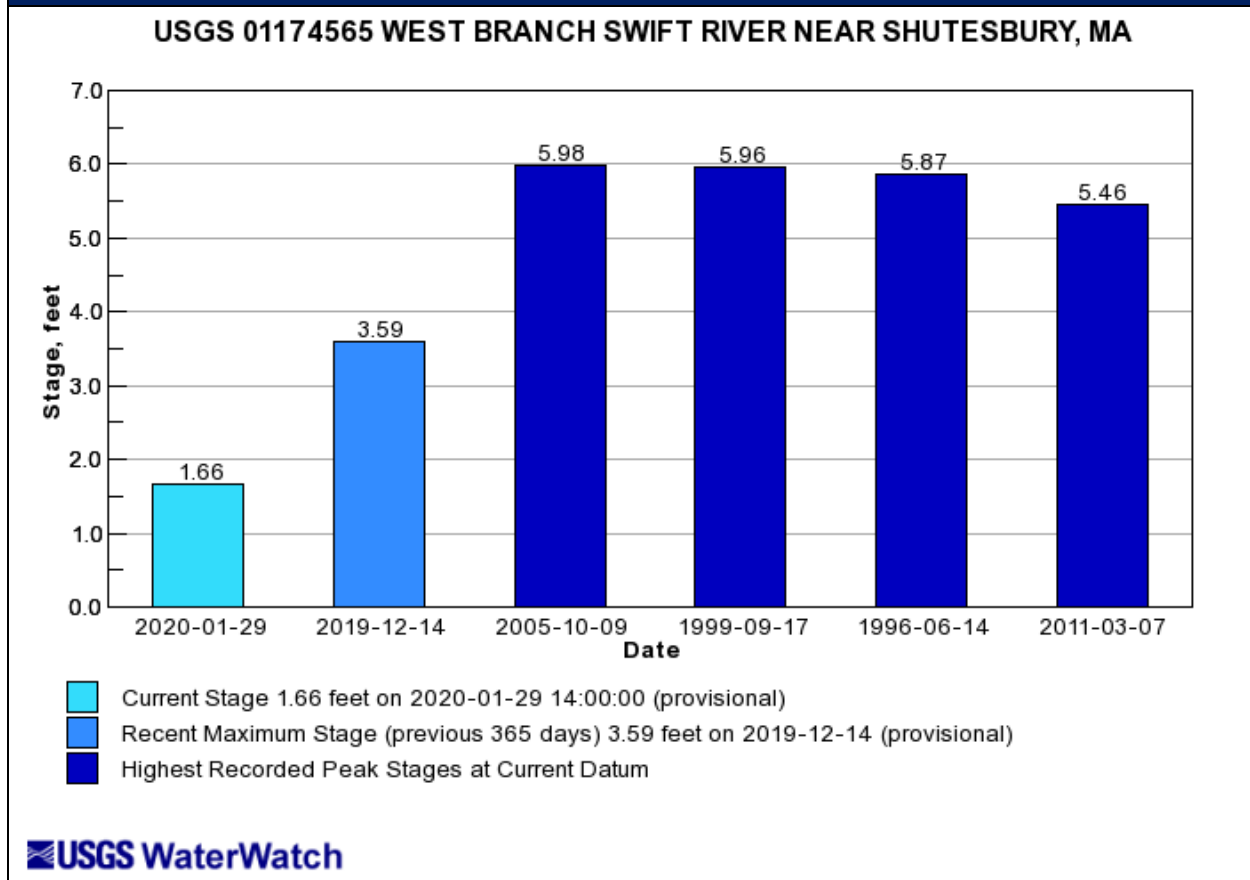
Most often, flash flooding is the result of a slow-moving thunderstorm or the heavy rains from a hurricane. In rural areas, flash flooding often occurs when small streams spill over their banks. However, in urbanized areas, flash flooding is often the result of clogged storm drains (leaves and other debris) and the higher amount of impervious surface area (roadways, parking lots, roof tops).

General Floods

General flooding may last for several days or weeks and are caused by precipitation over a longer time period in a particular river basin. Excessive precipitation within a watershed of a stream or river can result in flooding particularly when development in the floodplain has obstructed the natural flow of the water and/or decreased the natural ability of the groundcover to absorb and retain surface water runoff (e.g., the loss of wetlands and the higher amounts of impervious surface area in urban areas).

Flood flows in Massachusetts are measured at numerous USGS stream gauges. The gauges operate routinely, but particular care is taken to measure flows during flood events to calibrate the stage-discharge relationships at each location and to document actual flood conditions. In the aftermath of a flood event, the USGS will typically determine the recurrence interval of the event using data from a gauge's period of historical record. Figure 3-3 shows the four highest recorded peak flooding events on the West Branch of the Swift River at the Shutesbury and New Salem Town Line, as well as the highest flow event in the last 365 days.

Figure 3-3: Highest Recorded Flood Events on the Swift River Near Shutesbury, MA



Source: USGS WaterWatch https://waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php?id=wwchart_ftc&site_no=01166500.

The 100-Year Flood

The 100-year flood is the flood that has a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded each year. The 100-year flood is the standard used by most federal and state agencies. For example, it is used by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to guide floodplain management and determine the need for flood insurance.

The extent of flooding associated with a 1 percent annual probability of occurrence (the base flood or 100-year flood) is called the 100-year floodplain, which is used as the regulatory boundary by many agencies. Also referred to as the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), this boundary is a convenient tool for assessing vulnerability and risk in flood-prone communities.

Many communities have maps that show the extent and likely depth of flooding for the base flood. This extent generally includes both the stream channel and the flood fringe, which is the stream-adjacent area that will be inundated during a 100-year (or 1 percent annual chance) flood event but does not effectively convey floodwaters.

The 500-Year Flood

The term “500-year flood” is the flood that has a 0.2 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded each year. Flood insurance purchases are not required by the Federal Government in the 500-year floodplain, but could be required by individual lenders.

Secondary Hazards

The most problematic secondary hazards for flooding are fluvial erosion, river bank erosion, and landslides affecting infrastructure and other assets (e.g., agricultural fields) built within historic floodplains. Without the space required along river corridors for natural physical adjustment, such changes in rivers after flood events can be more harmful than the actual flooding. For instance, fluvial erosion attributed to Hurricane Irene caused an excess of \$23 million in damages along Route 2, which runs through Franklin County. The impacts from these secondary hazards are especially prevalent in the upper courses of rivers with steep gradients, where floodwaters may pass quickly and without much damage, but scour the banks, edging buildings, and structures closer to the river channel or cause them to fall in. Landslides can occur following flood events when high flows oversaturate soils on steep slopes, causing them to fail.

These secondary hazards also affect infrastructure. Roadways and bridges are impacted when floods undermine or wash out supporting structures. Railroad tracks may be impacted, potentially causing a train derailment, which could result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment and nearby waterways. Dams may fail or be damaged, compounding the flood hazard for downstream communities. Failure of wastewater treatment plants from overflow or overtopping of hazardous material tanks and the dislodging of hazardous waste containers can occur during floods as well, releasing untreated wastewater or hazardous materials directly into storm sewers, rivers, or the ocean. Flooding can also impact public water supplies and the power grid.

Previous Occurrences

The average annual precipitation for New Salem and surrounding areas in Western Massachusetts is 45 inches. Between 1996 and 2020, 17 flash floods have been reported in Franklin County (Table 3-6), resulting in \$3,245,000 in property damages.

Table 3-6: Previous Occurrences of Flash Floods in Franklin County			
Year	# of Flash Flood Events	Annual Property Damage	Annual Crop Damage
1996	4	\$1,800,000	\$0
1998	1	\$75,000	\$0
2000	1	\$0	\$0
2003	1	\$10,000	\$0
2004	1	\$10,000	\$0
2005	3	\$1,235,000	\$0

Table 3-6: Previous Occurrences of Flash Floods in Franklin County			
2013	3	\$65,000	\$0
2014	2	\$50,000	\$0
2017	1	\$0	\$0
Total	17	\$3,245,000	\$0

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Storm Events Database:
<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>

From 1996 to 2018, 44 flood events were reported in Franklin County, resulting in total property damages worth \$25,582,000 (Table 3-7). The bulk of these damages (\$22,275,000) were from Tropical Storm Irene in August, 2011.

In October 2005, rains from Tropical Storm Tammy and a subtropical depression caused severe flooding in New England, with Massachusetts sustaining \$6.5 million in damages. A trailer park in Greenfield was destroyed, leaving 70 people homeless. Roads were washed out as more than 20 inches of rain fell on some areas of the region.

Table 3-7: Previous Occurrences of Floods in Franklin County			
Year	# of Flood Events	Annual Property Damage	Annual Crop Damage
1996	7	\$0	\$0
1998	3	\$0	\$0
2001	1	\$0	\$0
2004	1	\$0	\$0
2005	2	\$2,600,000	\$0
2007	1	\$250,000	\$0
2008	3	\$38,000	\$0
2010	1	\$150,000	\$0
2011	8	\$22,375,000	\$0
2012	2	\$0	\$0
2015	10	\$31,000	\$0
2017	1	\$1,000	\$0
2018	4	\$137,000	\$0
Total	44	\$25,582,000	\$0

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Storm Events Database:
<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>

As with Tropical Storm Sandy, Irene caused only light power outages in New Salem. The Committee stated that Tropical Storm Irene was “no worse than any other heavy storm” for the Town.

As with other communities in Western Massachusetts, the presence of beaver dams can lead to or worsen localized flooding in some areas. See the Dam Failure section for more information on beaver dams.

Probability of Future Events

Based on previous occurrences, the frequency of occurrence of flooding events in New Salem is "High," with a 25 to 50 percent probability in any given year. Flooding frequencies for the various floodplains in New Salem are defined by FEMA as the following:

- 10-year floodplain – 10 percent chance of flooding in any given year
- 25-year floodplain – 2.5 percent chance of flooding in any given year
- 100-year floodplain – 1 percent chance of flooding in any given year
- 500-year floodplain – 0.2 percent chance of flooding in any given year

Of all the regions in the United States, the Northeast has seen the most dramatic increase in the intensity of rainfall events. The U.S. National Climate Assessment reports that between 1958 and 2010, the Northeast saw more than a 70% increase in the amount of precipitation falling in very heavy events (defined as the heaviest 1% of all daily events). Climate projections for Massachusetts, developed by the University of Massachusetts, suggest that the frequency of high-intensity rainfall events will continue to trend upward, and the result will be an increased risk of flooding. Specifically, the annual frequency of downpours releasing more than two inches of rain per day in Massachusetts may climb from less than 1 day per year to approximately 0.9-1.5 days by 2100. Events which release over one inch during a day could climb to as high as 8-11 days per year by 2100. A single intense downpour can cause flooding and widespread damage to property and critical infrastructure. While the coastal areas in Massachusetts will experience the greatest increase in high-intensity rainfall days, some level of increase will occur in every area of Massachusetts, including New Salem.¹⁷

Impact

Flooding can cause a wide range of issues, from minor nuisance roadway flooding and basement flooding to major impacts such as roadway closures. Specific damages associated with flooding events include the following primary concerns:

- Blockages of roadways or bridges vital to travel and emergency response
- Breaching of dams
- Damaged or destroyed buildings and vehicles
- Uprooted trees causing power and utility outages
- Drowning, especially people trapped in cars
- Contamination of drinking water
- Dispersion of hazardous materials

¹⁷ ResilientMA: Climate Change Clearing House for the Commonwealth: <http://resilientma.org/changes/changes-in-precipitation>. Accessed December 13, 2018.

- Interruption of communications and/or transportation systems, including train derailments

Although flooding impacts are often quite serious across Franklin County, based on the New Salem's flooding risk assessment, the impact of a flood event in the Town would likely be limited, with approximately 10% of property in an affected area damaged.

Vulnerability

Society

The impact of flooding on life, health, and safety is dependent upon several factors, including the severity of the event and whether or not adequate warning time is provided to residents. Populations living in or near floodplain areas may be impacted during a flood event. People traveling in flooded areas and those living in urban areas with poor stormwater drainage may be exposed to floodwater. People may also be impacted when transportation infrastructure is compromised from flooding.

In New Salem, the 100-year floodplain covers about 1,568 acres, or approximately 4.1 percent of the town, including an estimated 7 acres of developed residential land and 1.6 acres of industrial use. There are no commercial or public/institutional land uses within the floodplain.

Table 3-8 displays the number of dwelling units and the estimated population living in the 100-year floodplain in New Salem. According to 2005 MassGIS Land Use data, there are 12 dwelling units located in the floodplain. Using this number and New Salem's average household size as of the 2019 ACS, it is estimated that 27 people, or 2.7% of New Salem's total population, reside in the floodplain.

Table 3-8: Estimated New Salem Population Exposed to a 1 Percent Flood Event				
Total Population	# of Dwelling Units in Flood Hazard Area	Average # of People Per Household	Estimated Population in Flood Hazard Area	% of Total Population in Flood Hazard Area
1,009	12	2.29	27	2.7

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates; 2005 MassGIS Land Use data.

Vulnerable Populations

Of the population exposed, the most vulnerable include people with low socioeconomic status, people over the age of 65, young children, people with medical needs, and those with low English language fluency. For example, people with low socioeconomic status are more vulnerable because they are likely to consider the economic impacts of evacuation when deciding whether to evacuate. The population over the age of 65 is also more vulnerable because some of these individuals are more likely to seek or need medical attention because they may have more difficulty evacuating or the medical facility may be flooded. Those who have low English language fluency may not receive or understand the warnings to evacuate. Vulnerable populations may also be less likely to have adequate resources to recover from the

loss of their homes and jobs.

Table 3-9 estimates the number of vulnerable populations and households in New Salem. Individuals and households may fall into multiple categories, so the numbers should not be added. Rather, the table provides Town officials and emergency response personnel with information to help plan for responding to the needs of New Salem residents during a flood event.

Table 3-9: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Vulnerable Population Category	Number	Percent of Total Population*
Population Age 65 Years and Over	240	24%
Population with a Disability	138	14%
Population who Speak English Less than "Very Well"	0	0%
Vulnerable Household Category	Number	Percent of Total Households*
Low Income Households (annual income less than \$35,000)	94	21%
Householder Age 65 Years and Over Living Alone	40	9%
Households Without Access to a Vehicle	9	2%

*Total population = 1,009; Total households = 441

Note: Individuals and households may be counted under multiple categories.

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019 Five-Year Estimates.

Health Impacts

The total number of injuries and casualties resulting from typical riverine flooding is generally limited due to advance weather forecasting, blockades, and warnings. The historical record from 1996 to 2018 indicates that there have been no fatalities or injuries associated with flooding or flash flooding events in New Salem. However, flooding can result in direct mortality to individuals in the flood zone. This hazard is particularly dangerous because even a relatively low-level flood can be more hazardous than many residents realize. For example, while 6 inches of moving water can cause adults to fall, 1 foot to 2 feet of water can sweep cars away. Downed power lines, sharp objects in the water, or fast-moving debris that may be moving in or near the water all present an immediate danger to individuals in the flood zone.

Events that cause loss of electricity and flooding in basements, where heating systems are typically located in Massachusetts homes, increase the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide results from improper location and operation of cooking and heating devices (grills, stoves), damaged chimneys, or generators. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), floodwater often

contains a wide range of infectious organisms from raw sewage. These organisms include intestinal bacteria, MRSA (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus), strains of hepatitis, and agents of typhoid, paratyphoid, and tetanus (OSHA, 2005). Floodwaters may also contain agricultural or industrial chemicals and hazardous materials swept away from containment areas.

Individuals who evacuate and move to crowded shelters to escape the storm may face the additional risk of contagious disease; however, seeking shelter from storm events when advised is considered far safer than remaining in threatened areas. Individuals with pre-existing health conditions are also at risk if flood events (or related evacuations) render them unable to access medical support. Flooded streets and roadblocks can also make it difficult for emergency vehicles to respond to calls for service, particularly in rural areas.

Flood events can also have significant impacts after the initial event has passed. For example, flooded areas that do not drain properly can become breeding grounds for mosquitos, which can transmit vector-borne diseases. Exposure to mosquitos may also increase if individuals are outside of their homes for longer than usual as a result of power outages or other flood-related conditions. Finally, the growth of mold inside buildings is often widespread after a flood.

Investigations following Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy found mold in the walls of many water-damaged homes and buildings. Mold can result in allergic reactions and can exacerbate existing respiratory diseases, including asthma (CDC, 2004). Property damage and displacement of homes and businesses can lead to loss of livelihood and long-term mental stress for those facing relocation. Individuals may develop post-traumatic stress, anxiety, and depression following major flooding events (Neria et al., 2008).

Economic Impacts

Economic losses due to a flood include, but are not limited to, damages to buildings (and their contents) and infrastructure, agricultural losses, business interruptions (including loss of wages), impacts on tourism, and impacts on the tax base. Flooding can also cause extensive damage to public utilities and disruptions to the delivery of services. Loss of power and communications may occur, and drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities may be temporarily out of operation. Flooding can shut down major roadways and disrupt public transit systems, making it difficult or impossible for people to get to work. Floodwaters can wash out sections of roadway and bridges, and the removal and disposal of debris can also be an enormous cost during the recovery phase of a flood event. Agricultural impacts range from crop and infrastructure damage to loss of livestock. Extreme precipitation events may result in crop failure, inability to harvest, rot, and increases in crop pests and disease. In addition to having a detrimental effect on water quality and soil health and stability, these impacts can result in increased reliance on crop insurance claims.

Damages to buildings can affect a community's economy and tax base; the following section includes an analysis of buildings in New Salem that are vulnerable to flooding and their associated value.

Infrastructure

Buildings, infrastructure, and other elements of the built environment are vulnerable to inland flooding. At the site scale, buildings that are not elevated or flood-proofed and those located within the floodplain are highly vulnerable to inland flooding. These buildings are likely to become increasingly vulnerable as riverine flooding increases due to climate change (resilient MA, 2018). At a neighborhood to regional scale, highly developed areas and areas with high impervious surface coverage may be most vulnerable to flooding. Even moderate development that results in as little as 3 percent impervious cover can lead to flashier flows and river degradation, including channel deepening, widening, and instability (Vietz and Hawley, 2016).

Additionally, changes in precipitation will threaten key infrastructure assets with flood and water damage. Climate change has the potential to impact public and private services and business operations. Damage associated with flooding to business facilities, large manufacturing areas in river valleys, energy delivery and transmission, and transportation systems has economic implications for business owners as well as the state's economy in general (resilient MA, 2018). Flooding can cause direct damage to Town-owned facilities and result in roadblocks and inaccessible streets that impact the ability of public safety and emergency vehicles to respond to calls for service.

Table 3-10 shows the amount of commercial, industrial, and public/institutional land uses located in town and within the Flood Hazard Area in New Salem. There are no commercial or public/institutional land uses within the floodplain, but nearly a quarter of the Town's industrial uses fall within the 100-year floodplain.

Table 3-10: Acres of Commercial, Industrial, and Public/Institutional Land Use Within the Flood Hazard Area in New Salem			
Land Use	Total acres in Town	Acres in Flood Hazard Area	% of total acres in Flood Hazard Area
Commercial	6.4	0	0%
Industrial	6.9	1.6	23%
Public/Institutional	14.6	0	0%

Source: 2005 MassGIS Land Use data.

The Town of New Salem participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. However, as of December 2018, there were no policies in effect in New Salem. The Town is not a member of the Community Rating System, which entitles policyholders to a discount on flood insurance premiums. The CRS ranking is based on the steps that a town has taken to control flood losses.

Many dams within the Commonwealth have aged past their design life. As a result, they are less resilient to hazards such as inland flooding and extreme precipitation, and may not provide adequate safety following these disasters. These structures, if impacted by disasters, can affect human health, safety, and economic activity due to increased flooding and loss of infrastructure functions. These dams require

termination or restoration to improve their infrastructure and better equip them to withstand the hazards that the Commonwealth will face due to climate change.

As already stated, climate change impacts, including increased frequency of extreme weather events, are expected to raise the risk of damage to transportation systems, energy-related facilities, communication systems, a wide range of structures and buildings, solid and hazardous waste facilities, and water supply and wastewater management systems. A majority of the infrastructure in Massachusetts and throughout the country has been sited and designed based on historic weather and flooding patterns. As a result, infrastructure and facilities may lack the capacity to handle greater volumes of water or the required elevation to reduce vulnerability to flooding. Examples of climate change impacts to sectors of the built environment are summarized below.

Agriculture

Inland flooding is likely to impact the agricultural sector. Increased river flooding is likely to cause soil erosion, soil loss, and crop damage (resilient MA, 2018). In addition, wetter springs may delay planting of crops, resulting in reduced yields.

Energy

Flooding can increase bank erosion and also undermine buried energy infrastructure, such as underground power, gas, and cable infrastructure. Basement flooding can destroy electrical panels and furnaces. This can result in releases of oil and hazardous wastes to floodwaters. Inland flooding can also disrupt delivery of liquid fuels.

Public Health

The impacts to the built environment extend into other sectors. For example, flooding may increase the vulnerability of commercial and residential buildings to toxic mold buildup, leading to health risks, as described in the Populations section of the inland flooding hazard profile. Inland flooding may also lead to contamination of well water and contamination from septic systems (DPH, 2014).

Public Safety

Flash flooding can have a significant impact on public safety. Fast-moving water can sweep up debris, hazardous objects, and vehicles, and carry them toward people and property. Flooding can impact the ability of emergency response personnel to reach stranded or injured people. Drownings may also occur as people attempt to drive through flooded streets or escape to higher ground.

Transportation

Heavy precipitation events may damage roads, bridges, and energy facilities, leading to disruptions in transportation and utility services (resilient MA, 2018). Roads may experience greater ponding, which will further impact transportation. If alternative routes are not available, damage to roads and bridges may dramatically affect commerce and public health and safety.

Water Infrastructure

Stormwater drainage systems and culverts that are not sized to accommodate larger storms are likely to experience flood damage as extreme precipitation events increase (resilient MA, 2018). Both culverts that are currently undersized and culverts that are appropriately sized may be overwhelmed by larger storms. Gravity-fed water and wastewater infrastructure that is located in low lying areas near rivers and reservoirs may experience increased risks. Combined sewer overflows may increase with climate change, resulting in water quality degradation and public health risks (resilient MA, 2018).

Environment

Flooding is part of the natural cycle of a balanced environment. However, severe flood events can also result in substantial damage to the environment and natural resources, particularly in areas where human development has interfered with natural flood-related processes. As described earlier in this section, severe weather events are expected to become more frequent as a result of climate change; therefore, flooding that exceeds the adaptive capacity of natural systems may occur more often.

One common environmental effect of flooding is riverbank and soil erosion. Riverbank erosion occurs when high, fast water flows scour the edges of the river, transporting sediment downstream and reshaping the ecosystem. In addition to changing the habitat around the riverbank, this process also results in the deposition of sediment once water velocities slow. This deposition can clog riverbeds and streams, disrupting the water supply to downstream habitats. Soil erosion occurs whenever floodwaters loosen particles of topsoil and then transport them downstream, where they may be redeposited somewhere else or flushed into the ocean. Flooding can also influence soil conditions in areas where floodwaters pool for long periods of time, as continued soil submersion can cause oxygen depletion in the soil, reducing the soil quality and potentially limiting future crop production.

Flooding can also affect the health and well-being of wildlife. Animals can be directly swept away by flooding or lose their habitats to prolonged inundation. Floodwaters can also impact habitats nearby or downstream of agricultural operations by dispersing waste, pollutants, and nutrients from fertilizers. While some of these substances, particularly organic matter and nutrients, can actually increase the fertility of downstream soils, they can also result in severe impacts to aquatic habitats, such as eutrophication.




Vulnerability Summary

Based on the above analysis, New Salem has a "Low" vulnerability to flooding.

3.4 SEVERE SNOWSTORMS / ICE STORMS

Potential Effects of Climate Change

Climate projections for Massachusetts indicate that in future decades, winter precipitation could increase annually by as much as 0.4-3.9 inches (an increase of 4-35%), but by the end of the century most of this precipitation is likely to fall as rain instead of snow. There are many human and environmental impacts that could result from this change including reduced snow cover for winter recreation and tourism, less spring snowmelt to replenish aquifers and lower spring river flows for aquatic ecosystems. Figure 3-4 show potential effects of climate change on severe winter storms from the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan.

Figure 3-4: Effects of Climate Change on Severe Winter Storms		
Potential Effects of Climate Change		
	EXTREME WEATHER AND RISING TEMPERATURES → INCREASED SNOWFALL	Increased sea surface temperature in the Atlantic Ocean will cause air moving north over the ocean to hold more moisture. As a result, when these fronts meet cold air systems moving from the north, an even greater amount of snow than normal can be anticipated to fall on Massachusetts.
	RISING TEMPERATURES → CHANGING CIRCULATION PATTERNS AND WARMING OCEANS	Research has found that increasing water temperatures and reduced sea ice extent in the Arctic are producing atmospheric circulation patterns that favor the development of winter storms in the eastern U.S. Global warming is increasing the severity of winter storms because warming ocean water allows additional moisture to flow into the storm, which fuels the storm to greater intensity.
	EXTREME WEATHER → INCREASE IN FREQUENCY AND INTENSITY	There is evidence suggesting that nor'easters along the Atlantic coast are increasing in frequency and intensity. Future nor'easters may become more concentrated in the coldest winter months when atmospheric temperatures are still low enough to result in snowfall rather than rain.

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

Severe winter storms include ice storms, nor'easters, heavy snow, blowing snow, and other extreme forms of winter precipitation. A blizzard is a winter snowstorm with sustained or frequent wind gusts to 35 mph or more, accompanied by falling or blowing snow that reduces visibility to or below a quarter of a mile (NWS, 2018). These conditions must be the predominant condition over a 3-hour period. Extremely cold temperatures are often associated with blizzard conditions, but are not a formal part of the definition. However, the hazard created by the combination of snow, wind, and low visibility increases significantly with temperatures below 20°F. A severe blizzard is categorized as having temperatures near or below 10°F, winds exceeding 45 mph, and visibility reduced by snow to near zero.

Storm systems powerful enough to cause blizzards usually form when the jet stream dips far to the south, allowing cold air from the north to clash with warm air from the south. Blizzard conditions often develop on the northwest side of an intense storm system. The difference between the lower pressure in the storm and the higher pressure to the west creates a tight pressure gradient, resulting in strong winds and extreme conditions due to the blowing snow. Blowing snow is wind-driven snow that reduces visibility to 6 miles or less, causing significant drifting. Blowing snow may be snow that is falling and/or

loose snow on the ground picked up by the wind.

Ice Storms

Ice storm conditions are defined by liquid rain falling and freezing on contact with cold objects, creating ice buildups of one-fourth of an inch or more. These can cause severe damage. An ice storm warning, which is now included in the criteria for a winter storm warning, is issued when a half inch or more of accretion of freezing rain is expected. This may lead to dangerous walking or driving conditions and the pulling down of power lines and trees.

Ice pellets are another form of freezing precipitation, formed when snowflakes melt into raindrops as they pass through a thin layer of warmer air. The raindrops then refreeze into particles of ice when they fall into a layer of subfreezing air near the surface of the earth. Finally, sleet occurs when raindrops fall into subfreezing air thick enough that the raindrops refreeze into ice before hitting the ground. The difference between sleet and hail is that sleet is a wintertime phenomenon whereas hail falls from convective clouds (usually thunderstorms), often during the warm spring and summer months.

Nor'easters

A nor'easter is a storm that occurs along the East Coast of North America with winds from the northeast (NWS, n.d.). A nor'easter is characterized by a large counter-clockwise wind circulation around a low-pressure center that often results in heavy snow, high winds, and rain. A nor'easter gets its name from its continuously strong northeasterly winds blowing in from the ocean ahead of the storm and over the coastal areas.

Nor'easters are among winter's most ferocious storms. These winter weather events are notorious for producing heavy snow, rain, and oversized waves that crash onto Atlantic beaches, often causing beach erosion and structural damage. These storms occur most often in late fall and early winter. The storm radius is often as much as 100 miles, and nor'easters often sit stationary for several days, affecting multiple tide cycles and causing extended heavy precipitation. Sustained wind speeds of 20 to 40 mph are common during a nor'easter, with short-term wind speeds gusting up to 50 to 60 mph. Nor'easters are commonly accompanied with a storm surge equal to or greater than 2.0 feet.

Nor'easters begin as strong areas of low pressure either in the Gulf of Mexico or off the East Coast in the Atlantic Ocean. The low will then either move up the East Coast into New England and the Atlantic provinces of Canada, or out to sea. The level of damage in a strong hurricane is often more severe than a nor'easter, but historically Massachusetts has suffered more damage from nor'easters because of the greater frequency of these coastal storms (one or two per year). The comparison of hurricanes to nor'easters reveals that the duration of high surge and winds in a hurricane is 6 to 12 hours, while a nor'easter's duration can be from 12 hours to 3 days.

Severe winter storms can pose a significant risk to property and human life. The rain, freezing rain, ice, snow, cold temperatures and wind associated with these storms can cause the following hazards:

- Disrupted power and phone service
- Unsafe roadways and increased traffic accidents
- Infrastructure and other property are also at risk from severe winter storms and the associated flooding that can occur following heavy snow melt
- Tree damage and fallen branches that cause utility line damage and roadway blockages
- Damage to telecommunications structures
- Reduced ability of emergency officials to respond promptly to medical emergencies or fires
- Elderly are affected by extreme weather

Location

Although the entire Commonwealth may be considered at risk to the hazard of severe winter storms, higher snow accumulations appear to be prevalent at higher elevations in Western and Central Massachusetts, and along the coast where snowfall can be enhanced by additional ocean moisture. Ice storms occur most frequently in the higher-elevation portions of Western and Central Massachusetts. Inland areas, especially those in floodplains, are also at risk for flooding and wind damage.

The entire town of New Salem is susceptible to severe snowstorms and ice storms. Because these storms occur regionally, they impact the entire town. As a result, the location of occurrence is “Large,” with over 50 percent of land area affected.

Extent

Since 2005, the Regional Snowfall Index (RSI) has become the descriptor of choice for measuring winter events that impact the eastern two-thirds of the U.S. The RSI ranks snowstorm impacts on a scale system from 1 to 5 as depicted in Table 3-11. The RSI is similar to the Fujita scale for tornadoes or the Saffir-Simpson scale for hurricanes, except that it includes an additional variable: population. The RSI is based on the spatial extent of the storm, the amount of snowfall, and population.

The RSI is a regional index. Each of the six climate regions (identified by the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information) in the eastern two-thirds of the nation has a separate index. The RSI incorporated region-specific parameters and thresholds for calculating the index. The RSI is important because, with it, a storm event and its societal impacts can be assessed within the context of a region’s historical events. Snowfall thresholds in Massachusetts (in the Northeast region) are 4, 10, 20, and 30 inches of snowfall, while thresholds in the Southeast U.S. are 2, 5, 10, and 15 inches.

Table 3-11: Regional Snowfall Index Categories		
Category	RSI Value	Description
1	1—3	Notable
2	2.5—3.99	Significant

3	4—5.99	Major
4	6—9.99	Crippling
5	10.0+	Extreme

Source: NOAA National Climatic Data Center

Prior to the use of the RSI, the Northeast Snowfall Impact Scale (NESIS), developed by Paul Kocin of The Weather Channel and Louis Uccellini of the National Weather Service, was used to characterize and rank high-impact northeast snowstorms with large areas of 10-inch snowfall accumulations and greater. In contrast to the RSI, which is a regional index, NESIS is a quasi-national index that is calibrated to Northeast snowstorms. NESIS has five categories, as shown in Table 3-12.

Table 3-12: Northeast Snowfall Impact Scale Categories		
Category	NESIS Value	Description
1	1—2.499	Notable
2	2.5—3.99	Significant
3	4—5.99	Major
4	6—9.99	Crippling
5	10.0+	Extreme

Source: NOAA National Climatic Data Center

Previous Occurrences

New England generally experiences at least one or two severe winter storms each year with varying degrees of severity. Severe winter storms typically occur during January and February; however, they can occur from late September through late April. According to NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, there have been 80 heavy snow events in Franklin County since 1996, resulting in \$15,440,000 in damages; 29 winter storm events since 2002, resulting in \$1,170,000 in damages; and two ice storms have resulted in damages of \$3,150,000.

In December 2008, a major ice storm impacted the northeast. The hardest hit areas in southern New England were the Monadnock region of southwest New Hampshire, the Worcester Hills in central Massachusetts, and the east slopes of the Berkshires in Western Massachusetts. Anywhere from half an inch to an inch of ice built up on many exposed surfaces. Combined with breezy conditions, the ice downed numerous trees, branches, and power lines, which resulted in widespread power outages. More than 300,000 customers were reportedly without power in Massachusetts and an additional 300,000 were without power in the state of New Hampshire.

Damage to the infrastructure in Massachusetts and New Hampshire amounted to roughly 80 million dollars. This amount does not include damage to private property. The extent of the damage and number of people affected prompted the governors of both Massachusetts and New Hampshire to

request federal assistance. FEMA approved both requests. President Bush issued a Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance for seven Massachusetts counties and all of New Hampshire. Tree damage, power outages, and closed roads from the 2008 ice storm were widespread in New Salem. The Committee reported there were costs to the Town of over \$66,000.

Based on data available from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, there are 210 winter storms since 1900 that have registered on the RSI scale. Of these, approximately 18 storms resulted in snow falls in all or parts of Franklin County of at least 10 inches. These storms are listed in Table 3-13, in order of their RSI severity.

Table 3-13: High-Impact Snowstorms in Franklin County, 1958 - 2018			
Date	RSI Value	RSI Category	RSI Classification
2/22/1969	34.0	5	Extreme
3/12/1993	22.1	5	Extreme
1/6/1996	21.7	5	Extreme
2/5/1978	18.4	5	Extreme
2/23/2010	17.8	4	Crippling
2/15/2003	14.7	4	Crippling
1/29/1966	12.3	4	Crippling
3/12/2017	10.7	4	Crippling
2/27/1947	10.6	4	Crippling
12/25/1969	10.1	4	Crippling
12/4/2003	9.4	3	Major
2/8/2013	9.2	3	Major
2/2/1961	8.3	3	Major
2/10/1983	7.9	3	Major
2/14/1958	7.9	3	Major
2/12/2007	6.9	3	Major
3/2/1960	6.9	3	Major
1/25/2015	6.2	3	Major

Source: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/snow-and-ice/rsi/societal-impacts>

The Hazard Mitigation Committee identified the following as storms that have impacted New Salem in recent history and are identified in Table 3-14.

Table 3-14: Recent Heavy Snow, Winter Weather, and Ice Storm Events that Impacted New Salem			
Date	Location	Type	Recorded Property Damages
11/16/2002	Eastern Franklin County	Ice Storm	\$15,000
12/11/2009	Eastern Franklin County	Ice Storm	\$3,000,000

Table 3-14: Recent Heavy Snow, Winter Weather, and Ice Storm Events that Impacted New Salem

Date	Location	Type	Recorded Property Damages
11/26/2014	Eastern Franklin County	Heavy Snow	\$75,000
10/27/2016	Eastern Franklin County	Winter Weather	\$6,000
12/30/2019	Eastern Franklin County	Winter Weather	\$500

Source: NOAA Storm Events Database: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>

Probability of Future Events

Based upon the availability of records for Franklin County, the likelihood that a severe snow storm will hit New Salem in any given year is "Very High," or a 70 to 100 percent probability in any given year.

Increased sea surface temperature in the Atlantic Ocean will cause air moving north over this ocean to hold more moisture. As a result, when these fronts meet cold air systems moving from the north, an even greater amount of snow than normal can be anticipated to fall on Massachusetts. Climate projections for Massachusetts indicate that in future decades, winter precipitation could increase annually by as much as 0.4-3.9 inches (an increase of 4-35%), but by the end of the century most of this precipitation is likely to fall as rain instead of snow. There are many human and environmental impacts that could result from this change including reduced snow cover for winter recreation and tourism, less spring snowmelt to replenish aquifers and lower spring river flows for aquatic ecosystems.

Impact

The phrase "severe winter storm" encapsulates several types of natural hazards, including snowfall, wind, ice, sleet, and freezing rain hazards. Additional natural hazards that can occur as a result of winter storms include sudden and severe drops in temperature. Winter storms can also result in flooding and the destabilization of hillsides as snow or ice melts and begins to run off. The storms can also result in significant structural damage from wind and snow load as well as human injuries and economic and infrastructure impacts.

The impact of an event would be "Critical," with more than 25 percent of property in the affected area damaged and complete shutdown of facilities for a week possible.

Vulnerability

Society

According to the NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory, every year, winter weather indirectly and deceptively kills hundreds of people in the U.S., primarily from automobile accidents, overexertion, and exposure. Winter storms are often accompanied by strong winds that create blizzard conditions with blinding wind-driven snow, drifting snow, and extreme cold temperatures with dangerous wind chill. These events are considered deceptive killers because most deaths and other impacts or losses are indirectly related to the storm. Injuries and deaths may occur due to traffic accidents on icy roads, heart

attacks while shoveling snow, or hypothermia from prolonged exposure to cold.

Heavy snow can immobilize a region and paralyze a community, shutting down air and rail transportation, stopping the flow of supplies, and disrupting medical and emergency services. Accumulations of snow can cause buildings to collapse and knock down trees and power lines. In rural areas, homes and farms may be isolated for days, and unprotected livestock may perish. In the mountains, heavy snow can lead to avalanches.

The impact of a severe winter storm on life, health, and safety is dependent upon several factors, including the severity of the event and whether or not adequate warning time was provided to residents. Residents may be displaced or require temporary to long-term sheltering. In addition, downed trees, damaged buildings, and debris carried by high winds can lead to injury or loss of life. The entire population of New Salem is exposed to severe winter weather events.

Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable populations include the elderly living alone, who are susceptible to winter hazards due to their increased risk of injury and death from falls, overexertion, and/or hypothermia from attempts to clear snow and ice, or injury and death related to power failures. In addition, severe winter weather events can reduce the ability of these populations to access emergency services. People with low socioeconomic status are more vulnerable because they are likely to evaluate their risk and make decisions to evacuate based on the net economic impact on their families. Residents with low incomes may not have access to housing or their housing may be less able to withstand cold temperatures (e.g., homes with poor insulation and heating supply).

The population over the age of 65, individuals with disabilities, and people with mobility limitations or who lack transportation are also more vulnerable because they are more likely to seek or need medical attention, which may not be available due to isolation during a winter storm event. These individuals are also more vulnerable because they may have more difficulty if evacuation becomes necessary. People with limited mobility risk becoming isolated or “snowbound” if they are unable to remove snow from their homes. Rural populations may become isolated by downed trees, blocked roadways, and power outages. Residents relying on private wells could lose access to fresh drinking water and indoor plumbing during a power outage.

Table 3-15 estimates the number of vulnerable populations and households in New Salem. Individuals and households may fall into multiple categories, so the numbers should not be added. Rather, the table provides Town officials and emergency response personnel with information to help plan for responding to the needs of New Salem residents during a severe winter storm event.

Table 3-15: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Vulnerable Population Category	Number	Percent of Total Population*
Population Age 65 Years and Over	240	24%
Population with a Disability	138	14%
Population who Speak English Less than "Very Well"	0	0%
Vulnerable Household Category	Number	Percent of Total Households*
Low Income Households (annual income less than \$35,000)	94	21%
Householder Age 65 Years and Over Living Alone	40	9%
Households Without Access to a Vehicle	9	2%

*Total population = 1,009; Total households = 441

Note: Individuals and households may be counted under multiple categories.

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019 Five-Year Estimates.

Health Impacts

Cold weather, which is a component of a severe winter storm, increases the risk of hypothermia and frostbite. Exposure to cold conditions can also exacerbate pre-existing respiratory and cardiovascular conditions. In addition to temperature-related dangers, however, severe winter storms also present other potential health impacts. For example, individuals may use generators in their homes if the power goes out or may use the heat system in their cars if they become trapped by snow. Without proper ventilation, both of these activities can result in carbon monoxide buildup that can be fatal. Loss of power can also lead to hypothermia. After Hurricane Sandy, the number of cases of cold exposure in New York City was three times greater than the same time period in previous years.¹⁸ Driving during severe snow and ice conditions can also be very dangerous, as roads become slick and drivers can lose control of their vehicle. During and after winter storms, roads may be littered with debris, presenting a danger to drivers. Health impacts on people include the inability to travel to receive needed medical services and isolation in their homes. Additionally, natural gas-fueled furnaces, water heaters, and clothes dryers, and even automobile exhaust pipes, may become blocked by snow and ice, which can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.

Economic Impacts

The entire building stock inventory in New Salem is exposed to the severe winter weather hazard. In general, structural impacts include damage to roofs and building frames rather than building content. Heavy accumulations of ice can bring down trees, electrical wires, telephone poles and lines, and

¹⁸ Fink, Sheri. 2012. Hypothermia and Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Cases Soar in the City After Hurricane. New York Times. November 28, 2012.

communication towers. Communication and power networks can be disrupted for days while utility companies work to repair the extensive damage.

Even small accumulations of ice may cause extreme hazards to motorists and pedestrians.

Bridges and overpasses are particularly dangerous because they freeze before other surfaces. A specific area that is vulnerable to the winter storm hazard is the floodplain. Snow and ice melt can cause both riverine and urban flooding. The cost of snow and ice removal and repair of roads from the freeze/thaw process can drain local financial resources. The potential secondary impacts from winter storms, including loss of utilities, interruption of transportation corridors, loss of business functions, and loss of income for many individuals during business closures, also impact the local economy.

Similar to hurricanes and tropical storms, nor'easter events can greatly impact the economy, with impacts that include the loss of business functions (e.g., tourism and recreation), damage to inventories or infrastructure (the supply of fuel), relocation costs, wage losses, and rental losses due to the repair or replacement of buildings.

Infrastructure

All infrastructure and other elements of the built environment in New Salem are exposed to the severe winter weather hazards. Potential structural damage to the facilities themselves may include damage to roofs and building frames. These facilities may not be fully operational if workers are unable to travel to ensure continuity of operations prior and after a severe winter event. Disruptions to key public services such as electricity, transportation, schools, and health care may become more common.¹⁹ Table 3-16 identifies the assessed value of all residential, open space, commercial, and industrial land uses in Town, and the losses that would result from 1%, 5%, and 10% damage to this inventory as a result of a severe winter storm.

Table 3-16: Estimated Potential Loss by Tax Classification in New Salem				
Tax Classification	Total Assessed Value FY2020	1% Damage Loss Estimate	5% Damage Loss Estimate	10% Damage Loss Estimate
Residential	\$104,804,150	\$1,048,042	\$5,240,208	\$10,480,415
Open Space	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Commercial	\$1,658,152	\$16,582	\$82,908	\$165,815
Industrial	\$918,100	\$9,181	\$45,905	\$91,810
Total	\$107,380,402	\$1,073,804	\$5,369,020	\$10,738,040

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue - Division of Local Services, Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section.

¹⁹ Resilient MA 2018

Agriculture

Severe winter weather can lead to flooding in low-lying agricultural areas. Ice that accumulates on branches in orchards and forests can cause branches to break, while the combination of ice and wind can fell trees. Storms that occur in spring can delay planting schedules. Frost that occurs after warmer periods in spring can cause cold weather dieback and damage new growth.

Energy

Severe weather can cause power outages from trees that fall during heavy snow and strong wind events. Severe ice events can take down transmission and distribution lines. The severe weather can impair a utility's ability to rapidly repair and recover the system.

Public Health

Severe winter weather presents many health hazards, as previously described in the discussion of the severe winter storm/nor'easter hazard profile. Severe winter storms and events with extended power outages may overburden hospitals and emergency shelters.

Public Safety

Public safety buildings may experience direct loss (damage) from downed trees, heavy snowfall, and high winds. Full functionality of critical facilities, such as police, fire and medical facilities, is essential for response during and after a winter storm event. Because power interruptions can occur, backup power is recommended for critical facilities and infrastructure. The ability of emergency responders to respond to calls may be impaired by heavy snowfall, icy roads, and downed trees.

Transportation

Other infrastructure elements at risk for this hazard include roadways, which can be obstructed by snow and ice accumulation or by windblown debris. Additionally, over time, roadways can be damaged from the application of salt and the thermal expansion and contraction from alternating freezing and warming conditions. Other types of infrastructure, including rail, aviation, port, and waterway infrastructure (if temperatures are cold enough to cause widespread freezing), can be impacted by winter storm conditions.

Water Infrastructure

Water infrastructure that is exposed to winter conditions may freeze or be damaged by ice.

Environment

Although winter storms are a natural part of the Massachusetts climate, and native ecosystems and species are well adapted to these events, changes in the frequency or severity of winter storms could increase their environmental impacts. Environmental impacts of severe winter storms can include direct mortality of individual plants and animals and felling of trees, which can damage the physical structure of the ecosystem. Similarly, if large numbers of plants or animals die as the result of a storm, their lack of availability can impact the food supply for animals in the same food web. If many trees fall or die within a small area, they can release large amounts of carbon as they decay. This unexpected release

can cause further imbalance in the local ecosystem. The flooding that results when snow and ice melt can also cause extensive environmental impacts. Nor'easters can cause impacts that are similar to those of hurricanes and tropical storms and flooding. These impacts can include direct damage to species and ecosystems, habitat destruction, and the distribution of contaminants and hazardous materials throughout the environment.



Vulnerability Summary

Based on the above assessment, New Salem faces a "High" vulnerability from severe snowstorms and ice storms. Severe Winter Storms / Ice Storms occur frequently in New Salem, and residents can lose power for days on end, and critical facilities may have to rely on backup sources of power.

3.5 HURRICANES / TROPICAL STORMS

Potential Effects of Climate Change

A 2017 U.S. Climate Science Special Report noted that there has been an upward trend in North Atlantic hurricane activity since 1970. The report forecasts that future hurricanes formed in the North Atlantic will drop more rain and may have higher wind speeds. This is because a warmer atmosphere will hold more water, and hurricanes are efficient at wringing water out of the atmosphere and dumping it on land. When extreme storms like Tropical Storm Irene travel over inland areas, they may release large quantities of precipitation and cause rivers to overtop their banks. Irene dumped more than 10 inches of rain in Western Massachusetts. Buildings floated downriver in Shelburne Falls, flooded highways were closed, and 400,000 utility customers lost power (resilient MA, 2018). Figure 3-5 displays the potential effects of climate change on hurricanes and tropical storms from the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan.

Figure 3-5: Effects of Climate Change on Hurricanes and Tropical Storms		
Potential Effects of Climate Change		
	EXTREME WEATHER AND RISING TEMPERATURES → LARGER, STRONGER STORMS	As warmer oceans provide more energy for storms, both past events and models of future conditions suggest that the intensity of tropical storms and hurricanes will increase.
	CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION → INCREASED RAINFALL RATES	Warmer air can hold more water vapor, which means the rate of rainfall will increase. One study found that hurricane rainfall rates were projected to rise 7 percent for every degree Celsius increase in tropical sea surface temperature.

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

Hurricanes can range from as small as 50 miles across to as much as 500 miles across; Hurricane Allen in 1980 took up the entire Gulf of Mexico. There are generally two source regions for storms that have the potential to strike New England: (1) off the Cape Verde Islands near the west coast of Africa, and (2) in the Bahamas. The Cape Verde storms tend to be very large in diameter, since they have a week or more to traverse the Atlantic Ocean and grow. The Bahamas storms tend to be smaller, but they can also be just as powerful, and their effects can reach New England in only a day or two.

Tropical systems customarily come from a southerly direction and when they accelerate up the East Coast of the U.S., most take on a distinct appearance that is different from a typical hurricane. Instead of having a perfectly concentric storm with heavy rain blowing from one direction, then the calm eye, then the heavy rain blowing from the opposite direction, our storms (as viewed from satellite and radar) take on an almost winter-storm-like appearance. Although rain is often limited in the areas south and east of the track of the storm, these areas can experience the worst winds and storm surge. Dangerous flooding occurs most often to the north and west of the track of the storm. An additional

threat associated with a tropical system making landfall is the possibility of tornado generation. Tornadoes would generally occur in the outer bands to the north and east of the storm, a few hours to as much as 15 hours prior to landfall.

The official hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30. In New England, these storms are most likely to occur in August, September, and the first half of October. This is due in large part to the fact that it takes a considerable amount of time for the waters south of Long Island to warm to the temperature necessary to sustain the storms this far north. Also, as the region progresses into the fall months, the upper-level jet stream has more dips, meaning that the steering winds might flow from the Great Lakes southward to the Gulf States and then back northward up the eastern seaboard. This pattern would be conducive for capturing a tropical system over the Bahamas and accelerating it northward.

Tropical Storms

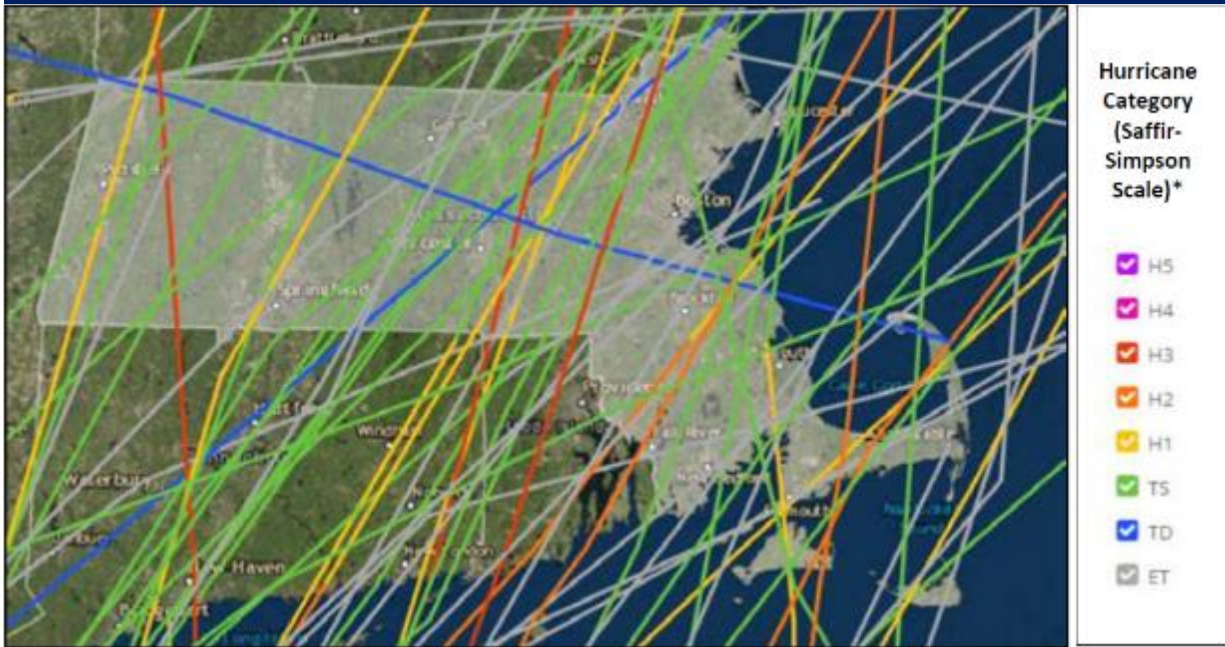
A tropical storm system is characterized by a low-pressure center and numerous thunderstorms that produce strong winds and heavy rain (winds are at a lower speed than hurricane-force winds, thus gaining its status as a tropical storm versus a hurricane). Tropical storms strengthen when water evaporated from the ocean is released as the saturated air rises, resulting in condensation of water vapor contained in the moist air. They are fueled by a different heat mechanism than other cyclonic windstorms, such as nor'easters and polar lows. The characteristic that separates tropical cyclones from other cyclonic systems is that at any height in the atmosphere, the center of a tropical cyclone will be warmer than its surroundings—a phenomenon called “warm core” storm systems.

The term “tropical” refers both to the geographical origin of these systems, which usually form in tropical regions of the globe, and to their formation in maritime tropical air masses. The term “cyclone” refers to such storms’ cyclonic nature, with counterclockwise wind flow in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise wind flow in the Southern Hemisphere.

Location

Because of the hazard’s regional nature, all of New Salem is at risk from hurricanes and tropical storms, with a “Large” location of occurrence with over 50 percent of land area affected. Ridge tops are more susceptible to wind damage. Inland areas, especially those in floodplains, are also at risk for flooding from heavy rain and wind damage. The majority of the damage following hurricanes and tropical storms often results from residual wind damage and inland flooding, as was demonstrated during recent tropical storms.

Figure 3-6: Historical Hurricane Paths within 65 Miles of Massachusetts



Source: NOAA, n.d. * TS=Tropical Storm, TD=Tropical Depression

NOAA's Historical Hurricane Tracks tool is a public interactive mapping application that displays Atlantic Basin and East-Central Pacific Basin tropical cyclone data. This interactive tool tracks tropical cyclones from 1842 to 2017. According to this resource, over the time frame tracked, 63 events categorized as an extra-tropical storm or higher occurred within 65 nautical miles of Massachusetts. The tracks of these storms are shown in Figure 3-6. As this figure shows, the paths of these storms vary across the Commonwealth, but are more likely to occur toward the coast.

Extent

Hurricanes are measured according to the Saffir-Simpson scale, which categorizes or rates hurricanes from 1 (minimal) to 5 (catastrophic) based on their intensity. This is used to give an estimate of the potential property damage and flooding expected from a hurricane landfall. Wind speed is the determining factor in the scale. All winds are assessed using the U.S. 1-minute average, meaning the highest wind that is sustained for 1 minute. The Saffir-Simpson Scale described in Table 3-17 gives an overview of the wind speeds and range of damage caused by different hurricane categories.

Table 3-17: Saffir-Simpson Scale

Scale No. (Category)	Winds (mph)	Potential Damage
1	74 – 95	Minimal: Damage is primarily to shrubbery and trees, mobile homes, and some signs. No real damage is done to structures.
2	96 – 110	Moderate: Some trees topple; some roof coverings are damaged; and major damage is done to mobile homes.
3	111 – 130	Extensive: Large trees topple; some structural damage is done to roofs; mobile homes are destroyed; and structural damage is done to small homes and utility buildings.
4	131 – 155	Extreme: Extensive damage is done to roofs, windows, and doors; roof systems on small buildings completely fail; and some curtain walls fail.
5	> 155	Catastrophic: Roof damage is considerable and widespread; window and door damage is severe; there are extensive glass failures; and entire buildings could fail.
Additional Classifications		
Tropical Storm	39-73	NA
Tropical Depression	< 38	NA

Source: NOAA, n.d. Note: mph = miles per hour, NA = not applicable

Tropical storms and tropical depressions, while generally less dangerous than hurricanes, can be deadly. The winds of tropical depressions and tropical storms are usually not the greatest threat; rather, the rains, flooding, and severe weather associated with the tropical storms are what customarily cause more significant problems. Serious power outages can also be associated with these types of events. After Hurricane Irene passed through the region as a tropical storm in late August 2011, many areas of the Commonwealth were without power for more than 5 days.

While tropical storms can produce extremely powerful winds and torrential rain, they are also able to produce high waves, damaging storm surge, and tornadoes. They develop over large bodies of warm water and lose their strength if they move over land due to increased surface friction and loss of the warm ocean as an energy source. Heavy rains associated with a tropical storm, however, can produce significant flooding inland, and storm surges can produce extensive coastal flooding up to 25 miles from the coastline.

One measure of the size of a tropical cyclone is determined by measuring the distance from its center of circulation to its outermost closed isobar. If the radius is less than 2 degrees of latitude, or 138 miles, then the cyclone is “very small.” A radius between 3 and 6 degrees of latitude, or 207 to 420 miles, is considered “average-sized.” “Very large” tropical cyclones have a radius of greater than 8 degrees, or 552 miles.

Previous Occurrences

According to NOAA's Historical Hurricane Tracker tool, 63 hurricane or tropical storm events have occurred in the vicinity of Massachusetts between 1842 and 2016. The Commonwealth was impacted by tropical storms Jose and Phillipe in 2017. Therefore, there is an average of one storm every other year or 0.5 storms per year. Storms severe enough to receive FEMA disaster declarations, however, are far rarer, occurring every 9 years on average. The Commonwealth has not been impacted by any Category 4 or 5 hurricanes; however, Category 3 storms have historically caused widespread flooding. Winds have caused sufficient damage to impair the ability of individuals to remain in their homes.

In Massachusetts, major hurricanes occurred in 1904, 1938, 1954, 1955, 1960 and 1976, 1985, 1991 and 2010. The Great New England Hurricane of 1938, a Category 3 hurricane which occurred on September 21, 1938, was one of the most destructive and powerful storms ever to strike Southern New England. Sustained hurricane force winds occurred throughout most of Southern New England. Extensive damage occurred to roofs, trees and crops. Widespread power outages occurred, which in some areas lasted several weeks. Rainfall from this hurricane resulted in severe river flooding across sections of Massachusetts and Connecticut. The combined effects from a frontal system several days earlier and the hurricane produced rainfall of 10 to 17 inches across most of the Connecticut River Valley. This resulted in some of the worst flooding ever recorded in this area. The most recent hurricane to make landfall in Franklin County was Hurricane Bob, a weak category 2 hurricane, which made landfall in New England in August 1991. In Franklin County, Hurricane Bob caused roughly \$5,555,556 in property and crop damages. No hurricane has tracked directly through the Town of New Salem.

Historic data for hurricane and tropical storm events indicate one hurricane and 17 tropical storms have been recorded in Franklin County. Hurricane Bob in 1991 caused over \$5.5 million in property damage in the county, and over \$500,000 in crop damage. In 2011, Tropical Storm Irene caused over \$26 million in property damage in Franklin County, mostly from flooding impacts.

Probability of Future Events

A 2017 U.S. Climate Science Special Report noted that there has been an upward trend in North Atlantic hurricane activity since 1970. The report forecasts that future hurricanes formed in the North Atlantic will drop more rain and may have higher wind speeds. This is because a warmer atmosphere will hold more water, and hurricanes are efficient at wringing water out of the atmosphere and dumping it on land.²⁰

New Salem's location in Western Massachusetts reduces the risk of extremely high winds that are associated with hurricanes, although it can experience some high wind events. Based upon past occurrences, New Salem has a High probability, or a 25-50% chance, of experiencing a hurricane or tropical storm event in a given year.

²⁰ ResilientMA: Climate Change Clearing House for the Commonwealth: <http://resilientma.org/changes/extreme-weather>. Accessed January 11, 2019.

Impact

Considering the impacts of Tropical Storm Irene on New Salem during the Vulnerability Assessment revealed that an occurrence could critically impact the Town, with potential multiple injuries to citizens possible and with a potential of more than 25% of property damaged or destroyed.

Vulnerability

The entire town would be vulnerable to the impact of a hurricane or tropical storm. Areas prone to flooding are particularly vulnerable. Additionally high winds could impact the town's roads, communication and energy infrastructure.

Society

Vulnerable Populations

Among the exposed populations, the most vulnerable include people with low socioeconomic status, people over the age of 65, people with medical needs, and those with low English language fluency. For example, people with low socioeconomic status are likely to consider the economic impacts of evacuation when deciding whether or not to evacuate. Individuals with medical needs may have trouble evacuating and accessing needed medical care while displaced. Those who have low English language fluency may not receive or understand the warnings to evacuate. During and after an event, rescue workers and utility workers are vulnerable to impacts from high water, swift currents, rescues, and submerged debris. Vulnerable populations may also be less likely to have adequate resources to recover from the loss of their homes and jobs or to relocate from a damaged neighborhood.

Table 3-18 estimates the number of vulnerable populations and households in New Salem. Individuals and households may fall into multiple categories, so the numbers should not be added. Rather, the table provides Town officials and emergency response personnel with information to help plan for responding to the needs of New Salem residents during a hurricane or tropical storm event.

Table 3-18: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Vulnerable Population Category	Number	Percent of Total Population*
Population Age 65 Years and Over	240	24%
Population with a Disability	138	14%
Population who Speak English Less than "Very Well"	0	0%
Vulnerable Household Category	Number	Percent of Total Households*
Low Income Households (annual income less than \$35,000)	94	21%
Householder Age 65 Years and Over Living Alone	40	9%

Table 3-18: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem

Households Without Access to a Vehicle	9	2%
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*Total population = 1,009; Total households = 441

Note: Individuals and households may be counted under multiple categories.

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019 Five-Year Estimates.

Health Impacts

The health impacts from hurricanes and tropical storms can generally be separated into impacts from flooding and impacts from wind. The potential health impacts of flooding are extensive, and are discussed in detail in the Flooding section. In general, some of the most serious flooding-related health threats include floodwaters sweeping away individuals or cars, downed power lines, and exposure to hazards in the water, including dangerous animals or infectious organisms. Contact with contaminated floodwaters can cause gastrointestinal illness.

Wind-related health threats associated with hurricanes are most commonly caused by projectiles propelled by the storm's winds. Wind- and water-caused damage to residential structures can also increase the risk of threat impacts by leaving residents more exposed to the elements. Hurricanes that occur later in the year also increase the risk of hypothermia.

Economic Impacts

In addition to the human costs that extreme storms deliver when they permanently or temporarily displace people, the repair and reconstruction costs after storm damage can be enormous for homeowners and businesses. When bridges and culverts have been washed away and roads damaged, municipal and state agencies must secure the resources for expensive recovery projects in limited municipal budgets and from Federal disaster grant programs that are increasingly over-subscribed. Electrical grid, power plants and wastewater infrastructure repair costs are all expected to increase in the future.²¹

Infrastructure

Hurricanes and tropical storms could critically impact the Town, with a potential of more than 25% of property in affected area damaged or destroyed. Residential and commercial buildings built along rivers may be vulnerable to severe damage. Potential structural damage to the facilities themselves may include damage to roofs and building frames. These facilities may not be fully operational if workers are unable to travel to ensure continuity of operations prior and after a severe winter event. Table 3-19 identifies the assessed value of all residential, open space, commercial, and industrial land uses in Town, and the losses that would result from 1%, 5%, and 10% damage to this inventory as a result of a hurricane or tropical storm.

²¹ ResilientMA: Climate Change Clearing House for the Commonwealth: <http://resilientma.org/changes/extreme-weather>. Accessed January 29, 2019.

Table 3-19: Estimated Potential Loss by Tax Classification in New Salem				
Tax Classification	Total Assessed Value FY2020	1% Damage Loss Estimate	5% Damage Loss Estimate	10% Damage Loss Estimate
Residential	\$104,804,150	\$1,048,042	\$5,240,208	\$10,480,415
Open Space	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Commercial	\$1,658,152	\$16,582	\$82,908	\$165,815
Industrial	\$918,100	\$9,181	\$45,905	\$91,810
Total	\$107,380,402	\$1,073,804	\$5,369,020	\$10,738,040

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue - Division of Local Services, Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section.

Energy

Hurricanes and tropical storms often result in power outages and contact with damaged power lines during and after a storm, which may result in electrocution.

Public Health

Combined sewer overflows associated with heavy rainfall can release contaminants, chemicals, and pathogens directly into the environment and into water systems. If a mass outbreak of waterborne illness were to occur, hospitals and medical providers may lack the capacity to treat patients.

Public Safety

Critical infrastructure, including local and state-owned police and fire stations, other public safety buildings, and facilities that serve as emergency operation centers may experience direct loss (damage) during a hurricane or tropical storm. Emergency responders may also be exposed to hazardous situations when responding to calls. Road blockages caused by downed trees may impair travel.

Transportation

Some roads and bridges are also considered critical infrastructure, particularly those providing ingress and egress and allowing emergency vehicles access to those in need. Costly damage to roads, bridges, and rail networks may occur as a result of hurricanes.²²

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Wastewater treatment centers may face elevated risks of damage and destruction from hurricanes (resilient MA, 2018). Heavy rains can lead to contamination of well water and can release contaminants from septic systems (DPH, 2014). Heavy rainfall can also overburden stormwater systems, drinking water supplies, and sewage systems.

²² Resilient MA 2018.

Environment

The environmental impacts of hurricanes and tropical storms are similar to those described for other hazards, including flooding, severe winter storms and other severe weather events. As described for human health, environmental impacts can generally be divided into short-term direct impacts and long-term impacts. As the storm is occurring, flooding may disrupt normal ecosystem function and wind may fell trees and other vegetation. Additionally, wind-borne or waterborne detritus can cause mortality to animals if they are struck or transported to a non-suitable habitat.

In the longer term, impacts to natural resources and the environment as a result of hurricanes and tropical storms are generally related to changes in the physical structure of ecosystems. For example, flooding may cause scour in riverbeds and erode riverbanks, modifying the river ecosystem and depositing the scoured sediment in another location. Similarly, trees that fall during the storm may represent lost habitat for local species, or they may decompose and provide nutrients for the growth of new vegetation. If the storm spreads pollutants into natural ecosystems, contamination can disrupt food and water supplies, causing widespread and long-term population impacts on species in the area.

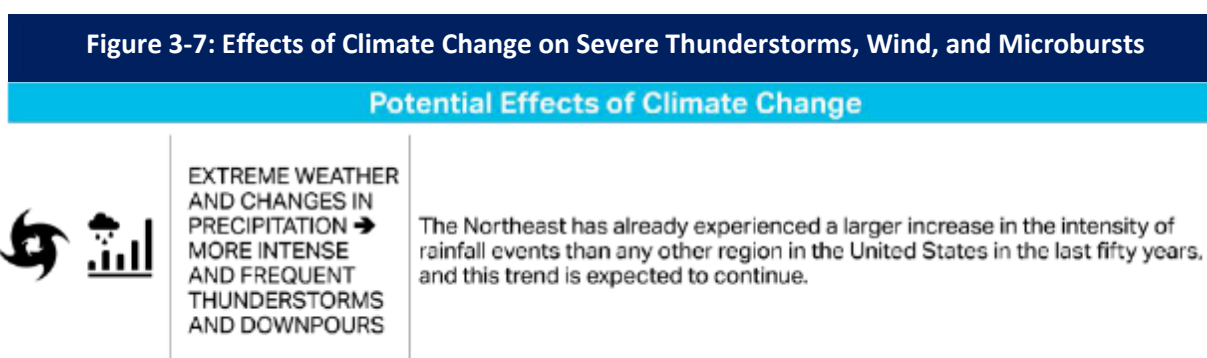
Vulnerability Summary

Based on the above analysis, New Salem faces a “Medium” vulnerability from hurricanes and tropical storms. The Vulnerability Assessment revealed an occurrence could critically impact the Town, with potential multiple injuries to citizens possible and with a potential of more than 25% of property in affected area damaged or destroyed.

3.6 SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS / WIND / MICROBURSTS

Potential Effects of Climate Change

Climate change is expected to increase extreme weather events across the globe and in Massachusetts. Climate change leads to extreme weather because of warmer air and ocean temperatures and changing air currents. Warmer air leads to more evaporation from large water bodies and holds more moisture, so when clouds release their precipitation, there is more of it. In addition, changes in atmospheric air currents like jet streams and ocean currents can cause changes in the intensity and duration of stormy weather. While it is difficult to connect one storm to a changing climate, scientists point to the northeastern United States as one of the regions that is most vulnerable to an increase in extreme weather driven by climate change.²³



Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

A thunderstorm is a storm originating in a cumulonimbus cloud. Cumulonimbus clouds produce lightning, which locally heats the air to 50,000 degrees Celsius, which in turn produces an audible shock wave, known as thunder. Frequently during thunderstorm events, heavy rain and gusty winds are present. Less frequently, hail is present, which can become very large in size.

Tornadoes can also be generated during these events. According to the National Weather Service, a thunderstorm is classified as “severe” when it produces damaging wind gusts in excess of 58 mph (50 knots), hail that is 1 inch in diameter or larger (quarter size), or a tornado.

Every thunderstorm has an updraft (rising air) and a downdraft (sinking air). Sometimes strong downdrafts known as downbursts can cause tremendous wind damage that is similar to that of a tornado. A small (less than 2.5 mile path) downburst is known as a “microburst” and a larger downburst is called a “macro-burst.” An organized, fast-moving line of microbursts traveling across large areas is known as a “derecho.” These occasionally occur in Massachusetts. Winds exceeding 100 mph have been measured from downbursts in Massachusetts.

²³ ResilientMA: Climate Change Clearing House for the Commonwealth: <http://resilientma.org/changes/extreme-weather>. Accessed January 29, 2019.

Wind is air in motion relative to surface of the earth. For non-tropical events over land, the NWS issues a Wind Advisory (sustained winds of 31 to 39 mph for at least 1 hour or any gusts 46 to 57 mph) or a High Wind Warning (sustained winds 40+ mph or any gusts 58+ mph). For non-tropical events over water, the NWS issues a small craft advisory (sustained winds 25-33 knots), a gale warning (sustained winds 34-47 knots), a storm warning (sustained winds 48 to 63 knots), or a hurricane force wind warning (sustained winds 64+ knots). For tropical systems, the NWS issues a tropical storm warning for any areas (inland or coastal) that are expecting sustained winds from 39 to 73 mph. A hurricane warning is issued for any areas (inland or coastal) that are expecting sustained winds of 74 mph. Effects from high winds can include downed trees and/or power lines and damage to roofs, windows, and other structural components. High winds can cause scattered power outages. High winds are also a hazard for aircraft.













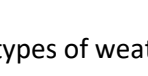
Location

The entire town of New Salem is at risk for severe thunderstorms, wind and microbursts.

Extent

An average thunderstorm is 15 miles across and lasts 30 minutes; severe thunderstorms can be much larger and longer. The severity of thunderstorms can vary widely, from commonplace and short-term events to large-scale storms that result in direct damage and flooding. Thunderstorms can cause hail, wind, and flooding, with widespread flooding the most common characteristic that leads to a storm being declared a disaster. The severity of flooding varies widely based both on characteristics of the storm itself and the region in which it occurs. Lightning can occasionally also present a severe hazard. Southern New England typically experiences 10 to 15 days per year with severe thunderstorms.

Microbursts are typically less than three miles across. They can last anywhere from a few seconds to several minutes. Microbursts cause damaging winds up to 170 miles per hour in strength and can be accompanied by precipitation.

Figure 3-8: Beaufort Wind Scale				
Beaufort number	Wind Speed (mph)	Seaman's term		Effects on Land
0	Under 1	Calm		Calm; smoke rises vertically.
1	1-3	Light Air		Smoke drift indicates wind direction; vanes do not move.
2	4-7	Light Breeze		Wind felt on face; leaves rustle; vanes begin to move.
3	8-12	Gentle Breeze		Leaves, small twigs in constant motion; light flags extended.
4	13-18	Moderate Breeze		Dust, leaves and loose paper raised up; small branches move.
5	19-24	Fresh Breeze		Small trees begin to sway.
6	25-31	Strong Breeze		Large branches of trees in motion; whistling heard in wires.
7	32-38	Moderate Gale		Whole trees in motion; resistance felt in walking against the wind.
8	39-46	Fresh Gale		Twigs and small branches broken off trees.
9	47-54	Strong Gale		Slight structural damage occurs; slate blown from roofs.
10	55-63	Whole Gale		Seldom experienced on land; trees broken; structural damage occurs.
11	64-72	Storm		Very rarely experienced on land; usually with widespread damage.
12	73 or higher	Hurricane Force		Violence and destruction.

Source: Developed in 1805 by Sir Francis Beaufort

New Salem is susceptible to high winds from several types of weather events: before and after frontal systems, hurricanes and tropical storms, severe thunderstorms and tornadoes, and nor'easters. Sometimes, wind gusts of only 40 to 45 mph can cause scattered power outages from downed trees and wires. This is especially true after periods of prolonged drought or excessive rainfall, since both are situations that can weaken the root systems and make them more susceptible to the winds' effects. Winds measuring less than 30 mph are not considered to be hazardous under most circumstances. Wind speeds in a hurricane are measured using the Saffir-Simpson scale. Another scale developed for measuring wind is the Beaufort wind scale (see Figure 3-8).

Previous Occurrences

Since 1996, a total of 15 high wind events occurred in Franklin County (Table 3-20), causing a total of \$303,000 in property damages. High winds are defined by the National Weather Service as sustained non-convective winds of 35 knots (40 mph) or greater lasting for 1 hour or longer, or gusts of 50 knots

(58 mph) or greater for any duration. The probability of future high wind events is expected to increase as a result of climate projections for the state that suggest a greater occurrence of severe weather events in the future.

Table 3-20: High Wind Events in Franklin County			
Year	# of High Wind Events	Annual Property Damage	Annual Crop Damage
1996	2	\$0	\$0
1999	1	\$0	\$0
2003	2	\$130,000	\$0
2004	1	\$30,000	\$0
2005	1	\$10,000	\$0
2006	3	\$68,000	\$0
2011	1	\$15,000	\$0
2013	2	\$35,000	\$0
2018	1	\$3,000	\$0
2019	1	\$12,000	\$0
Total	15	\$303,000	\$0

Source: NOAA Storm Events Database: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>

Thunderstorm winds are defined by the National Weather Service as winds arising from convection (occurring within 30 minutes of lightning being observed or detected) with speeds of at least 50 knots (58 mph), or winds of any speed (non-severe thunderstorm winds below 50 knots) producing a fatality, injury, or damage. New Salem has experienced fourteen (14) thunderstorm wind events since 1998 (Table 3-21). These storms resulted in downed trees and wires and caused \$115,000 in property damage. In one instance in 2015, a microburst tore through New Salem with maximum speeds of 80mph.

Table 3-21: Thunderstorm Wind Events in New Salem				
Year	# of Events	Annual Property Damage	Annual Crop Damage	Event Description
1998	1	\$0	\$0	T-Storm with 68mph gusts, many downed wires and trees throughout Franklin County.
2001	1	\$0	\$0	Severe thunderstorm with strong winds and damaging hail. Half dollar-sized hail fell in New Salem.
2005	1	\$5,000	\$0	Showers and thunderstorms developed across Massachusetts in a hot and humid airmass ahead of a weak cold front during the afternoon and evening

Table 3-21: Thunderstorm Wind Events in New Salem				
Year	# of Events	Annual Property Damage	Annual Crop Damage	Event Description
				hours of 14 August 2005. These thunderstorms produced damaging wind gusts, large hail, and flash flooding.
2010	1	\$25,000	\$0	Trees and wires were downed throughout New Salem, resulting in power outages in half the town.
2011	1	\$3,000	\$0	A tree on Elm Street was downed by thunderstorm winds.
2013	1	\$5,000	\$0	A tree was downed onto wires on Crawl and Neilson Streets.
2014	1	\$5,000	\$0	Trees and wires were downed on Cooleyville Road and Jennie Morr Road in New Salem.
2019	1	\$300	\$0	In New Salem, a tree was down on Daniel Shays Highway.
Total	14	\$43,300	\$0*	

*Crop loss data was not provided for these events.

Source: NOAA Storm Events Database: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>

Secondary hazards of thunderstorms and severe weather include lightning and hail. In Franklin County, 22 lightning events since 1997 caused a total of \$835,500 in property damages (Table 3-22).

Table 3-22: Lightning Events in Franklin County			
Year	# of Lightning Events	Annual Property Damage	Annual Crop Damage
1997	1	\$3,000	\$0
2001	1	\$20,000	\$0
2002	1	\$15,000	\$0
2004	1	\$35,000	\$0
2005	1	\$50,000	\$0
2008	1	\$10,000	\$0
2010	2	\$25,000	\$0
2012	1	\$500,000	\$0
2013	4	\$49,000	\$0
2014	3	\$93,000	\$0
2018	6	\$35,500	\$0
Total	22	\$835,500	\$0

Source: NOAA Storm Events Database: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>

A total of 45 hail events have been reported in Franklin County since 1998 (Table 3-23). Property damage was only recorded for one event, in the amount of \$5,000. One hail event in 2008 resulted in \$50,000 in crop damages. Pea to marble size hail fell in a swath from Colrain to Shelburne damaging apple and peach orchards. An estimated 45 acres of apples and two to three acres of peaches were damaged by the hail.

Table 3-23: Hail Events in Franklin County			
Year	# of Hail Events	Annual Property Damage	Annual Crop Damage
1998	4	\$0	\$0
2000	1	\$0	\$0
2001	1	\$0	\$0
2003	1	\$0	\$0
2004	2	\$0	\$0
2005	3	\$5,000	\$0
2007	5	\$0	\$0
2008	7	\$0	\$50,000
2009	2	\$0	\$0
2010	4	\$0	\$0
2011	4	\$0	\$0
2012	1	\$0	\$0
2013	3	\$0	\$0
2017	3	\$0	\$0
2018	1	\$0	\$0
2020	3	\$0	\$0
Total	45	\$5,000	\$50,000

Source: NOAA Storm Events Database: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>

Probability of Future Events

According to the National Weather Service, Massachusetts experiences between 20 to 30 thunderstorm days each year. Based on past occurrences, there is a “Very High” probability (50% - 100% chance) of a severe thunderstorm or winds affecting the town in a given year. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of thunderstorms and other severe weather.

Impact

The entire town of New Salem is vulnerable to high winds that can cause extensive damage. The U.S. is divided into four wind zones. States located in Wind Zone IV have experienced the greatest number of tornadoes and the strongest tornadoes. The Commonwealth is located within Wind Zone II, which includes wind speeds up to 180 mph. The entire Commonwealth is also located within the hurricane-susceptible region, and the western portion of the Commonwealth is located within the special wind region, in which wind-speed anomalies are present and additional consideration of the wind hazard is

warranted. The entire town of New Salem can experience the effect and impact from severe thunderstorms, microbursts, and hail. The magnitude of impact of a severe thunderstorm event is likely “Critical,” with more than 25% of property in the affected area damaged or destroyed.

Vulnerability

Society

The entire population of New Salem is considered exposed to high-wind and thunderstorm events. Downed trees, damaged buildings, and debris carried by high winds can lead to injury or loss of life. Populations located outdoors are considered at risk and more vulnerable to many storm impacts, particularly lightning strikes, compared to those who are located inside. Moving to a lower risk location will decrease a person’s vulnerability.

Vulnerable Populations

Socially vulnerable populations are most susceptible to severe weather based on a number of factors, including their physical and financial ability to react or respond during a hazard, and the location and construction quality of their housing. In general, vulnerable populations include people over the age of 65, the elderly living alone, people with low socioeconomic status, people with low English language fluency, people with limited mobility or a life-threatening illness, and people who lack transportation or are living in areas that are isolated from major roads. The isolation of these populations is a significant concern.

Table 3-24 estimates the number of vulnerable populations and households in New Salem. Individuals and households may fall into multiple categories, so the numbers should not be added. Rather, the table provides Town officials and emergency response personnel with information to help plan for responding to the needs of New Salem residents during a severe weather event.

Table 3-24: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Vulnerable Population Category	Number	Percent of Total Population*
Population Age 65 Years and Over	240	24%
Population with a Disability	138	14%
Population who Speak English Less than "Very Well"	0	0%
Vulnerable Household Category	Number	Percent of Total Households*
Low Income Households (annual income less than \$35,000)	94	21%
Householder Age 65 Years and Over Living Alone	40	9%

Table 3-24: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem

Households Without Access to a Vehicle	9	2%
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*Total population = 1,009; Total households = 441

Note: Individuals and households may be counted under multiple categories.

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019 Five-Year Estimates.

Power outages can be life-threatening to those dependent on electricity for life support. Power outages may also result in inappropriate use of combustion heaters, cooking appliances and generators in indoor or poorly ventilated areas, leading to increased risks of carbon monoxide poisoning. People who work or engage in recreation outdoors are also vulnerable to severe weather.

Health Impacts

Both high winds and thunderstorms present potential safety impacts for individuals without access to shelter during these events. Extreme rainfall events can also affect raw water quality by increasing turbidity and bacteriological contaminants leading to gastrointestinal illness. Additionally, research has found that thunderstorms may cause the rate of emergency room visits for asthma to increase to 5 to 10 times the normal rate.²⁴ Much of this phenomenon is attributed to the stress and anxiety that many individuals, particularly children, experience during severe thunderstorms. The combination of wind, rain, and lightning from thunderstorms with pollen and mold spores can exacerbate asthma. The rapidly falling air temperatures characteristic of a thunderstorm as well as the production of nitrogen oxide gas during lightning strikes have also both been correlated with asthma.

Economic Impacts

Wind storms and severe thunderstorms events may impact the economy, including direct building losses and the cost of repairing or replacing the damage caused to the building. Additional economic impacts may include loss of business functions, water supply system damage, inventory damage, relocation costs, wage losses, and rental losses due to the repair/replacement of buildings. Agricultural losses due to lightning and the resulting fires can be extensive. Lightning can be responsible for damage to buildings; can cause electrical, forest and/or wildfires; and can damage infrastructure, such as power transmission lines and communication towers.

Recovery and clean-up costs can also be costly, resulting in further economic impacts. Prolonged obstruction of major routes due to secondary hazards such as landslides, debris, or floodwaters can disrupt the shipment of goods and other commerce. Large, prolonged storms can have negative economic impacts on an entire region.

Because of differences in building construction, residential structures are generally more susceptible to wind damage than commercial and industrial structures. Wood and masonry buildings in general,

²⁴ Andrews, L.W. 2012. How Thunderstorms Affect Health. Psychology Today. June 2, 2012.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/minding-the-body/201206/how-thunderstorms-affect-health>

regardless of their occupancy class, tend to experience more damage than concrete or steel buildings. Mobile homes are the most vulnerable to damage, even if tied down, and offer little protection to people inside.

Infrastructure

Damage to buildings is dependent upon several factors, including wind speed, storm duration, path of the storm track, and building construction. According to the Hazus wind model,²⁵ direct wind-induced damage (wind pressures and windborne debris) to buildings is dependent upon the performance of components and cladding, including the roof covering (shingles, tiles, membrane), roof sheathing (typically wood-frame construction only), windows, and doors, and is modeled as such. Structural wall failures can occur for masonry and wood-frame walls, and uplift of whole roof systems can occur due to failures at the roof/wall connections. Foundation failures (i.e., sliding, overturning, and uplift) can potentially take place in manufactured homes.

Massachusetts is divided into three design wind speeds for four risk categories, the limits of which are defined by the Massachusetts State Building Code (9th Edition). National wind data prepared by the American Society of Civil Engineers serve as the basis of these wind design requirements ("Minimum Design Loads for Buildings and Other Structures," American Society of Civil Engineers ASCE-7). Generally speaking, structures should be designed to withstand the total wind load of their location. New Salem falls within the 90 mph wind load zone. Refer to the State Building Code (9th Edition [780 CMR] Chapter 16 Structural Design, as amended by Massachusetts) for appropriate reference wind pressures, wind forces on roofs, and similar data.

All elements of the built environment are exposed to severe weather events such as high winds and thunderstorms. Table 3-25 identifies the assessed value of all residential, open space, commercial, and industrial land uses in Town, and the losses that would result from 1%, 5%, and 10% damage to this inventory as a result of high winds or a severe thunderstorm.

Table 3-25: Estimated Potential Loss by Tax Classification in New Salem				
Tax Classification	Total Assessed Value FY2020	1% Damage Loss Estimate	5% Damage Loss Estimate	10% Damage Loss Estimate
Residential	\$104,804,150	\$1,048,042	\$5,240,208	\$10,480,415
Open Space	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Commercial	\$1,658,152	\$16,582	\$82,908	\$165,815
Industrial	\$918,100	\$9,181	\$45,905	\$91,810
Total	\$107,380,402	\$1,073,804	\$5,369,020	\$10,738,040

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue - Division of Local Services, Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section.

²⁵ <https://www.fema.gov/hazus-mh-hurricane-wind-model>

Agriculture

Forestry species and agricultural crops, equipment, and infrastructure may be directly impacted by high winds. Trees are also vulnerable to lightning strikes.

Energy

The most common problem associated with severe weather is loss of utilities. Severe windstorms causing downed trees can create serious impacts on power and aboveground communication lines. Downed power lines can cause blackouts, leaving large areas isolated. Loss of electricity and phone connections would leave certain populations isolated because residents would be unable to call for assistance. Additionally, the loss of power can impact heating or cooling provision to citizens (including the young and elderly, who are particularly vulnerable to temperature-related health impacts).

Utility infrastructure (power lines, gas lines, electrical systems) could suffer damage, and impacts can result in the loss of power, which can impact business operations. After an event, there is a risk of fire, electrocution, or an explosion.

Public Safety

Public safety facilities and equipment may experience a direct loss (damage) from high winds.

Transportation

Roads may become impassable due to flash or urban flooding, downed trees and power lines, or due to landslides caused by heavy, prolonged rains. Impacts to transportation lifelines affect both short-term (e.g., evacuation activities) and long-term (e.g., day-to-day commuting) transportation needs.

Water & Wastewater Infrastructure

The hail, wind, and flash flooding associated with thunderstorms and high winds can cause damage to water infrastructure. Flooding can overburden stormwater, drinking water, and wastewater systems. Water and sewer systems may not function if power is lost.

Environment

As described under other hazards, such as hurricanes and severe winter storms, high winds can defoliate forest canopies and cause structural changes within an ecosystem that can destabilize food webs and cause widespread repercussions. Direct damage to plant species can include uprooting or total destruction of trees and an increased threat of wildfire in areas of tree debris. High winds can also erode soils, which can damage both the ecosystem from which soil is removed as well as the system on which the sediment is ultimately deposited.

Environmental impacts of extreme precipitation events are discussed in depth in the Flooding section, and often include soil erosion, the growth of excess fungus or bacteria, and direct impacts to wildlife. For example, research by the Butterfly Conservation Foundation shows that above average rainfall events have prevented butterflies from successfully completing their mating rituals, causing population

numbers to decline. Harmful algal blooms and associated neurotoxins can also be a secondary hazard of extreme precipitation events as well as heat. Public drinking water reservoirs may also be damaged by widespread winds uprooting watershed forests and creating serious water quality disturbances.

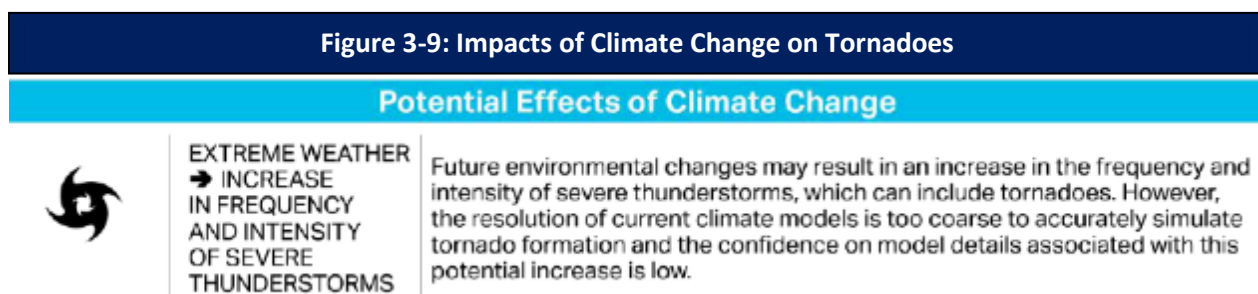
Vulnerability Summary

Based on the above assessment, New Salem has a “High” vulnerability to severe thunderstorms and wind events. Thunderstorms are common in New England, and can impact property, crops, utilities and the population of New Salem. Microbursts are less common, but can cause significant damage when they do occur. The cascade effects of severe storms include utility losses and transportation accidents and flooding. Particular areas of vulnerability include low-income and elderly populations, and infrastructure such as roadways and utilities that can be damaged by such storms and the low-lying areas that can be impacted by flooding.

3.7 TORNADOES

Potential Impacts of Climate Change

Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of severe weather, which can include tornadoes. However, tornadoes are too small to be simulated well by climate models. Therefore, specific predictions about how this hazard will change are not possible, given current technical limitations. As discussed in other sections in this Plan, the conditions that are conducive to tornadoes (which are also conducive to other weather phenomena, such as hurricanes and tropical storms) are expected to become more severe under global warming.



Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

A tornado is a narrow, violently rotating column of air that extends from the base of a cumulonimbus cloud to the ground. The observable aspect of a tornado is the rotating column of water droplets, with dust and debris caught in the column. Tornadoes are the most violent of all atmospheric storms.

The following are common factors in tornado formation:

- Very strong winds in the middle and upper levels of the atmosphere
- Clockwise turning of the wind with height (i.e., from southeast at the surface to west aloft)
- Increasing wind speed in the lowest 10,000 feet of the atmosphere (i.e., 20 mph at the surface and 50 mph at 7,000 feet)
- Very warm, moist air near the ground, with unusually cooler air aloft
- A forcing mechanism such as a cold front or leftover weather boundary from previous shower or thunderstorm activity

Tornadoes can form from individual cells within severe thunderstorm squall lines. They can also form from an isolated supercell thunderstorm. They can be spawned by tropical cyclones or the remnants thereof, and weak tornadoes can even occur from little more than a rain shower if air is converging and spinning upward. Most tornadoes occur in the late afternoon and evening hours, when the heating is the greatest. The most common months for tornadoes to occur are June, July, and August, although the Conway, Massachusetts, tornado (2017) occurred in February.

A tornadic waterspout is a rapidly rotating column of air extending from the cloud base (typically a cumulonimbus thunderstorm) to a water surface, such as a bay or the ocean. They can be formed in the

same way as regular tornadoes, or can form on a clear day with the right amount of instability and wind shear. Tornadoic waterspouts can have wind speeds of 60 to 100 mph, but since they do not move very far, they can often be navigated around. They can become a threat to land if they drift onshore.

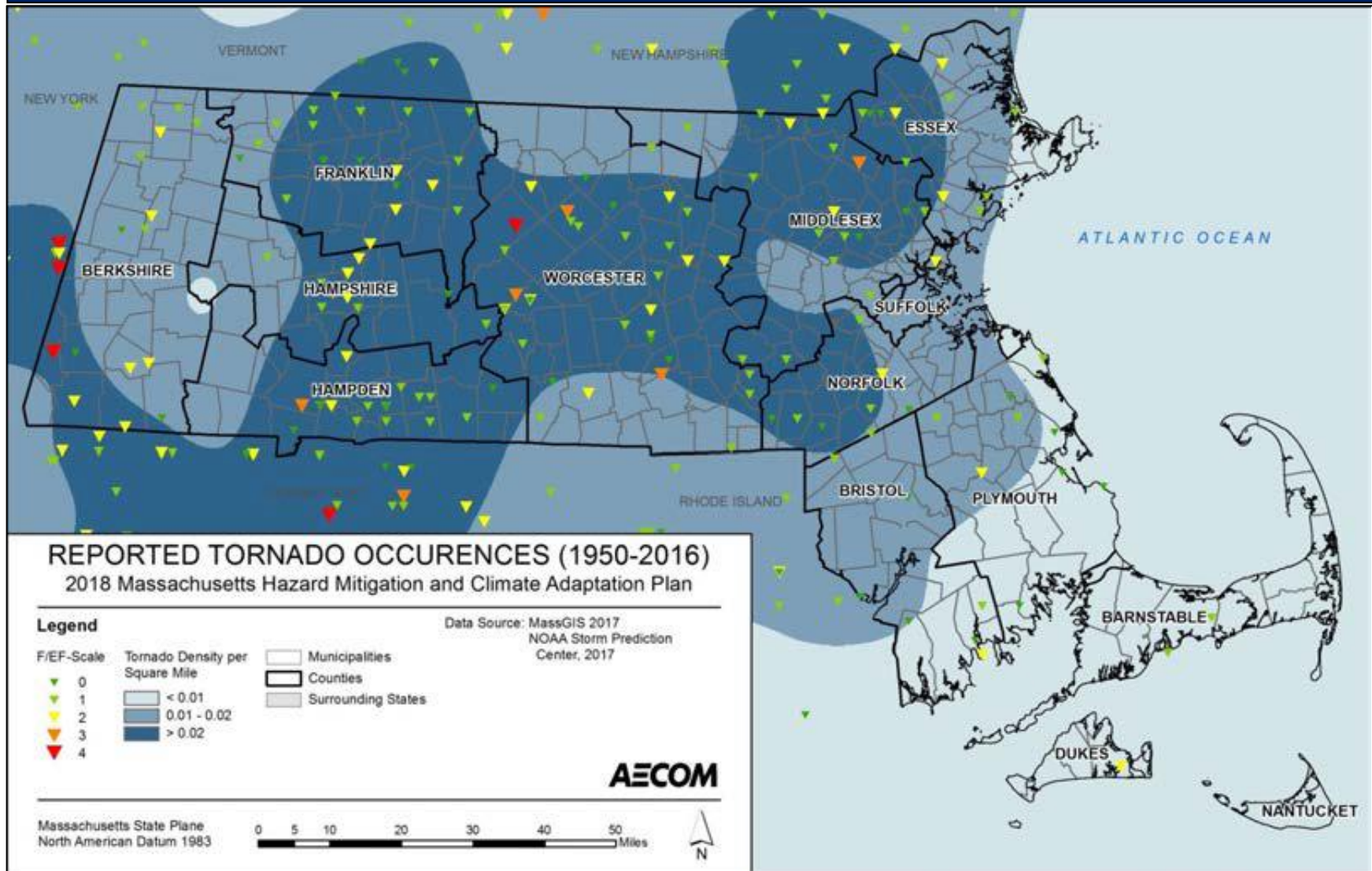
Location

Figure 3-10 illustrates the reported tornado occurrences, based on all-time initial touchdown locations across the Commonwealth as documented in the NOAA NCDC Storm Events Database. ArcGIS was used to calculate an average score per square mile. The analysis indicated that the area at greatest risk for a tornado touchdown runs from central to northeastern Massachusetts, and includes New Salem and much of Franklin County. Tornadoes are rated as having an Area of Occurrence of “Isolated.” If a tornado were to occur in New Salem, it would likely impact less than 10% of the Town.

Extent







The NWS rates tornadoes using the Enhanced Fujita scale (EF scale), which does not directly measure wind speed but rather the amount of damage created. This scale derives 3-second gusts estimated at the point of damage based on the assignment of 1 out of 8 degrees of damage to a range of different structure types. These estimates vary with height and exposure. This method is considerably more sophisticated than the original Fujita scale, and it allows surveyors to create more precise assessments of tornado severity. Figure 3-11 provides guidance from NOAA about the impacts of a storm with each rating.

Figure 3-10: Density of Reported Tornadoes per Square Mile



Source: NOAA Storm Prediction Center (SPC), as presented in the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, September 2018.

Figure 3-11: Enhanced Fujita Scale & Guide to Tornado Severity

Scale	Wind Speed Estimate		Potential damage	Example of Damage
	mph	km/h		
EF0	65–85	105–137	Minor damage. Peels surface off some roofs; some damage to gutters or siding; branches broken off trees; shallow-rooted trees pushed over. Confirmed tornadoes with no reported damage (i.e., those that remain in open fields) are always rated EF0.	
EF1	86–110	138–177	Moderate damage. Roofs severely stripped; mobile homes overturned or badly damaged; loss of exterior doors; windows and other glass broken.	
EF2	111–135	178–217	Considerable damage. Roofs torn off from well-constructed houses; foundations of frame homes shifted; mobile homes completely destroyed; large trees snapped or uprooted; light-object missiles generated; cars lifted off ground.	
EF3	136–165	218–266	Severe damage. Entire stories of well-constructed houses destroyed; severe damage to large buildings such as shopping malls; trains overturned; trees debarked; heavy cars lifted off the ground and thrown; structures with weak foundations are badly damaged.	
EF4	166–200	267–322	Devastating damage. Well-constructed and whole frame houses completely leveled; some frame homes may be swept away; cars and other large objects thrown and small missiles generated.	
EF5	>200	>322	Incredible damage. Strong-framed, well-built houses leveled off foundations and swept away; steel-reinforced concrete structures are critically damaged; tall buildings collapse or have severe structural deformations; cars, trucks, and trains can be thrown approximately 1 mile (1.6 km).	

Source: Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enhanced_Fujita_scale

Previous Occurrences

On June 1, 2011, thunderstorms forming ahead of a cold front across Southern New England organized into discrete supercells in an environment highly favorable for tornado formation. A tornado evaluated to be an EF-3 tornado entered Hampden County from the Berkshires, touched down in Westfield, and continued on a 38 mile long trek through West Springfield, Springfield, Wilbraham, Monson, Brimfield, and Sturbridge. This tornado was on the ground for an estimated 70 minutes. About two hours later, another supercell tracked just to the north of the storm track of the EF3 tornado. While its rotation was not as strong, it produced brief tornadoes in Wilbraham (EF1), North Brimfield (EF1), and Sturbridge (EF0). While the focus was on the tornadoes and their damage, damaging winds, large hail up to two inches in diameter, and some flash flooding also occurred across southern New England.

Since the 1950s, there have been over twenty tornadoes in Franklin County. In the last two decades, five tornadoes have been reported in Franklin County, in the Towns of Heath, Charlemont, Wendell, New Salem, and Conway (Table 3-26). The February 2017 tornado in the center of Conway was the most destructive, impacting forests and causing major property damage to several homes, barns, and a church that subsequently had to be torn down. Miraculously, no deaths or serious injuries were reported.

Table 3-26: Tornado Events in Franklin County				
Date	Severity	Property Damage	Crop Damage	Event Narrative
7/3/1997	F1	\$50,000	\$0	A tornado touched down just west of Number Nine Road in Heath and then skipped along a path which ended about a mile into northwest Colrain. Many large trees were uprooted or snapped at their mid levels. A silo was destroyed and part of the roof of an attached barn was peeled back. A hay tractor was flipped over with its wheels in the air. Doors to a garage were blown in and the roof was partially ripped off. The tornado affected mostly wooded terrain and did extensive tree damage when it passed through a state forest. The path width was up to 100 yards. There were no injuries.
7/3/1997	F1	\$50,000	\$0	A tornado touched down in the eastern part of Charlemont and travelled east causing damage to a campground. Fifteen trailers were damaged from falling trees and flying debris. Two of the trailers were severely damaged and one was destroyed with seven trees falling on top of it. Eyewitnesses reported rotation in the clouds and debris. The tornado then moved through the higher terrain of the Catamount State Forest. The path was discontinuous and ranged in width from 50 to 100 yards. The tornado path ended in the Copeland Hills section of Colrain. There were no direct injuries reported.
7/11/2006	F2	\$200,000	\$0	Brief F2 touchdown in Wendell

Table 3-26: Tornado Events in Franklin County				
Date	Severity	Property Damage	Crop Damage	Event Narrative
9/1/2013	EF0	\$0	\$0	A Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation employee observed a waterspout on Quabbin Reservoir in New Salem, MA. He was able to snap two pictures of the storm, one showing a funnel and another showing the funnel extended down to the water. The waterspout was very short lived, never hit land, and did no damage and injured no people. Winds aloft were not conducive for tornadic development, but the environment was unstable and a surface front was moving through the region.
2/25/2017	EF1	\$400,000	\$0	This tornado touched down at 7:23 pm on Main Poland Road in western Conway, Massachusetts. The path width started at 50 yards, with a sharp gradient evident of damage versus no damage. Large sections of forest had thick pine trees snapped at mid-tree. Numerous power lines were downed along the path into downtown Conway. The path width grew, reaching a maximum width of 200 yards near the town hall. Several houses were severely damaged on Whately Road, southeast of the town hall. Roofs were blown off, and in one case the side walls of a house were missing with the interior of the house exposed. On Hill View Road a large barn collapsed. One injury occurred when a tree landed on a house on South Deerfield Road east of town. That was where the visible damage path ended.

Source: NOAA Storm Events Database: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>

Probability of Future Events

As highlighted in the National Climate Assessment, tornado activity in the U.S. has become more variable, and increasingly so in the last 2 decades. While the number of days per year that tornadoes occur has decreased, the number of tornadoes on these days has increased. Climate models show projections that the frequency and intensity of severe thunderstorms (which include tornadoes, hail, and winds) will increase. Based on past occurrences, there is a “Low” probability (a 1-2% chance) of a tornado affecting the town in a given year.

Impact

Tornadoes are potentially the most dangerous of local storms. If a major tornado were to strike in the populated areas of New Salem, damage could be widespread. Fatalities could be high; many people could be displaced for an extended period of time; buildings could be damaged or destroyed; businesses could be forced to close for an extended period of time or even permanently; and routine services, such as telephone or power, could be disrupted. The severity of impact of a tornado event is likely “Critical,” with more than 25% of property in the affected area damaged or destroyed.

Vulnerability

Society

The entire town of New Salem has the potential for tornado formation, and is located in the area within Massachusetts described above as having higher-than-average tornado frequency. Residents of impacted areas may be displaced or require temporary to long-term shelter due to severe weather events. In addition, downed trees, damaged buildings, and debris carried by high winds can lead to injury or loss of life.

Vulnerable Populations

In general, vulnerable populations include people over the age of 65, people with low socioeconomic status, people with low English language fluency, people with compromised immune systems, and residents living in areas that are isolated from major roads. Power outages can be life-threatening to those who are dependent on electricity for life support and can result in increased risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Individuals with limited communication capacity, such as those with limited internet or phone access, may not be aware of impending tornado warnings. The isolation of these populations is also a significant concern, as is the potential insufficiency of older or less stable housing to offer adequate shelter from tornadoes. Residents living in mobile homes are at increased risk to tornadoes.

An estimated 189 housing units in New Salem, or 37% of all housing units in town, were built prior to the 1970s when the first building code went into effect in Massachusetts. An estimated 15 mobile homes are located in New Salem, accounting for approximately 3 percent of the total housing stock.²⁶ Although there are a small number of mobile homes still in the Town, the Committee noted that these types of homes are no longer allowed per the Town's zoning bylaws. Table 3-27 estimates the number of vulnerable populations and households in New Salem. Individuals and households may fall into multiple categories, so the numbers should not be added. Rather, the table provides Town officials and emergency response personnel with information to help plan for responding to the needs of New Salem residents during a tornado event.

Table 3-27: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Vulnerable Population Category	Number	Percent of Total Population*
Population Age 65 Years and Over	240	24%
Population with a Disability	138	14%
Population who Speak English Less than "Very Well"	0	0%
Vulnerable Household Category	Number	Percent of Total Households*

²⁶ U.S. Census Bureau 2014-2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

Table 3-27: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Low Income Households (annual income less than \$35,000)	94	21%
Householder Age 65 Years and Over Living Alone	40	9%
Households Without Access to a Vehicle	9	2%

*Total population = 1,009; Total households = 441

Note: Individuals and households may be counted under multiple categories.

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019 Five-Year Estimates.

Health Impacts

The primary health hazard associated with tornadoes is the threat of direct injury from flying debris or structural collapse as well as the potential for an individual to be lifted and dropped by the tornado's winds. After the storm has subsided, tornadoes can present unique challenges to search and rescue efforts because of the extensive and widespread distribution of debris. The distribution of hazardous materials, including asbestos-containing building materials, can present an acute health risk for personnel cleaning up after a tornado disaster and for residents in the area. The duration of exposure to contaminated material may be far longer if drinking water reservoir or groundwater aquifers are contaminated. According to the EPA, properly designed storage facilities for hazardous materials can reduce the risk of those materials being spread during a tornado. Many of the health impacts described for other types of storms, including lack of access to a hospital, carbon monoxide poisoning from generators, and mental health impacts from storm-related trauma, could also occur as a result of tornado activity.

Economic Impacts

Tornado events are typically localized; however, in those areas, economic impacts can be significant. Types of impacts may include loss of business functions, water supply system damage, damage to inventories, relocation costs, wage losses, and rental losses due to the repair or replacement of buildings. Recovery and clean-up costs can also be costly. The damage inflicted by historical tornadoes in Massachusetts varies widely, but the average damage per event is approximately \$3.9 million.

Because of differences in building construction, residential structures are generally more susceptible to tornado damage than commercial and industrial structures. Wood and masonry buildings in general, regardless of their occupancy class, tend to experience more damage than concrete or steel buildings. Mobile homes are the most vulnerable to damage, even if tied down, and offer little protection to people inside.

Infrastructure

All critical facilities and infrastructure in New Salem are exposed to tornado events. Table 3-28 identifies the assessed value of all residential, open space, commercial, and industrial land uses in Town, and the losses that would result from 1%, 5%, and 10% damage to this inventory as a result of a tornado.

Table 3-28: Estimated Potential Loss by Tax Classification in New Salem				
Tax Classification	Total Assessed Value FY2020	1% Damage Loss Estimate	5% Damage Loss Estimate	10% Damage Loss Estimate
Residential	\$104,804,150	\$1,048,042	\$5,240,208	\$10,480,415
Open Space	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Commercial	\$1,658,152	\$16,582	\$82,908	\$165,815
Industrial	\$918,100	\$9,181	\$45,905	\$91,810
Total	\$107,380,402	\$1,073,804	\$5,369,020	\$10,738,040

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue - Division of Local Services, Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section.

Agriculture

Forestry species and agricultural crops, equipment, and infrastructure may be directly impacted by tornadoes.

Energy

High winds could down power lines and poles adjacent to roads. Damage to above-ground transmission infrastructure can result in extended power outages.

Public Safety

Public safety facilities and equipment may experience direct loss (damage) from tornadoes.

Shelters and other critical facilities that provide services for people whose property is uninhabitable following a tornado may experience overcrowding and inadequate capacity to provide shelter space and services.

Transportation

Incapacity and loss of roads and bridges are the primary transportation failures resulting from tornadoes, and these failures are primarily associated with secondary hazards, such as landslide events. Tornadoes can cause significant damage to trees and power lines, blocking roads with debris, incapacitating transportation, isolating populations, and disrupting ingress and egress. Of particular concern are bridges and roads providing access to isolated areas and to the elderly. Prolonged obstruction of major routes due to secondary hazards, such as landslides, debris, or floodwaters, can disrupt the shipment of goods and other commerce. If the tornado is strong enough to transport large debris or knock out infrastructure, it can create serious impacts on power and aboveground communication lines.

Water & Wastewater Infrastructure

The hail, wind, debris, and flash flooding associated with tornadoes can cause damage to infrastructure, such as storage tanks, hydrants, residential pumping fixtures, and distribution systems. Water and

wastewater utilities are also vulnerable to potential contamination due to chemical leaks from ruptured containers. Ruptured service lines in damaged buildings and broken hydrants can lead to loss of water and pressure.

Environment

Direct impacts may occur to flora and fauna small enough to be uprooted and transported by the tornado. Even if the winds are not sufficient to transport trees and other large plants, they may still uproot them, causing significant damage to the surrounding habitat. As felled trees decompose, the increased dry matter may increase the threat of wildfire in vegetated areas. Additionally, the loss of root systems increases the potential for soil erosion.

Disturbances created by blowdown events may also impact the biodiversity and composition of the forest ecosystem. Invasive plant species are often able to quickly capitalize on the resources (such as sunlight) available in disturbed and damaged ecosystems. This enables them to gain a foothold and establish quickly with less competition from native species. In addition to damaging existing ecosystems, material transported by tornadoes can also cause environmental havoc in surrounding areas. Particular challenges are presented by the possibility of asbestos-contaminated building materials or other hazardous waste being transported to natural areas or bodies of water, which could then become contaminated. Public drinking water reservoirs may also be damaged by widespread winds uprooting watershed forests and creating serious water quality disturbances.

Vulnerability Summary

Overall, New Salem has a “Low” vulnerability to tornadoes. Tornadoes are not common occurrences in New Salem, but can cause significant damage when they do occur. The cascade effects of tornadoes include utility losses and transportation accidents and flooding. Losses associated with the flood hazard are discussed earlier in this section. Particular areas of vulnerability include low-income and elderly populations, mobile homes, and infrastructure such as roadways and utilities that can be damaged by such storms and the low-lying areas that can be impacted by flooding.



3.8 WILDFIRE

Potential Impacts of Climate Change

Climate change has the potential to affect multiple elements of the wildfire system: fire behavior, ignitions, fire management, and vegetation fuels. Periods of hot, dry weather create the highest fire risk. Therefore, the predicted increase in average and extreme temperatures in the Commonwealth may intensify wildfire danger by warming and drying out vegetation. A recent study published in *the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* found that climate change has likely been a significant contributor to the expansion of wildfires in the western U.S., which have nearly doubled in extent in the past three decades.²⁷ Another study found that the frequency of lightning strikes—an occasional cause of wildfires—could increase by approximately 12 percent for every degree Celsius of warming.²⁸ Finally, the year-round increase in temperatures is likely to expand the duration of the fire season.

Climate change is also interacting with existing stressors to forests, making them more vulnerable to wildfire. Drought, invasive species, and extreme weather events, all can lead to more dead, downed, or dying trees, increasing the fire load in a forest.

Figure 3-12: Impacts of Climate Change on Wildfires

Potential Effects of Climate Change		
	RISING TEMPERATURES AND CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION → PROLONGED DROUGHT	Seasonal drought risk is projected to increase during summer and fall in the Northeast as higher temperatures lead to greater evaporation and earlier winter and spring snowmelt, coupled with more variable precipitation patterns. Drought and warmer temperatures may also heighten the risk of wildfire, by causing forested areas to dry out and become more flammable.
	RISING TEMPERATURES → MORE FREQUENT LIGHTNING	Research has found that the frequency of lightning strikes – an occasional cause of wildfires – could increase by approximately 12 percent for every degree Celsius of warming.

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

A wildfire can be defined as any non-structure fire that occurs in vegetative wildland that contains grass, shrub, leaf litter, and forested tree fuels. Wildfires in Massachusetts are caused by natural events, human activity, or prescribed fire. Wildfires often begin unnoticed but spread quickly, igniting brush, trees, and potentially homes. The wildfire season in Massachusetts usually begins in late March and typically culminates in early June, corresponding with the driest live fuel moisture periods of the year.

²⁷ Abatzoglou, J.T. and Williams, A.P. 2016. Impact of anthropogenic climate change on wildfire across western US forests 2016 113 (42) 11770-11775; published ahead of print October 10, 2016, doi:10.1073/pnas.1607171113

²⁸ Romps, D.M. et al. 2014. Projected increase in lightning strikes in the United States due to global warming. Science. November 14, 2014. <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/346/6211/851>

April is historically the month in which wildfire danger is the highest. Drought, snowpack level, and local weather conditions can impact the length of the fire season.

Fire Ecology and Wildfire Behavior

The “wildfire behavior triangle” reflects how three primary factors influence wildfire behavior: fuel, topography, and weather. Each point of the triangle represents one of the three factors, and arrows along the sides represent the interplay between the factors. For example, drier and warmer weather with low relative humidity combined with dense fuel loads and steeper slopes can result in dangerous to extreme fire behavior.

How a fire behaves primarily depends on the characteristics of available fuel, weather conditions, and terrain, as described below.

- Fuel:
 - Lighter fuels such as grasses, leaves, and needles quickly expel moisture and burn rapidly, while heavier fuels such as tree branches, logs, and trunks take longer to warm and ignite.
 - Snags and hazard trees, especially those that are diseased or dying, become receptive to ignition when influenced by environmental factors such as drought, low humidity, and warm temperatures.
- Weather:
 - Strong winds, especially wind events that persist for long periods or ones with significant sustained wind speeds, can exacerbate extreme fire conditions or accelerate the spread of wildfire.
 - Dry spring and summer conditions, or drought at any point of the year, increases fire risk. Similarly, the passage of a dry, cold front through the region can result in sudden wind speed increases and changes in wind direction.
 - Thunderstorms in Massachusetts are usually accompanied by rainfall; however, during periods of drought, lightning from thunderstorm cells can result in fire ignition. Thunderstorms with little or no rainfall are rare in New England, but have occurred.
- Terrain:
 - Topography of a region or a local area influences the amount and moisture of fuel.
 - Barriers such as highways and lakes can affect the spread of fire.
 - Elevation and slope of landforms can influence fire behavior because fire spreads more easily uphill compared to downhill.

The wildland-urban interface is the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. There are a number of reasons that

the wildland-urban interface experiences an increased risk of wildfire damage. Access and fire suppression issues on private property in the wildland-urban interface can make protecting structures from wildfires difficult. This zone also faces increased risk because structures are built in densely wooded areas, so fires started on someone's property are more easily spread to the surrounding forest.

Fire is also used extensively as a land management tool to replicate natural fire cycles, and it has been used to accomplish both fire-dependent ecosystem restoration and hazard fuel mitigation objectives on federal, state, municipal, and private lands in Massachusetts since the 1980s. For example, over the past 16 years, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) has used a combination of tree harvesting, shrub mowing, and prescribed burning to benefit rare species and to reduce the risk of a catastrophic wildfire in the Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area, a rare pitch pine-scrub oak forest in Montague. Approximately 880 acres have been treated since 2004 to restore woodland and shrubland habitats. MassWildlife has cooperative agreements with the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Town of Montague Conservation Commission to restore sandplain habitats on their inholdings within the plains, and works closely with local fire departments and the DCR Bureau of Fire Control to ensure that firefighters have adequate access in the event of a wildfire and are familiar with the changes in vegetation and fuels resulting from habitat management activities.²⁹

In Massachusetts, the DCR Bureau of Forest Fire Control is the state agency responsible for protecting 3.5 million acres of state, public, and private wooded land and for providing aid, assistance, and advice to the Commonwealth's cities and towns. The Bureau coordinates efforts with a number of entities, including fire departments, local law enforcement agencies, the Commonwealth's county and statewide civil defense agencies and mutual aid assistance organizations.

Bureau units respond to all fires that occur on state-owned forestland and are available to municipal fire departments for mutual assistance. Bureau firefighters are trained in the use of forestry tools, water pumps, brush breakers, and other motorized equipment, as well as in fire behavior and fire safety. Massachusetts also benefits from mutual aid agreements with other state and federal agencies. The Bureau is a member of the Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Commission, a commission organized in 1949 by the New England states, New York, and four eastern Canadian Provinces to provide resources and assistance in the event of large wildfires.

Massachusetts DCR also has a long-standing cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service both for providing qualified wildfire-fighters for assistance throughout the U.S. and for receiving federal assistance within the Commonwealth. Improved coordination and management efforts seem to be reducing the average damage from wildfire events. According to the Bureau's website, in 1911, more than 34 acres were burned on average during each wildfire. As of 2017, that figure has been reduced to 1.17 acres.

²⁹ "Background information on Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area," MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, as published in the *2018 Montague Open Space and Recreation Plan*.

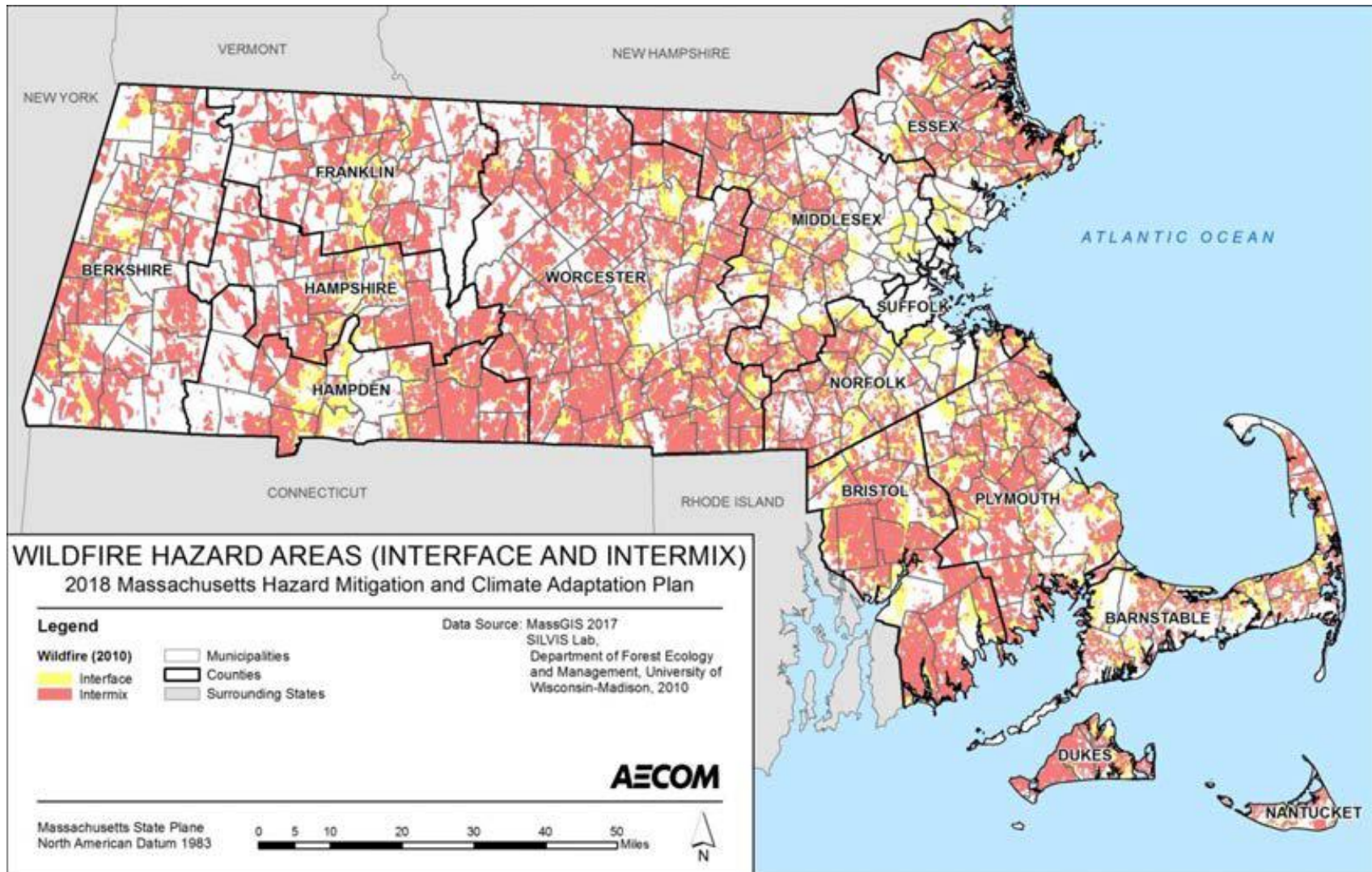
Location

The ecosystems that are most susceptible to the wildfire hazard are pitch pine, scrub oak, and oak forests, as these areas contain the most flammable vegetative fuels. Other portions of the Commonwealth are also susceptible to wildfire, particularly at the urban-wildland interface. The SILVIS Lab at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Forest Ecology and Management classifies exposure to wildfire hazard as “interface” or “intermix.” Intermix communities are those where housing and vegetation intermingle and where the area includes more than 50 percent vegetation and has a housing density greater than one house per 16 hectares (approximately 6.5 acres). Interface communities are defined as those in the vicinity of contiguous vegetation, with more than one house per 40 acres and less than 50 percent vegetation, and within 1.5 miles of an area of more than 500 hectares (approximately 202 acres) that is more than 75 percent vegetated. These areas are shown in Figure 3-13. Inventoried assets (population, building stock, and critical facilities) were overlaid with these data to determine potential exposure and impacts related to this hazard. New Salem has several areas of “intermix” zones within town.

The Northeast Wildfire Risk Assessment Geospatial Work Group completed a geospatial analysis of fire risk in the 20-state U.S. Forest Service Northeastern Area. The assessment is comprised of three components—fuels, wildland-urban interface, and topography (slope and aspect)—that are combined using a weighted overlay to identify wildfire-prone areas where hazard mitigation practices would be most effective. Figure 3-14 illustrates the areas identified for the Commonwealth. New Salem mostly falls within the “High” wildfire risk area. The entire town of New Salem, which is approximately 90% forested, is at risk for wildfire.

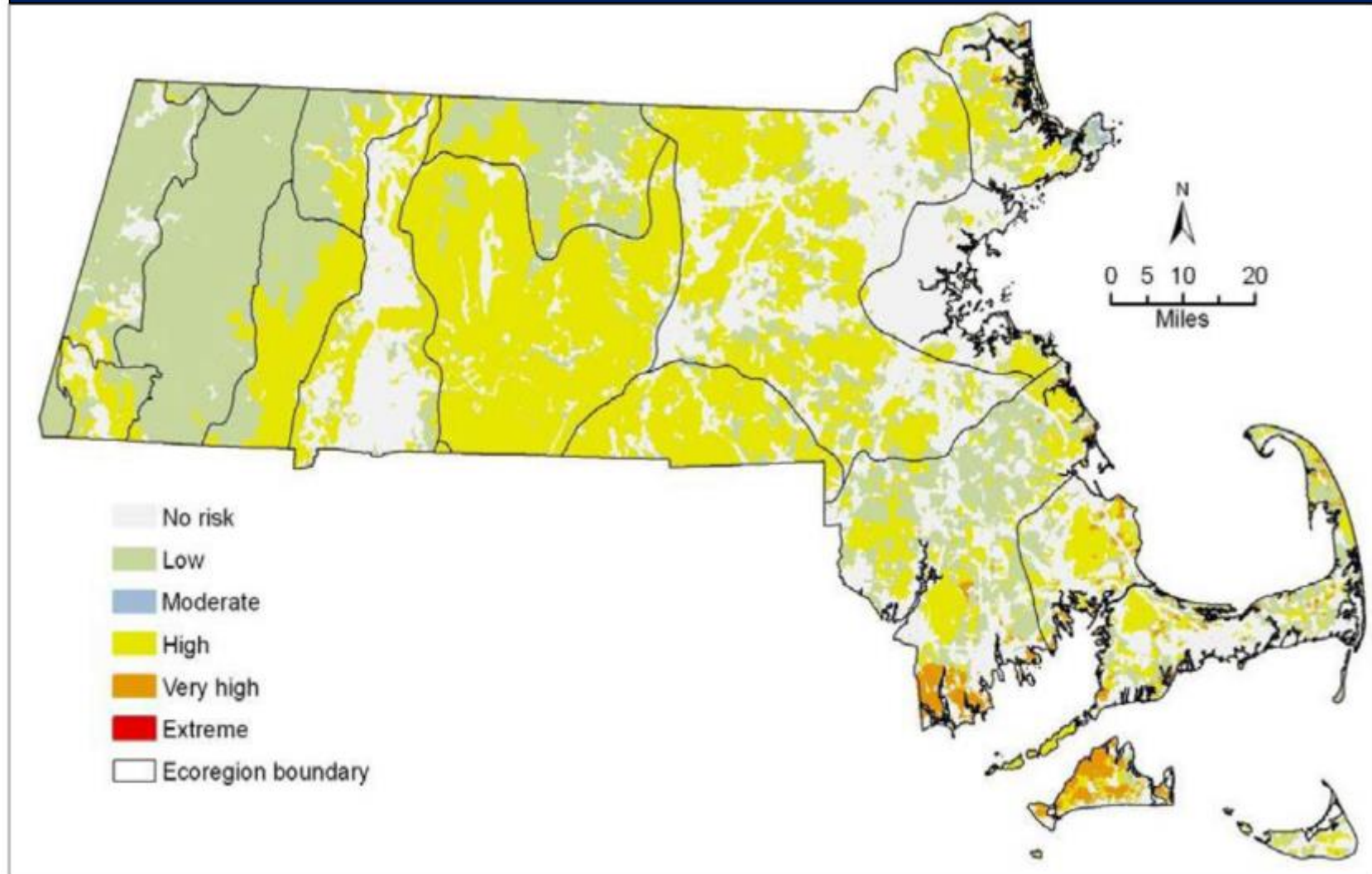
Early detection of wildfires is a key part of the Bureau’s overall effort. Early detection is achieved by trained Bureau observers who staff the statewide network of 42 operating fire towers. During periods of high fire danger, the Bureau conducts county-based fire patrols in forested areas. These patrols assist cities and towns in prevention efforts and allow for the quick deployment of mobile equipment for suppression of fires during their initial stage. Figure 3-15 displays the Bureau’s fire control districts and fire towers in Massachusetts.

Figure 3-13: Wildland-Urban Interface and Intermix for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts



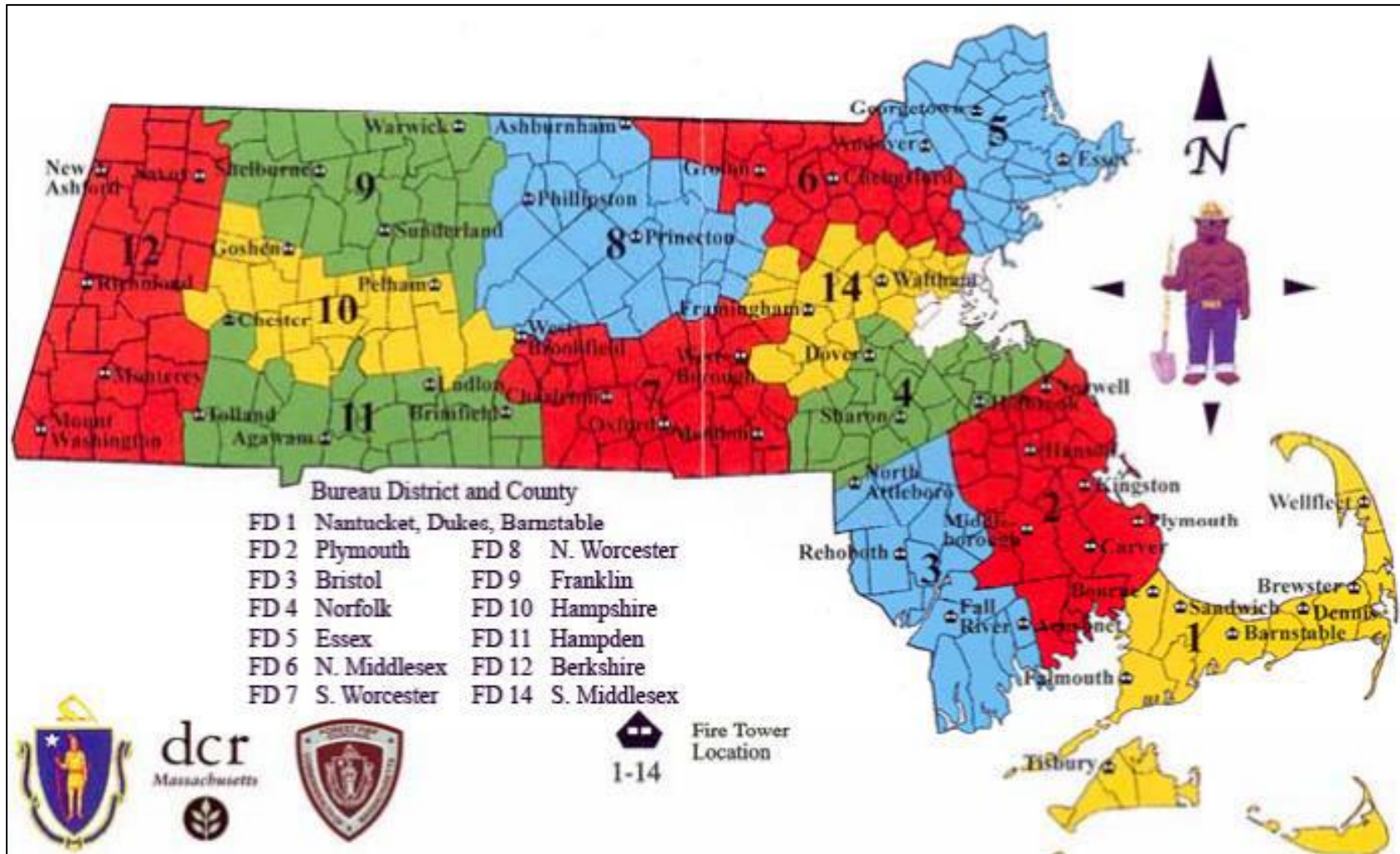
Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Figure 3-14: Wildfire Risk Areas for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Source: Northeast Wildfire Risk Assessment Geospatial Work Group, 2009, as presented in the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, September 2018.

Figure 3-15: Massachusetts Bureau of Forest Fire Control Districts and Tower Network



Source: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Bureau of Forest Fire Control, 2018, as presented in the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, September 2018.

Extent

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group defines seven classes of wildfires:

- Class A: 0.25 acre or less
- Class B: more than 0.25 acre, but less than 10 acres
- Class C: 10 acres or more, but less than 100 acres
- Class D: 100 acres or more, but less than 300 acres
- Class E: 300 acres or more, but less than 1,000 acres
- Class F: 1,000 acres or more, but less than 5,000 acres
- Class G: 5,000 acres or more.

Unfragmented and heavily forested areas of the state are vulnerable to wildfires, particularly during droughts. The greatest potential for significant damage to life and property from fire exists in areas designated as wildland-urban interface areas. A wildland-urban interface area defines the conditions where highly flammable vegetation is adjacent to developed areas.

Fires can be classified by physical parameters such as their fireline intensity, or Byram's intensity, which is the rate of energy per unit length of the fire front (BTU [British thermal unit] per foot of fireline per second). Wildfires are also measured by their behavior, including total heat release during burnout of fuels (BTU per square foot) and whether they are crown-, ground-, or surface-burning fires. Following a fire event, the severity of the fire can be measured by the extent of mortality and survival of plant and animal life aboveground and belowground and by the loss of organic matter.³⁰

If a fire breaks out and spreads rapidly, residents may need to evacuate within days or hours. A fire's peak burning period generally is between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Once a fire has started, fire alerting is reasonably rapid in most cases. The rapid spread of cellular and two-way radio communications in recent years has further contributed to a significant improvement in warning time.

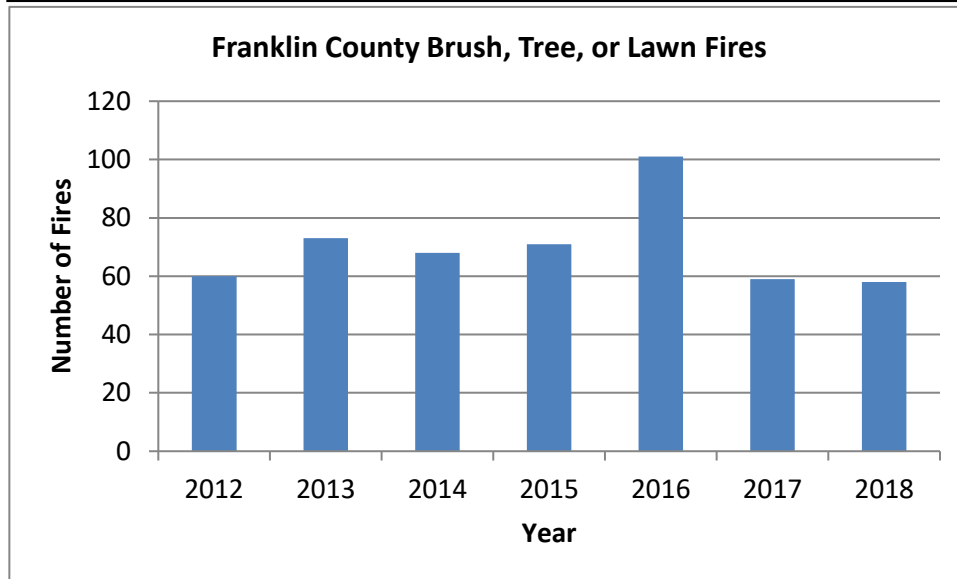
Previous Occurrences

From 2012 to 2018³¹ Franklin County has averaged 75 brush, tree, or lawn fires a year, with the highest reported number of fires occurring in 2016 (Figure 3-16). During 2016, Franklin County and Massachusetts experienced one of the worst droughts in the last 50 years.

³⁰National Parks Service (NPS), compiled by George Wooten. n.d. Fire and fuels management: Definitions, ambiguous terminology and references. <https://www.nps.gov/olym/learn/management/upload/fire-wildfire-definitions-2.pdf>

³¹ County data profiles from the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System have been published through 2018 as of December 2020.

Figure 3-16: Outdoor Vegetation Fires in Franklin County 2012 - 2018



Source: Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System County Profiles.

While wildfires have not been a significant problem in New Salem, there is always a possibility that changing land use patterns and weather conditions will increase a community's vulnerability. For example, drought conditions can make forests and other open, vegetated areas more vulnerable to ignition. Once the fire starts, it will burn hotter and be harder to extinguish. Soils and root systems starved for moisture are also vulnerable to fire. Residential growth in rural, forested areas increases the total area that is vulnerable to fire and places homes and neighborhoods closer to areas where wildfires are more likely to occur.

The State of Massachusetts experienced another prolonged drought during the summer of 2020. The dry conditions led to over 1,000 fires across the Commonwealth, including two large wildfires in the nearby communities of Leverett and Orange. The fire in Leverett burned over 60 acres near Joshua Hill and took firefighting crews nearly a month to extinguish. The wildfire in Orange on Tully Mountain burned a similar amount of land, and the dry conditions led to the fire burning nearly a foot into the ground, which complicated firefighting efforts. Across the region, buildup of twigs, pine needles, and other debris has turned forest floors into "tinderboxes" and increases the region's vulnerability to wildfires.

Probability of Future Events

It is difficult to predict the likelihood of wildfires in a probabilistic manner because a number of factors affect fire potential and because some conditions (e.g., ongoing land use development patterns, location, and fuel sources) exert changing pressure on the wildland-urban interface zone.

However, based on the best available climate data that predicts a greater occurrence of prolonged

droughts, New Salem has a “Very High” probability (50-100% chance) that it will experience a wildfire in a given year. The Committee and New Salem Fire Department are greatly concerned about the increasing risks associated with wildfires in Franklin County, especially for a Town that is heavily forested like New Salem.

Impact

Unfragmented and heavily forested areas of New Salem are vulnerable to wildfires, particularly during droughts. The greatest potential for significant damage to life and property from fire exists in areas designated as wildland-urban interface areas. A wildland-urban interface area defines the conditions where highly flammable vegetation is adjacent to developed areas. The greatest impact in New Salem from a wildfire is to the natural environment, which faces a “Critical” impact from wildfires, with more than 25% of property in the affected area damaged or destroyed.

Vulnerability

Society

As demonstrated by historical wildfire events, potential losses from wildfire include human health and the lives of residents and responders. The most vulnerable populations include emergency responders and those within a short distance of the interface between the built environment and the wildland environment.

Vulnerable Populations

All individuals whose homes or workplaces are located in wildfire hazard zones are exposed to this hazard, as wildfire behavior can be unpredictable and dynamic. However, the most vulnerable members of this population are those who would be unable to evacuate quickly, including those over the age of 65, households with young children under the age of 5, people with mobility limitations, and people with low socioeconomic status. Landowners with pets or livestock may face additional challenges in evacuating if they cannot easily transport their animals. Outside of the area of immediate impact, sensitive populations, such as those with compromised immune systems or cardiovascular or respiratory diseases, can suffer health impacts from smoke inhalation. Individuals with asthma are more vulnerable to the poor air quality associated with wildfire. Finally, firefighters and first responders are vulnerable to this hazard if they are deployed to fight a fire in an area they would not otherwise be in.

Table 3-29 estimates the number of vulnerable populations and households in New Salem. Individuals and households may fall into multiple categories, so the numbers should not be added. Rather, the table provides Town officials and emergency response personnel with information to help plan for responding to the needs of New Salem residents during a wildfire event.

Table 3-29: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Vulnerable Population Category	Number	Percent of Total Population*
Population Age 65 Years and Over	240	24%
Population with a Disability	138	14%
Population who Speak English Less than "Very Well"	0	0%
Vulnerable Household Category	Number	Percent of Total Households*
Low Income Households (annual income less than \$35,000)	94	21%
Householder Age 65 Years and Over Living Alone	40	9%
Households Without Access to a Vehicle	9	2%

*Total population = 1,009; Total households = 441

Note: Individuals and households may be counted under multiple categories.

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019 Five-Year Estimates.

Health Impacts

Smoke and air pollution from wildfires can be a severe health hazard. Smoke generated by wildfire consists of visible and invisible emissions containing particulate matter (soot, tar, and minerals), gases (water vapor, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide (CO₂), and nitrogen oxides), and toxics (formaldehyde and benzene). Emissions from wildfires depend on the type of fuel, the moisture content of the fuel, the efficiency (or temperature) of combustion, and the weather. Other public health impacts associated with wildfire include difficulty in breathing, reactions to odor, and reduction in visibility. Due to the high prevalence of asthma in Massachusetts, there is a high incidence of emergency department visits when respiratory irritants like smoke envelop an area. Wildfires may also threaten the health and safety of those fighting the fires. First responders are exposed to dangers from the initial incident and the aftereffects of smoke inhalation and heat-related illness.

Economic Impacts

Wildfire events can have major economic impacts on a community, both from the initial loss of structures and the subsequent loss of revenue from destroyed businesses and a decrease in tourism. Individuals and families also face economic risk if their home is impacted by wildfire. The exposure of homes to this hazard is widespread. Additionally, wildfires can require thousands of taxpayer dollars in fire response efforts and can involve hundreds of operating hours on fire apparatus and thousands of man-hours from volunteer firefighters. There are also many direct and indirect costs to local businesses that excuse volunteers from work to fight these fires.

Infrastructure

For the purposes of this planning effort, all elements of the built environment located in the wildland

interface and intermix areas are considered exposed to the wildfire hazard. Table 3-30 identifies the assessed value of all residential, open space, commercial, and industrial land uses in Town, and the losses that would result from 1%, 5%, and 10% damage to this inventory as a result of a wildfire.

Table 3-30: Estimated Potential Loss by Tax Classification in New Salem				
Tax Classification	Total Assessed Value FY2019	1% Damage Loss Estimate	5% Damage Loss Estimate	10% Damage Loss Estimate
Residential	\$104,804,150	\$1,048,042	\$5,240,208	\$10,480,415
Open Space	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Commercial	\$1,658,152	\$16,582	\$82,908	\$165,815
Industrial	\$918,100	\$9,181	\$45,905	\$91,810
Total	\$107,380,402	\$1,073,804	\$5,369,020	\$10,738,040

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue - Division of Local Services, Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section.

Agriculture

While Massachusetts does not experience wildfires at the same magnitude as those in western states, wildfires do occur and are a threat to the agriculture sector. The forestry industry is especially vulnerable to wildfires. Barns, other wooden structures, and animals and equipment in these facilities are also susceptible to wildfires.

Energy

Distribution lines are subject to wildfire risk because most poles are made of wood and susceptible to burning. Transmission lines are at risk to faulting during wildfires, which can result in a broad area outage. In the event of a wildfire, pipelines could provide a source of fuel and lead to a catastrophic explosion.

Public Health

As discussed in the Populations section of the wildfire hazard profile, wildfires impact air quality and public health. Widespread air quality impairment can lead to overburdened hospitals.

Public Safety

Wildfire is a threat to emergency responders and all infrastructure within the vicinity of a wildfire.

Transportation

Most road and railroads would be without damage except in the worst scenarios. However, fires can create conditions that block or prevent access, and they can isolate residents and emergency service providers. The wildfire hazard typically does not have a major direct impact on bridges, but wildfires can create conditions in which bridges are obstructed.

Water Infrastructure

In addition to potential direct losses to water infrastructure, wildfires may result in significant withdrawal of water supplies. Coupled with the increased likelihood that drought and wildfire will coincide under the future warmer temperatures associated with climate change, this withdrawal may result in regional water shortages and the need to identify new water sources.

Environment

Fire is a natural part of many ecosystems and serves important ecological purposes, including facilitating the nutrient cycling from dead and decaying matter, removing diseased plants and pests, and regenerating seeds or stimulating germination of certain plants. However, many wildfires, particularly man-made wildfires, can also have significant negative impacts on the environment. In addition to direct mortality, wildfires and the ash they generate can distort the flow of nutrients through an ecosystem, reducing the biodiversity that can be supported.

Frequent wildfires can eradicate native plant species and encourage the growth of fire-resistant invasive species. Some of these invasive species are highly flammable; therefore, their establishment in an area increases the risk of future wildfires. There are other possible feedback loops associated with this hazard. For example, every wildfire contributes to atmospheric CO₂ accumulation, thereby contributing to global warming and increasing the probability of future wildfires (as well as other hazards). There are also risks related to hazardous material releases during a wildfire. During wildfires, containers storing hazardous materials could rupture due to excessive heat and act as fuel for the fire, causing rapid spreading of the wildfire and escalating it to unmanageable levels. In addition, these materials could leak into surrounding areas, saturating soils and seeping into surface waters to cause severe and lasting environmental damage.

Vulnerability Summary

Based on the above assessment, New Salem faces a “High” vulnerability from wildfire and brushfires. While wildfires have caused minimal damage, injury and loss of life to date in New Salem, their potential to destroy property and cause injury or death exists. Existing and future mitigation efforts should continue to be developed and employed that will enable New Salem to be prepared for these events when they occur. Wildfires can also cause utility disruption and air-quality problems. Particular areas of vulnerability include low-income and elderly populations, and residents living in the interface area adjacent to large areas of unfragmented forests.

3.9 EARTHQUAKES

Potential Impacts of Climate Change

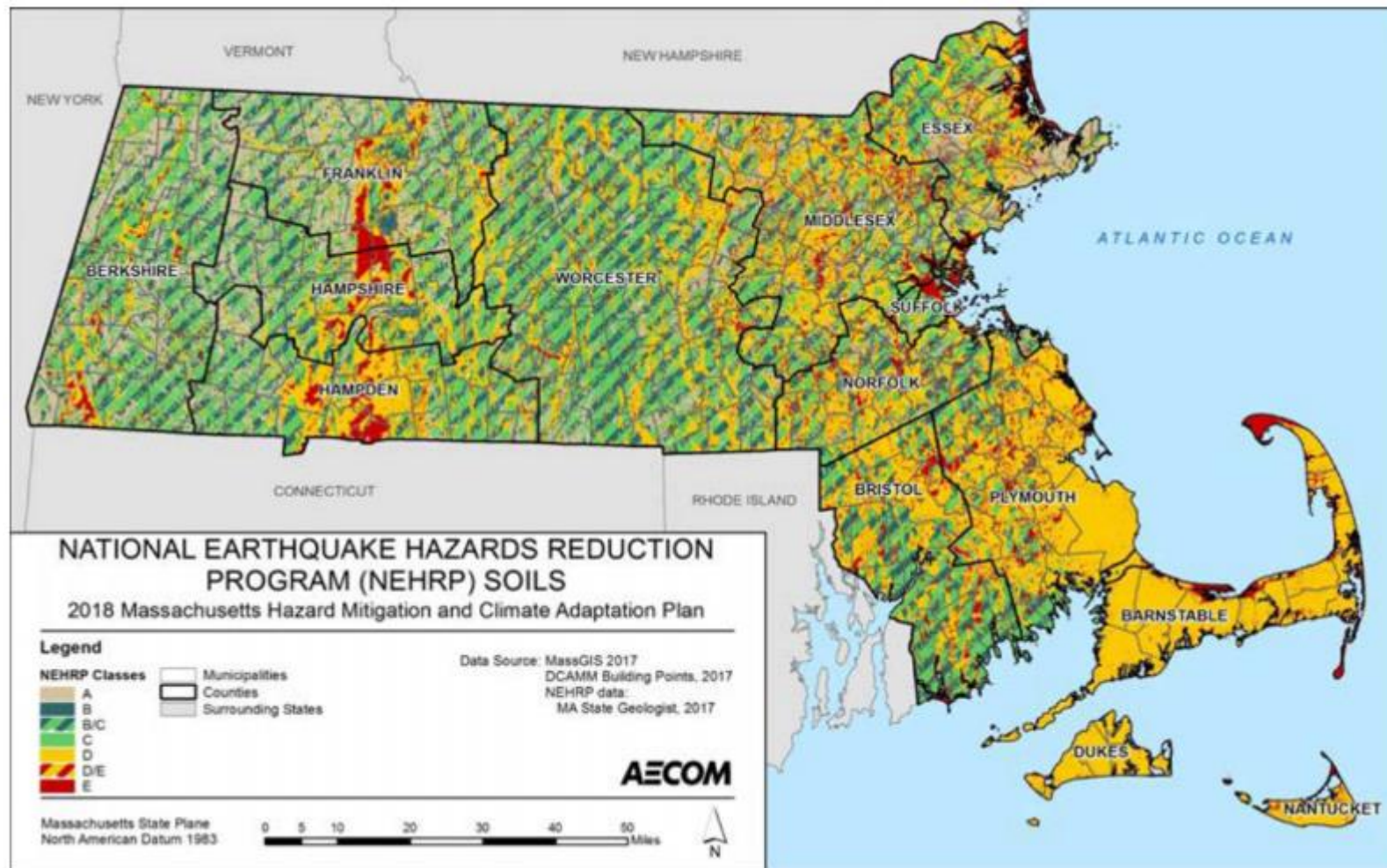
The State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan does not identify any effects of climate change on the earthquake hazard in Massachusetts.

Hazard Description

An earthquake is the vibration of the Earth's surface that follows a release of energy in the Earth's crust. These earthquakes often occur along fault boundaries. As a result, areas that lie along fault boundaries—such as California, Alaska, and Japan—experience earthquakes more often than areas located within the interior portions of these plates. New England, on the other hand, experiences intraplate earthquakes because it is located deep within the interior of the North American plate. Scientists are still exploring the cause of intraplate earthquakes, and many believe these events occur along geological features that were created during ancient times and are now weaker than the surrounding areas.

Ground shaking is the primary cause of earthquake damage to man-made structures. This damage can be increased due to the fact that soft soils amplify ground shaking. A contributor to site amplification is the velocity at which the rock or soil transmits shear waves (S waves). The National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) developed five soil classifications, which are defined by their S-wave velocity, that impact the severity of an earthquake. The soil classification system ranges from A to E, where A represents hard rock that reduces ground motions from an earthquake and E represents soft soils that amplify and magnify ground shaking and increase building damage and losses. These soil types are shown in Figure 3-17.

Figure 3-17: National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Soil Types in Massachusetts



Note: This map should be viewed as a first-order approximation of the NEHRP soil classifications. They are not intended for site-specific engineering design or construction. The map is provided only as a guide for use in estimating potential damage from earthquakes. The maps do not guarantee or predict seismic risk or damage. However, the maps certainly provide a first step by highlighting areas that may warrant additional, site-specific investigation if high seismic risk coincides with critical facilities, utilities, or roadways. Sources: Mabee and Duncan, 2017; Preliminary NEHRP Soil Classification Map of Massachusetts, as presented in the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, September 2018.

Location

New England is located in the middle of the North American Plate. One edge of the North American Plate is along the West Coast where the plate is pushing against the Pacific Ocean Plate. The eastern edge of the North American Plate is located at the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, where the plate is spreading away from the European and African Plates. New England's earthquakes appear to be the result of the cracking of the crustal rocks due to compression as the North American Plate is being very slowly squeezed by the global plate movements. As a result, New England epicenters do not follow the major mapped faults of the region, nor are they confined to particular geologic structures or terrains. Because earthquakes have been detected all over New England, seismologists suspect that a strong earthquake could be centered anywhere in the region. Furthermore, the mapped geologic faults of New England currently do not provide any indications detailing specific locations where strong earthquakes are most likely to be centered.

In addition to earthquakes occurring within the Commonwealth, earthquakes in other parts of New England can impact widespread areas. This is due in part to the fact that earthquakes in the eastern U.S. are felt over a larger area than those in the western U.S. The difference between seismic shaking in the East versus the West is primarily due to the geologic structure and rock properties that allow seismic waves to travel farther without weakening.³²

Because of the regional nature of the hazard, the entire town is susceptible to earthquakes, and the location of occurrence would be "Large," with more than 50% of the town affected.

Extent

The location of an earthquake is commonly described by the geographic position of its epicenter and by its focal depth. The focal depth of an earthquake is the depth from the surface to the region where the earthquake's energy originates (the focus). Earthquakes with focal depths up to about 43.5 miles are classified as shallow. Earthquakes with focal depths of 43.5 to 186 miles are classified as intermediate. The focus of deep earthquakes may reach depths of more than 435 miles. The focus of most earthquakes is concentrated in the upper 20 miles of the Earth's crust. The depth to the Earth's core is about 3,960 miles, so even the deepest earthquakes originate in relatively shallow parts of the Earth's interior. The epicenter of an earthquake is the point on the Earth's surface directly above the focus.

Seismic waves are the vibrations from earthquakes that travel through the Earth and are recorded on instruments called seismographs. The magnitude or extent of an earthquake is a measured value of the amplitude of the seismic waves. The Richter magnitude scale (Richter scale) was developed in 1932 as a mathematical device to compare the sizes of earthquakes. The Richter scale is the most widely known scale for measuring earthquake magnitude. It has no upper limit and is not used to express damage. An earthquake in a densely populated area, which results in many deaths and considerable damage, can have the same magnitude as an earthquake in a remote area that causes no damage.

³² U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). 2012. New Evidence Shows Power of East Coast Earthquakes. Accessed May 6, 2013. <http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3447>

The perceived severity of an earthquake is based on the observed effects of ground shaking on people, buildings, and natural features, and severity varies with location. Intensity is expressed by the Modified Mercalli Scale, which describes how strongly an earthquake was felt at a particular location. The Modified Mercalli Scale expresses the intensity of an earthquake's effects in a given locality in values ranging from I to XII. Seismic hazards are also expressed in terms of PGA, which is defined by USGS as "what is experienced by a particle on the ground" in terms of percent of acceleration force of gravity. More precisely, seismic hazards are described in terms of Spectral Acceleration, which is defined by USGS as "approximately what is experienced by a building, as modeled by a particle on a massless vertical rod having the same natural period of vibration as the building" in terms of percent of acceleration force of gravity (percent g). Tables 3-31 and 3-32 summarize the Richter scale magnitudes, Modified Mercalli Intensity scale, and associated damage.

Table 3-31: Richter Scale Magnitudes and Effects	
Magnitude	Effects
< 3.5	Generally not felt, but recorded.
3.5 - 5.4	Often felt, but rarely causes damage.
5.4 - 6.0	At most slight damage to well-designed buildings. Can cause major damage to poorly constructed buildings over small regions.
6.1 - 6.9	Can be destructive in areas up to about 100 kilometers across where people live.
7.0 - 7.9	Major earthquake. Can cause serious damage over larger areas.
8 or >	Great earthquake. Can cause serious damage in areas several hundred kilometers across.

Source: US Federal Emergency Management Agency

Table 3-32: Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale for and Effects			
Scale	Intensity	Description of Effects	Corresponding Richter Scale Magnitude
I	Instrumental	Detected only on seismographs.	
II	Feeble	Some people feel it.	< 4.2
III	Slight	Felt by people resting; like a truck rumbling by.	
IV	Moderate	Felt by people walking.	
V	Slightly Strong	Sleepers awake; church bells ring.	< 4.8
VI	Strong	Trees sway; suspended objects swing, objects fall off shelves.	< 5.4
VII	Very Strong	Mild alarm; walls crack; plaster falls.	< 6.1

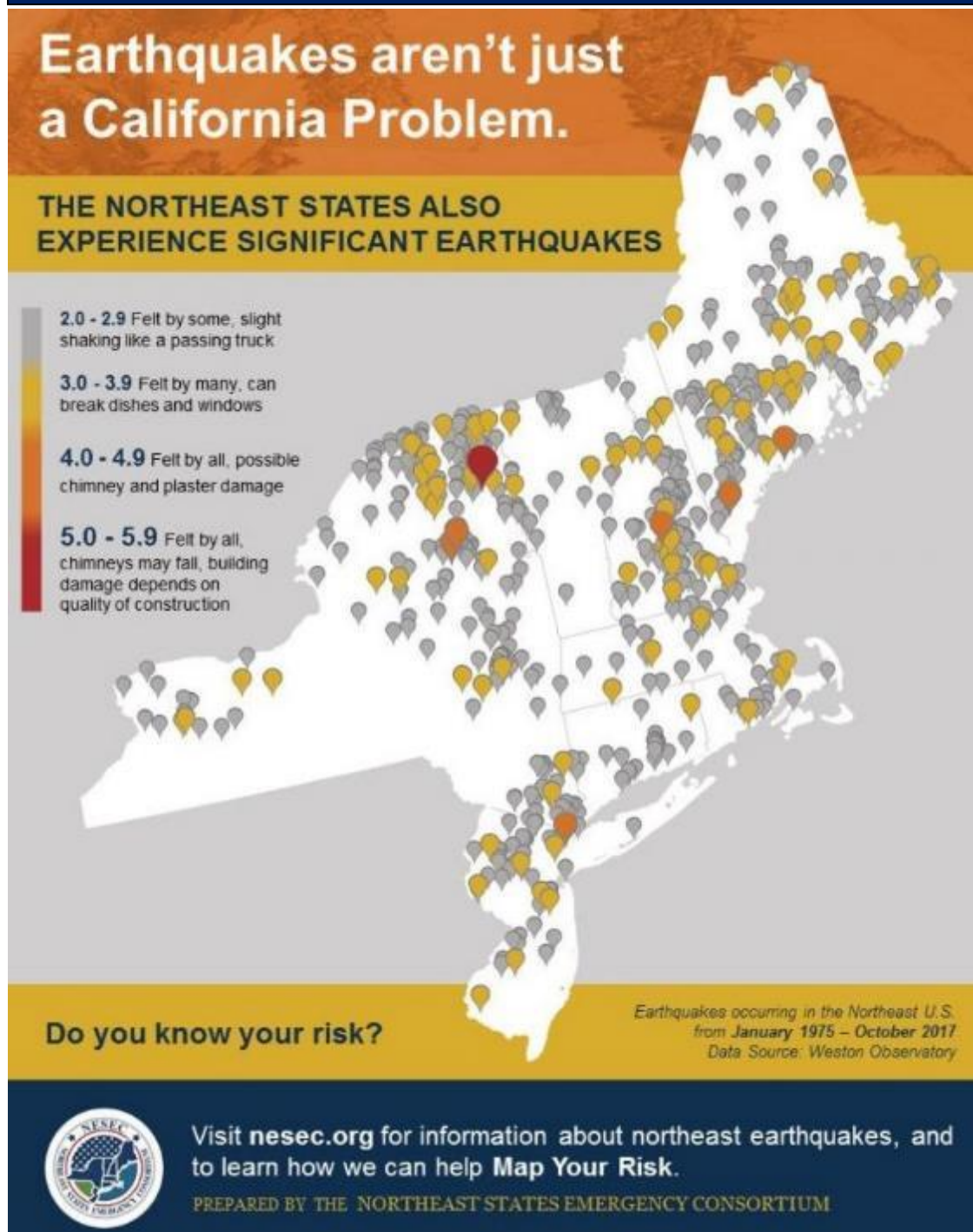
Table 3-32: Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale for and Effects			
VIII	Destructive	Moving cars uncontrollable; masonry fractures, poorly constructed buildings damaged.	
IX	Ruinous	Some houses collapse; ground cracks; pipes break open.	< 6.9
X	Disastrous	Ground cracks profusely; many buildings destroyed; liquefaction and landslides widespread.	< 7.3
XI	Very Disastrous	Most buildings and bridges collapse; roads, railways, pipes and cables destroyed; general triggering of other hazards.	< 8.1
XII	Catastrophic	Total destruction; trees fall; ground rises and falls in waves.	> 8.1

Source: US Federal Emergency Management Agency

Previous Occurrences

Although it is well documented that the zone of greatest seismic activity in the U.S. is along the Pacific Coast in Alaska and California, in the New England area, an average of six earthquakes are felt each year (Figure 3-18). Damaging earthquakes have taken place historically in New England (Table 3-33). According to the Weston Observatory Earthquake Catalog, 6,470 earthquakes have occurred in New England and adjacent areas. However, only 35 of these events were considered significant. The most recent earthquakes in the region that could have affected the Town of New Salem are shown in Figure 3-18. There is no record of any damage to the Town of New Salem as a result of these earthquakes.

Figure 3-18: Earthquakes Occurring in the Northeast from 1975 - 2017



Source: Northeast States Emergency Consortium (NESEC) <http://nsec.org/earthquakes-hazards/>.

Table 3-33: Northeast States Record of Historic Earthquakes			
State	Years of Record	Number of Earthquakes	Years with Damaging Earthquakes
Connecticut	1678 - 2016	115	1791
Maine	1766 - 2016	454	1973, 1904
Massachusetts	1668 - 2016	408	1727, 1755
New Hampshire	1638 - 2016	320	1638, 1940
Rhode Island	1766 - 2016	34	
Vermont	1843 - 2016	50	
New York	1737 - 2016	551	1737, 1929, 1944, 1983, 2002
<i>Total Number of Earthquakes felt: 1,932</i>			

Source: Northeast States Emergency Consortium website, <http://nesec.org/earthquakes-hazards/>

Probability of Future Events

Earthquakes cannot be predicted and may occur at any time. However, a 1994 report by the USGS, based on a meeting of experts at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, provides an overall probability of occurrence. Earthquakes above magnitude 5.0 have the potential for causing damage near their epicenters, and larger magnitude earthquakes have the potential for causing damage over larger areas. This report found that the probability of a magnitude 5.0 or greater earthquake centered somewhere in New England in a 10-year period is about 10 percent to 15 percent. This probability rises to about 41 percent to 56 percent for a 50-year period. The last earthquake with a magnitude above 5.0 that was centered in New England took place in the Ossipee Mountains of New Hampshire in 1940. Based on past events, New Salem has “Low” probability, or a 1-2% chance in a given year, of being impacted by an earthquake.

Impact

Ground shaking from earthquakes can rupture gas mains and disrupt other utility service, damage buildings, bridges and roads, and trigger other hazardous events such as avalanches, flash floods (dam failure) and fires. Un-reinforced masonry buildings, buildings with foundations that rest on filled land or unconsolidated, unstable soil, and mobile homes not tied to their foundations are at risk during an earthquake. Massachusetts introduced earthquake design requirements into the building code in 1975 and improved building code for seismic reasons in the 1980s. However, these specifications apply only to new buildings or to extensively-modified existing buildings. Buildings, bridges, water supply lines, electrical power lines and facilities built before the 1980s may not have been designed to withstand the forces of an earthquake. The seismic standards have also been upgraded with the 1997 revision of the State Building Code. Liquefaction of the land near water could also lead to extensive destruction.

Depending on the magnitude of the earthquake, New Salem could face “Catastrophic” impacts from earthquakes, with more than 50% of property damaged in the affected area.

Vulnerability

Society

The entire population of New Salem is potentially exposed to direct and indirect impacts from earthquakes. The degree of exposure depends on many factors, including the age and construction type of the structures where people live, work, and go to school; the soil type these buildings are constructed on; and the proximity of these building to the fault location. In addition, the time of day also exposes different sectors of the community to the hazard. There are many ways in which earthquakes could impact the lives of residents. Business interruptions could keep people from working, road closures could isolate populations, and loss of utilities could impact populations that suffered no direct damage from an event itself. People who reside or work in unreinforced masonry buildings are vulnerable to liquefaction.

Vulnerable Populations

The populations most vulnerable to an earthquake event include people over the age of 65 (24% of New Salem's population) and those living below the poverty level (21% of New Salem's total households). These socially vulnerable populations are most susceptible, based on a number of factors, including their physical and financial ability to react or respond during a hazard, the location and construction quality of their housing, and the inability to be self-sustaining after an incident due to a limited ability to stockpile supplies. Residents living in homes built prior to the 1970s when the State building code first went into effect, and residents living in mobile homes, are also more vulnerable to earthquakes. An estimated 40% of all housing units in Town, were built prior to the 1970s when the first building code went into effect in Massachusetts. An estimated 15 mobile homes are located in New Salem, accounting for 3 percent of the total housing stock.³³

Health Impacts

The most immediate health risk presented by the earthquake hazard is trauma-related injuries and fatalities, either from structural collapse, impacts from nonstructural items such as furniture, or the secondary effects of earthquakes, such as landslides and fires. Following a severe earthquake, health impacts related to transportation impediments and lack of access to hospitals may occur, as described for other hazards. If ground movement causes hazardous material (in storage areas or in pipelines) to enter the environment, additional health impacts could result, particularly if surface water, groundwater, or agricultural areas are contaminated.

Economic Impacts

Earthquakes also have impacts on the economy, including loss of business functions, damage to inventories, relocation costs, wage losses, and rental losses due to the repair or replacement of buildings. Lifeline-related losses include the direct repair cost for transportation and utility systems. Additionally, economic losses include the business interruption losses associated with the inability to operate a business due to the damage sustained during the earthquake as well as temporary living

³³ U.S. Census Bureau 2015-2019 American Community Survey five-year estimates.

expenses for those displaced.

Infrastructure

All elements of the built environment in New Salem are exposed to the earthquake hazard. Table 3-34 identifies the assessed value of all residential, open space, commercial, and industrial land uses in Town, and the losses that would result from 1%, 5%, and 10% damage to this inventory as a result of an earthquake.

Table 3-34: Estimated Potential Loss by Tax Classification in New Salem				
Tax Classification	Total Assessed Value FY2019	1% Damage Loss Estimate	5% Damage Loss Estimate	10% Damage Loss Estimate
Residential	\$104,804,150	\$1,048,042	\$5,240,208	\$10,480,415
Open Space	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Commercial	\$1,658,152	\$16,582	\$82,908	\$165,815
Industrial	\$918,100	\$9,181	\$45,905	\$91,810
Total	\$107,380,402	\$1,073,804	\$5,369,020	\$10,738,040

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue - Division of Local Services, Municipal Databank/Local Aid Section.

In addition to these direct impacts, there is increased risk associated with hazardous materials releases, which have the potential to occur during an earthquake from fixed facilities, transportation-related incidents (vehicle transportation), and pipeline distribution. These failures can lead to the release of materials to the surrounding environment, including potentially catastrophic discharges into the atmosphere or nearby waterways, and can disrupt services well beyond the primary area of impact.

Agriculture

Earthquakes can result in loss of crop yields, loss of livestock, and damage to barns, processing facilities, greenhouses, equipment, and other agricultural infrastructure. Earthquakes can be especially damaging to farms and forestry if they trigger a landslide.

Energy

Earthquakes can damage power plants, gas lines, liquid fuel storage infrastructure, transmission lines, utility poles, solar and wind infrastructure, and other elements of the energy sector. Damage to any components of the grid can result in widespread power outages.

Public Health

A significant earthquake may result in numerous injuries that could overburden hospitals.

Public Safety

Police stations, fire stations, and other public safety infrastructure can experience direct losses (damage)

from earthquakes. The capability of the public safety sector is also vulnerable to damage caused by earthquakes to roads and the transportation sector.

Transportation

Earthquakes can impact many aspects of the transportation sector, including causing damage to roads, bridges, vehicles, and storage facilities and sheds. Damage to road networks and bridges can cause widespread disruption of services and impede disaster recovery and response.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Due to their extensive networks of aboveground and belowground infrastructure—including pipelines, pump stations, tanks, administrative and laboratory buildings, reservoirs, chemical storage facilities, and treatment facilities—water and wastewater utilities are vulnerable to earthquakes. Additionally, sewer and water treatment facilities are often built on ground that is subject to liquefaction, increasing their vulnerability. Earthquakes can cause ruptures in storage and process tanks, breaks in pipelines, and building collapse, resulting in loss of water and loss of pressure, and contamination and disruption of drinking water services. Damage to wastewater infrastructure can lead to sewage backups and releases of untreated sewage into the environment.

Environment

Earthquakes can impact natural resources and the environment in a number of ways, both directly and through secondary impacts. For example, damage to gas pipes may cause explosions or leaks, which can discharge hazardous materials into the local environment or the watershed if rivers are contaminated. Fires that break out as a result of earthquakes can cause extensive damage to ecosystems, as described in the Wildfire section. Primary impacts of an earthquake vary widely based on strength and location. For example, if strong shaking occurs in a forest, trees may fall, resulting not only in environmental impacts but also potential economic impacts to the landowner or forestry businesses relying on that forest. If shaking occurs in a mountainous environment, cliffs may crumble and caves may collapse. Disrupting the physical foundation of the ecosystem can modify the species balance in that ecosystem and leave the area more vulnerable to the spread of invasive species.

Vulnerability Summary

Based on this analysis, New Salem has a "Low" vulnerability to earthquakes.

3.10 DAM FAILURE

Potential Impacts of Climate Change

The State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan does not identify any effects of climate change on the dam failure hazard in Massachusetts.

Hazard Description

Dams and levees and their associated impoundments provide many benefits to a community, such as water supply, recreation, hydroelectric power generation, and flood control. However, they also pose a potential risk to lives and property. Dam or levee failure is not a common occurrence, but dams do represent a potentially disastrous hazard. When a dam or levee fails, the potential energy of the stored water behind the dam is released rapidly. Most dam or levee failures occur when floodwaters above overtop and erode the material components of the dam. Often dam or levee breeches lead to catastrophic consequences as the water rushes in a torrent downstream, flooding an area engineers refer to as an “inundation area.” The number of casualties and the amount of property damage will depend upon the timing of the warning provided to downstream residents, the number of people living or working in the inundation area, and the number of structures in the inundation area.

Many dams in Massachusetts were built during the 19th Century without the benefit of modern engineering design and construction oversight. Dams of this age can fail because of structural problems due to age and/or lack of proper maintenance, as well as from structural damage caused by an earthquake or flooding.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Office of Dam Safety is the agency responsible for regulating dams in the state (M.G.L. Chapter 253, Section 44 and the implementing regulations 302 CMR 10.00). The regulations apply to dams that are in excess of 6 feet in height (regardless of storage capacity) or have more than 15 acre feet of storage capacity (regardless of height). Dam safety regulations enacted in 2005 transferred significant responsibilities for dams from the State of Massachusetts to dam owners, including the responsibility to conduct dam inspections.

Location

The Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) Plan for New Salem does not list any dams in the Town of New Salem. According to information provided by the MA DCR Office of Dam Safety, there are no dams in New Salem. The closest dams classified as a Significant Hazard are the Mattawa North Dam and Mattawa South Dam in Orange, but the Committee determined New Salem would not be impacted should either of those dams fail.

As described in the Flooding section, beaver issues have largely been remediated in New Salem. There is one beaver dam located on Shutesbury Road, but a beaver deceiver was installed and the Town contracted a company to check on it annually. The Conservation Commission keeps track and reports other issues, but overall this is not a large concern to the Town.

Extent

Often dam or levee breaches lead to catastrophic consequences as the water ultimately rushes in a torrent downstream flooding an area engineers refer to as an “inundation area.” The number of casualties and the amount of property damage will depend upon the timing of the warning provided to downstream residents, the number of people living or working in the inundation area, and the number of structures in the inundation area.

Dams in Massachusetts are assessed according to their risk to life and property. The state has three hazard classifications for dams:

- *High Hazard:* Dams located where failure or improper operation will likely cause loss of life and serious damage to homes, industrial or commercial facilities, important public utilities, main highways, or railroads.
- *Significant Hazard:* Dams located where failure or improper operation may cause loss of life and damage to homes, industrial or commercial facilities, secondary highways or railroads or cause interruption of use or service of relatively important facilities.
- *Low Hazard:* Dams located where failure or improper operation may cause minimal property damage to others. Loss of life is not expected.

Owners of dams are required to hire a qualified engineer to inspect and report results using the following inspection schedule:

- Low Hazard Potential dams – 10 years
- Significant Hazard Potential dams – 5 years
- High Hazard Potential dams – 2 years

The time intervals represent the maximum time between inspections. More frequent inspections may be performed at the discretion of the state. As noted previously, dams and reservoirs licensed and subject to inspection by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) are excluded from the provisions of the state regulations provided that all FERC-approved periodic inspection reports are provided to the DCR. FERC inspections of high and significant hazard projects are conducted on a yearly basis. All other dams are subject to the regulations unless exempted in writing by DCR.

Previous Occurrences

No dam failures or failure of beaver dams have occurred since the 2014 plan.

Probability of Future Events

Currently the frequency of dam failures is “Low” with a 1-2 percent chance of a dam failing in any given year.

Dams are designed partly based on assumptions about a river's flow behavior, expressed as hydrographs. Changes in weather patterns can have significant effects on the hydrograph used for the design of a dam. If the hydrograph changes, it is conceivable that the dam can lose some or all of its designed margin of safety, also known as freeboard. If freeboard is reduced, dam operators may be forced to release increased volumes earlier in a storm cycle in order to maintain the required margins of safety. Such early releases of increased volumes can increase flood potential downstream.

Throughout the western United States, communities downstream of dams are already seeing increases in stream flows from earlier releases from dams. Dams are constructed with safety features known as "spillways." Spillways are put in place on dams as a safety measure in the event of the reservoir filling too quickly. Spillway overflow events often referred to as "design failures," result in increased discharges downstream and increased flooding potential. Although climate change will not increase the probability of catastrophic dam failure, it may increase the probability of design failures.

Impact

A dam failure impacting New Salem is likely to have a Critical impact, with more than 25% of property in the affected area damaged or destroyed, and a possible complete shutdown of facilities for a week or more.

Vulnerability

Dam failures, while rare, can destroy roads, structures, facilities, utilities, and impact the population of New Salem. Existing and future mitigation efforts should continue to be developed and employed that will enable New Salem to be prepared for these events when they occur. Particular areas of vulnerability include low-income and elderly populations, buildings in the floodplain or inundation areas, and infrastructure such as roadways and utilities that can be damaged by such events.

Society

Vulnerable Populations

The most vulnerable members of the population are those living or working within the floodplain or dam inundation areas, and in particular, those who would be unable to evacuate quickly, including people over the age of 65, households with young children under the age of 5, people with mobility limitations, people with low socioeconomic status, and people with low English fluency who may not understand emergency instructions provided in English.

Economic Impacts

Economic impacts are not limited to assets in the inundation area, but may extend to infrastructure and resources that serve a much broader area. In addition to direct damage from dam failure, economic impacts include the amount of time required to repair or replace and reopen businesses, governmental

and nonprofit agencies, and industrial facilities damaged by the dam failure.³⁴

Infrastructure

Structures that lie in the inundation area of each of the dams in New Salem are vulnerable to a dam failure. Buildings located within the floodplain are also vulnerable to dam failure in New Salem.

Environment

Examples of environmental impacts from a dam failure include:

- Pollution resulting from septic system failure, back-up of sewage systems, petroleum products, pesticides, herbicides, or solvents
- Pollution of the potable water supply or soils
- Exposure to mold or bacteria during cleanup
- Changes in land development patterns
- Changes in the configuration of streams or the floodplain
- Erosion, scour, and sedimentation
- Changes in downstream hydro-geomorphology
- Loss of wildlife habitat or biodiversity
- Degradation to wetlands
- Loss of topsoil or vegetative cover
- Loss of indigenous plants or animals³⁵

Vulnerability Summary

Overall, the Town determined that it has a “Low” vulnerability from dam or levee failure.

³⁴ *Assessing the Consequences of Dam Failure: A How-To Guide*. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). March 2012.
<https://damsafety.org/sites/default/files/files/FEMA%20TM%20AssessingtheConsequencesofDamFailure%20March2012.pdf>



³⁵ *Assessing the Consequences of Dam Failure: A How-To Guide*. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). March 2012.
<https://damsafety.org/sites/default/files/files/FEMA%20TM%20AssessingtheConsequencesofDamFailure%20March2012.pdf>

3.11 DROUGHT

Potential Impacts of Climate Change

Although total annual precipitation is anticipated to increase over the next century, seasonal precipitation is predicted to include more severe and unpredictable dry spells. More rain falling over shorter time periods will reduce groundwater recharge, even in undeveloped areas, as the ground becomes saturated and unable to absorb the same amount of water if rainfall were spread out. The effects of this trend will be exacerbated by the projected reduction in snowpack, which can serve as a significant water source during the spring melt to buffer against sporadic precipitation. Also, the snowpack melt is occurring faster than normal, resulting not only in increased flooding but a reduced period in which the melt can recharge groundwater and the amount of water naturally available during the spring growing period.

Reduced recharge can in turn affect base flow in streams that are critical to sustain ecosystems during dry periods and groundwater-based water supply systems. Reservoir-based water supply systems will also need to be assessed to determine whether they can continue to meet projected demand by adjusting their operating rules to accommodate the projected changes in precipitation patterns and associated changes in hydrology. Finally, rising temperatures will also increase evaporation, exacerbating drought conditions.

Figure 3-19: Impacts of Climate Change on Drought		
Potential Effects of Climate Change		
	RISING TEMPERATURES AND CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION → PROLONGED DROUGHT	The frequency and intensity of droughts are projected to increase during summer and fall in the Northeast as higher temperatures lead to greater evaporation and earlier winter and spring snowmelt, and precipitation patterns become more variable and extreme.
	RISING TEMPERATURES AND CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION → REDUCED SNOWPACK	Due to climate change, the proportion of precipitation falling as snow and the extent of time snowpack remains are both expected to decrease. This reduces the period during which snowmelt can recharge groundwater supplies, bolster streamflow, and provide water for the growing period.

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

Droughts can vary widely in duration, severity, and local impact. They may have widespread social and economic significance that requires the response of numerous parties, including water suppliers, firefighters, farmers, and residents. Droughts are often defined as periods of deficient precipitation. How this deficiency is experienced can depend on factors such as land use change, the existence of dams, and water supply withdrawals or diversions. For example, impervious surfaces associated with development can exacerbate the effects of drought due to decreased groundwater recharge.

Drought is a natural phenomenon, but its impacts are exacerbated by the volume and rate of water

withdrawn from these natural systems over time as well as the reduction in infiltration from precipitation that is available to recharge these systems. Groundwater withdrawals for drinking water can reduce groundwater levels, impacting water supplies as well as base flow (flow of groundwater) in streams. A reduction in base flow is significant, especially in times of drought, as this is often the only source of water to the stream. In extreme situations, groundwater levels can fall below stream channel bottom, and groundwater becomes disconnected from the stream, resulting in a dry channel.

Natural infiltration is reduced by impervious cover (pavement, buildings) on the land surface and by the interruption of natural small-scale drainage patterns in the landscape caused by development and drainage infrastructure. Sewer collection systems can also reduce groundwater levels when groundwater infiltrates into them. This is a common problem for wastewater collection systems in Franklin County, where many of the existing pipes were put in place over 100 years ago. Also, when drains are connected to the sanitary system, groundwater and precipitation are transported to wastewater treatment plants where effluent is typically discharged to surface water bodies and not returned to the groundwater.

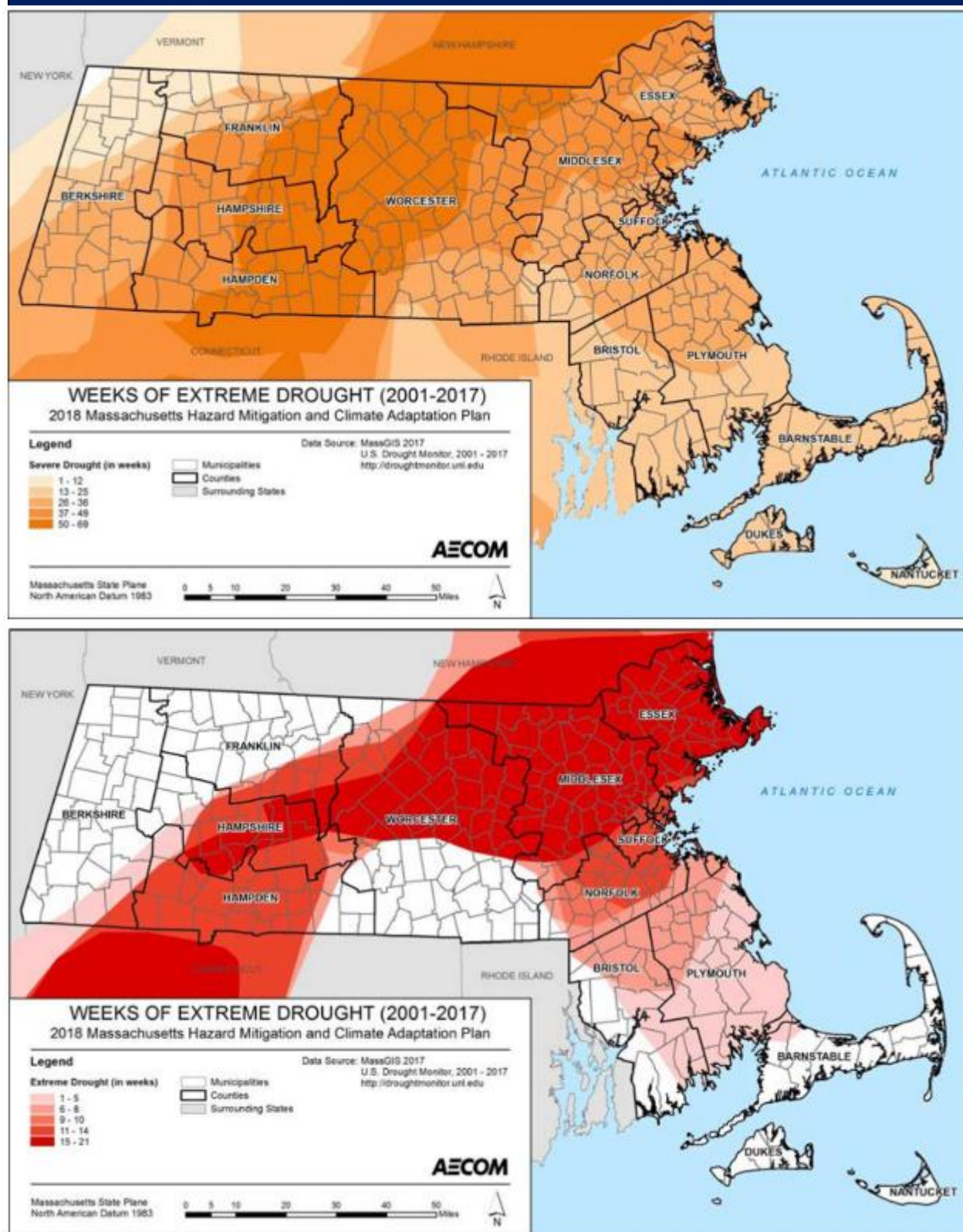
Highly urbanized areas with traditional stormwater drainage systems tend to result in higher peak flood levels during rainfall events and rapid decline of groundwater levels during periods of low precipitation. Thus, the hydrology in these areas becomes more extreme during floods and droughts.³⁶ The importance of increasing infiltration is widely recognized, and the implementation of nature-based solutions to help address this problem is discussed further in later portions of this plan.

Location

New Salem falls in a region in Massachusetts that is more prone to severe and extreme drought based on the number of weeks these areas experienced drought conditions from 2001-2017 (Figure 3-20). Because of this hazard's regional nature, a drought would impact the entire town, resulting in a "Large" location of occurrence, or more than 50 percent of total land area affected.

³⁶ ERG and Horsley Witten Group. 2017. Using Green Infrastructure to Improve Resilience in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Final Project Report.

Figure 3-20: Areas Experiencing Severe or Extreme Drought, 2001 - 2017



Source: U.S. Drought Monitor, 2017, as presented in the 2018 Massachusetts Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan.

Extent

The severity of a drought would determine the scale of the event and would vary among town residents depending on the type of private well serving town buildings, local businesses and New Salem resident, for example shallow wells in unconsolidated materials or deep, drilled bedrock wells. There is no municipal public water supply.

The U.S. Drought Monitor categorizes drought on a D0-D4 scale as shown below.

Table 3-35: U.S. Drought Monitor		
Classification	Category	Description
D0	Abnormally Dry	Going into drought: short-term dryness slowing planting, growth of crops or pastures. Coming out of drought: some lingering water deficits; pastures or crops not fully recovered
D1	Moderate Drought	Some damage to crops, pastures; streams, reservoirs, or wells low, some water shortages developing or imminent; voluntary water-use restrictions requested
D2	Severe Drought	Crop or pasture losses likely; water shortages common; water restrictions imposed
D3	Extreme Drought	Major crop/pasture losses; widespread water shortages or restrictions
D4	Exceptional Drought	Exceptional and widespread crop/pasture losses; shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and wells creating water emergencies

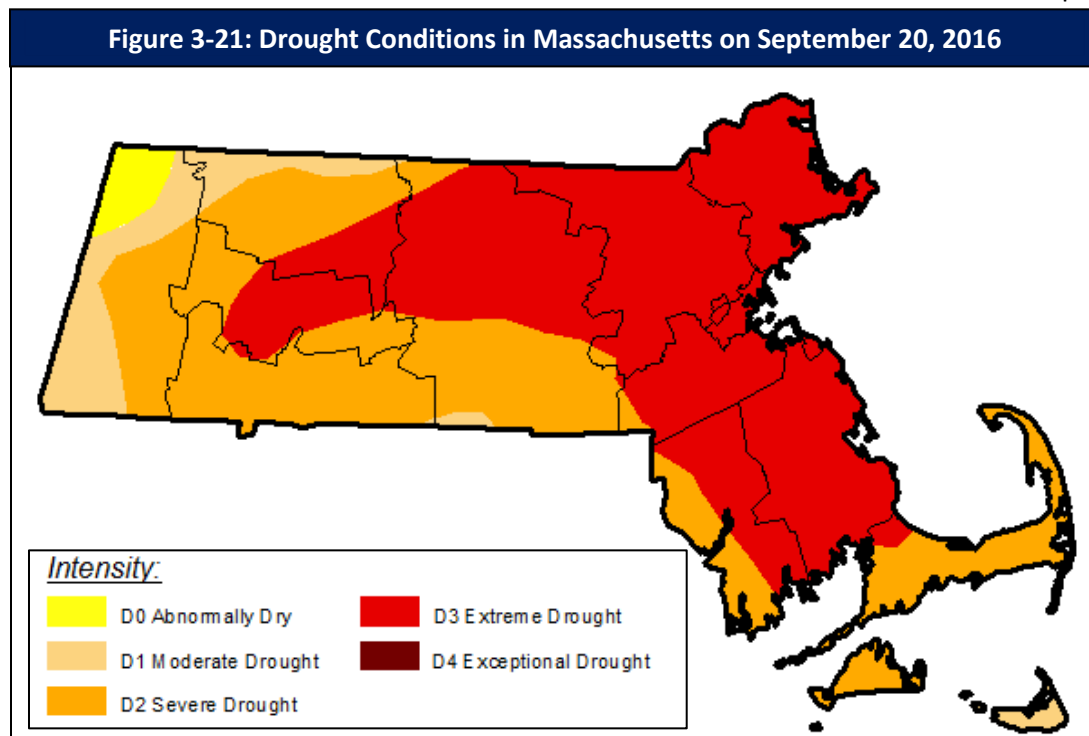
Previous Occurrences

In Massachusetts, six major droughts have occurred statewide since 1930. They range in severity and length, from three to eight years. In many of these droughts, water-supply systems were found to be inadequate.

Beginning in 1960 in western Massachusetts and in 1962 in eastern Massachusetts through 1969, Massachusetts experienced the most significant drought on record, according to the United States Geological Survey. The severity and duration of the drought caused significant impacts on both water supplies and agriculture. Although short or relatively minor droughts occurred over the next 50 years, the next long-term event began in March 2015, when Massachusetts began experiencing widespread abnormally dry conditions. In July 2016, based on a recommendation from the Drought Management Task Force (DMTF), the Secretary of EOEEA declared a Drought Watch for Central and Northeast Massachusetts and a Drought Advisory for Southeast Massachusetts and the Connecticut River Valley. Drought warnings were issued in five out of six drought regions of the state. Many experts stated that this drought was the worst in more than 50 years.

By September 2016, 78% of Franklin County was categorized as “severe drought” (D2) or higher, and

26% of the County was categorized as “extreme drought” (D3) (Figure 3-21).³⁷ By May 2017, the entire Commonwealth had returned to “normal” due to wetter-than-normal conditions in the spring of 2017.



Source: U.S. Drought Monitor. <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Drought was identified as a top natural hazard during the New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Community Building workshop conducted as a part of this planning process. The workshop also took place during a period of severe drought in the Fall of 2020. The state of Massachusetts was in a widespread drought from June to November of last year, due to five months of below average rainfall. The drought impacted farmers throughout the region, and the dry conditions led to many fires across the state (as detailed in the *Wildfire* section of this chapter). At the workshop it was noted that private wells have run dry in the past and are vulnerable to prolonged dry periods. Although this drought was not as severe as past events, workshop participants discussed how these conditions may be more prevalent in the future due to changing precipitation patterns.

Probability of Future Events

According to the 2018 Massachusetts Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, on a monthly basis over the 162-year period of record from 1850 to 2012, there is a 2% chance of being in a drought warning level. As noted previously, rising temperatures and changes in precipitation due to climate change could increase the frequency of episodic droughts, like the one experienced across the Commonwealth in the summer of 2016. In New Salem, drought has a "Very High" probability of future occurrence, or between a 50% and 100% chance of occurring in any given year.

³⁷ U.S. Drought Monitor, accessed February 13, 2019.
<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Data/DataTables.aspx?state,MA>

Impact

Due to the water richness of western Massachusetts, New Salem is unlikely to be adversely affected by anything other than a major, extended drought. The major impact to residents would be private wells running dry or being contaminated due to low water levels. Farmers could be impacted economically by the extended lack of water. Drought may increase the probability of a wildfire occurring. The prolonged lack of precipitation dries out soil and vegetation, which becomes increasingly prone to ignition as long as the drought persists. As a result, the impact of a drought would be “Critical” with more than 25% property damage or disruption on quality of life.

New Salem’s firefighting infrastructure may be insufficient, even in normal conditions. Firefighting capabilities could be further compromised in a drought if aquifers, fire ponds, or rivers used for pumping water are low.

Vulnerability

The number and type of impacts increase with the persistence of a drought as the effect of the precipitation deficit cascades down parts of the watershed and associated natural and socioeconomic assets. For example, a precipitation deficiency may result in a rapid depletion of soil moisture that may be discernible relatively quickly to farmers. The impact of this same precipitation deficit may not affect hydroelectric power production, drinking water supply availability, or recreational uses for many months.

Society

The entire population of New Salem is vulnerable to drought events. However, the vulnerability of populations to this hazard can vary significantly based on water supply sources and municipal water use policies.

Vulnerable Populations

Drought conditions can cause a shortage of water for human consumption and reduce local firefighting capabilities. Public water supplies (PWS) provide water for both of these services and may struggle to meet system demands while maintaining adequate pressure for fire suppression and meeting water quality standards. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires all PWS to maintain an emergency preparedness plan. However, there is no municipal public water supply in New Salem. Individual wells provide drinking water for residents and businesses as well as the town-owned buildings in New Salem. The Town as well as homeowners and businesses are vulnerable during a drought if they are not able to find an alternate short- or long-term water supply (i.e. install a new well) or temporarily relocate in the event their well runs dry.

Health Impacts

With declining groundwater levels, residential well owners may experience dry wells or sediment in

their water due to the more intense pumping required to pull water from the aquifer and to raise water from a deeper depth. Wells may also develop a concentration of pollutants, which may include nitrates and heavy metals (including uranium) depending on local geology. The loss of clean water for consumption and for sanitation may be a significant impact depending on the affected population's ability to quickly drill a deeper or a new well or to relocate to unaffected areas.

During a drought, dry soil and the increased prevalence of wildfires can increase the amount of irritants (such as pollen or smoke) in the air. Reduced air quality can have widespread deleterious health impacts, but is particularly significant to the health of individuals with pre-existing respiratory health conditions like asthma. Lowered water levels can also result in direct environmental health impacts, as the concentration of contaminants in swimmable bodies of water will increase when less water is present. Stagnant water bodies may develop and increase the prevalence of mosquito breeding, thus increasing the risk for vector-borne illnesses.

Economic Impacts

The economic impacts of drought can be substantial, and would primarily affect the agriculture, recreation and tourism, forestry, and energy sectors.

Infrastructure

Agriculture

Drier summers and intermittent droughts may strain irrigation water supplies, stress crops, and delay harvests. Insufficient irrigation will impact the availability of produce, which may result in higher demand than supply. This can drive up the price of local food. Farmers with wells that are dry are advised to contact the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources to explore microloans through the Massachusetts Drought Emergency Loan Fund or to seek federal Economic Injury Disaster Loans.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

As noted already, drought affects both groundwater sources and smaller surface water reservoir supplies. Water supplies for drinking, agriculture, and water-dependent industries may be depleted by smaller winter snowpacks and drier summers anticipated due to climate change. Reduced precipitation during a drought means that water supplies are not replenished at a normal rate. This can lead to a reduction in groundwater levels and problems such as reduced pumping capacity or wells going dry. Shallow wells are more susceptible than deep wells. Suppliers may struggle to meet system demands while maintaining adequate water supply pressure for fire suppression requirements. Private well supplies may dry up and need to either be deepened or supplemented with water from outside sources.

Environment

Drought has a wide-ranging impact on a variety of natural systems. Some of those impacts can include

the following:³⁸

- Reduced water availability, specifically, but not limited to, habitat for aquatic species
- Decreased plant growth and productivity
- Increased wildfires
- Greater insect outbreaks
- Increased local species extinctions
- Lower stream flows and freshwater delivery to downstream estuarine habitats
- Increased potential for hypoxia (low oxygen) events
- Reduced forest productivity
- Direct and indirect effects on goods and services provided by habitats (such as timber, carbon sequestration, recreation, and water quality from forests)
- Limited fish migration or breeding due to dry streambeds or fish mortality caused by dry streambeds

In addition to these direct natural resource impacts, a wildfire exacerbated by drought conditions could cause significant damage to New Salem's environment as well as economic damage related to the loss of valuable natural resources.

Vulnerability Summary



Based on the above assessment, New Salem has a "High" vulnerability to drought. While such a drought would require water saving measures to be implemented, there would be no foreseeable damage to structures or loss of life resulting from the hazard.

³⁸ Clark, J.S. et al. 2016. The impacts of increasing drought on forest dynamics, structure, and biodiversity in the United States. *Global Change Biology*, 22, 2329–2352. Doi: 10.1111/gcb.13160.

3.12 LANDSLIDES

Potential Impacts of Climate Change

According to the 2018 *Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan*, slope saturation by water is already a primary cause of landslides in the Commonwealth. Regional climate change models suggest that New England will likely experience warmer, wetter winters in the future as well as more frequent and intense storms throughout the year. This increase in the frequency and severity of storm events could result in more frequent soil saturation conditions, which are conducive to an increased frequency of landslides. Additionally, an overall warming trend is likely to increase the frequency and duration of droughts and wildfire, both of which could reduce the extent of vegetation throughout the Commonwealth. The loss of the soil stability provided by vegetation could also increase the probability of landslides wherever these events occur.

Figure 3-22: Impacts of Climate Change on Landslides		
Potential Effects of Climate Change		
	CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION AND EXTREME WEATHER → SLOPE SATURATION	Regional climate change models suggest that Massachusetts will likely experience more frequent and intense storms throughout the year. This change could result in more frequent soil saturation conditions, which are conducive to an increased frequency of landslides.
	RISING TEMPERATURES → REDUCED VEGETATION EXTENT	An increased frequency of drought events is likely to reduce the extent of vegetation throughout the Commonwealth. The loss of the soil stability provided by vegetation could also increase the probability of landslides wherever these events occur.

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

The term landslide includes a wide range of ground movements, such as rock falls, deep failure of slopes, and shallow debris flows. The most common types of landslides in Massachusetts include translational debris slides, rotational slides, and debris flows. Most of these events are caused by a combination of unfavorable geologic conditions (silty clay or clay layers contained in glaciomarine, glaciolacustrine, or thick till deposits), steep slopes, and/or excessive wetness leading to excess pore pressures in the subsurface. Historical landslide data for the Commonwealth suggests that most landslides are preceded by two or more months of higher than normal precipitation, followed by a single, high-intensity rainfall of several inches or more.³⁹ This precipitation can cause slopes to become saturated.

Landslides associated with slope saturation occur predominantly in areas with steep slopes underlain by glacial till or bedrock. Bedrock is relatively impermeable relative to the unconsolidated material that

³⁹ Mabee, S.B., Duncan, C.C. 2013. Slope Stability Map of Massachusetts. Prepared for the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

overlies it. Similarly, glacial till is less permeable than the soil that forms above it. Thus, there is a permeability contrast between the overlying soil and the underlying, and less permeable, unweathered till and/or bedrock. Water accumulates on this less permeable layer, increasing the pore pressure at the interface. This interface becomes a plane of weakness. If conditions are favorable, failure will occur.

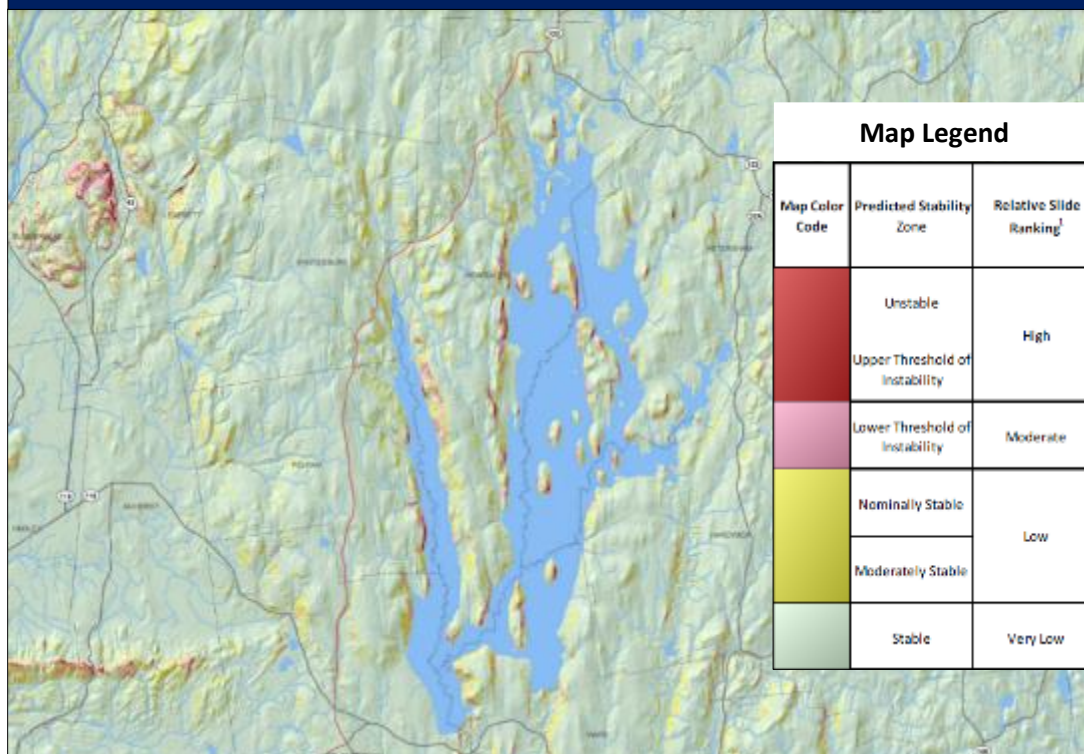
Landslides are created by human activities as well, including deforestation, cultivation and construction, which destabilize already fragile slopes. Some human activities that could cause landslides include:

- vibrations from machinery or traffic;
- blasting;
- earthwork which alters the shape of a slope, or which imposes new loads on an existing slope;
- in shallow soils, the removal of deep-rooted vegetation that binds colluvium to bedrock; and
- construction, agricultural or forestry activities (logging) which change the amount of water which infiltrates the soil.

Location

In 2013, the Massachusetts Geological Survey prepared an updated map of potential landslide hazards for the Commonwealth (funded by FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program) to provide the public, local governments, and emergency management agencies with the location of areas where slope movements have occurred or may possibly occur in the future under conditions of prolonged moisture and high-intensity rainfall. This project was designed to provide statewide mapping and identification of landslide hazards that can be used for community level planning as well as prioritizing high-risk areas for mitigation.

Figure 3-23: Slope Stability Map, New Salem and Surrounding Towns



Source: Massachusetts Geologic Survey and UMass Amherst, 2013

New Salem has areas in town with high and moderate landslide rankings. These areas are shown in Figure 3-23 and are mostly located along the steep slopes of the hilly terrain abutting the Quabbin Reservoir. In general, due to the steep topography and soils in town, and the presence of major waterways and upland tributaries, New Salem has a larger amount of unstable soils than many surrounding towns. However, the Committee noted that there are no known areas of landslides in Town.

Extent

Natural variables that contribute to the overall extent of potential landslide activity in any particular area include soil properties, topographic position and slope, and historical incidence. Predicting a landslide is difficult. As a result, estimations of the potential severity of landslides are informed by previous occurrences as well as an examination of landslide susceptibility. Information about previous landslides can provide insight as to both where landslides may occur and what types of damage may result. It is important to note, however, that landslide susceptibility only identifies areas potentially affected and does not imply a time frame when a landslide might occur. The distribution of susceptibility in New Salem is depicted on the Slope Stability Map, with areas of higher slope instability considered to also be more susceptible to the landslide hazard.

Previous Occurrences

No significant landslide events have been observed in New Salem. If a landslide were to occur, the

location of occurrence would likely be “Isolated” with less than 10% of the Town impacted.

Probability of Future Events

In general, landslides are most likely during periods of higher than average rainfall. The ground must be saturated prior to the onset of a major storm for a significant landslide to occur. Increasing heavy precipitation events will increase the risk of landslides in New Salem. There is a “Moderate” probability, or 2-25% chance, of a landslide happening in the next year.

Impact

Homes located on lots with significant slopes (i.e., 10% or greater), or that are located at the bottom of steep slopes, are at greater risk of impacts from landslides. The impact of a landslide in New Salem would likely be “Limited” with more than 10% of property in the affected area damaged or destroyed.

Vulnerability

Society

Vulnerable Populations

Populations who rely on potentially impacted roads for vital transportation needs are considered to be particularly vulnerable to this hazard. In New Salem, this is less of a concern, as there are noted locations where a landslide would shut off access to a critical route.

Health Impacts

People in landslide hazard zones are exposed to the risk of dying during a large-scale landslide; however, damage to infrastructure that impedes emergency access and access to health care is the largest health impact associated with this hazard. Mass movement events in the vicinity of major roads could deposit many tons of sediment and debris on top of the road. Restoring vehicular access is often a lengthy and expensive process.

Economic Impacts

A landslide’s impact on the economy and estimated dollar losses are difficult to measure. Landslides can impose direct and indirect impacts on society. Direct costs include the actual damage sustained by buildings, property, and infrastructure. Indirect costs, such as clean-up costs, business interruption, loss of tax revenues, reduced property values, and loss of productivity are difficult to measure. Additionally, ground failure threatens transportation corridors, fuel and energy conduits, and communication lines

Infrastructure

Landslides can result in direct losses as well as indirect socioeconomic losses related to damaged infrastructure. Infrastructure located within areas shown as unstable on the Slope Stability Map should be considered to be exposed to the landslide hazard.

Agriculture

Landslides that affect farmland can result in significant loss of livelihood and long-term loss of productivity. Forests can also be significantly impacted by landslides.

Energy

The energy sector is vulnerable to damaged infrastructure associated with landslides. Transmission lines are generally elevated above steep slopes, but the towers supporting them can be subject to landslides. A landslide may cause a tower to collapse, bringing down the lines and causing a transmission fault. Transmission faults can cause extended and broad area outages.

Public Health

Landslides can result in injury and loss of life. Landslides can impact access to power and clean water and also increase exposure to vector-borne diseases.

Public Safety

Access to major roads is crucial to life safety after a disaster event and to response and recovery operations. The ability of emergency responders to reach people and property impacted by landslides can be impaired by roads that have been buried or washed out by landslides. The instability of areas where landslides have occurred can also limit the ability of emergency responders to reach survivors.

Transportation

Landslides can significantly impact roads and bridges. Landslides can block egress and ingress on roads, isolating neighborhoods and causing traffic problems and delays for public and private transportation. These impacts can result in economic losses for businesses. Mass movements can knock out bridge abutments or significantly weaken the soil supporting them, making them hazardous for use.

The possibility of a landslide in the vicinity of a highway or major road represents a significant economic vulnerability for the Town and State. For example, the damage to a 6-mile stretch of Route 2 caused by tropical storm Irene (2011), which included debris flows, four landslides, and fluvial erosion and undercutting of infrastructure, cost \$23 million for initial repairs.

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Surface water bodies may become directly or indirectly contaminated by landslides. Landslides can block river and stream channels, which can result in upstream flooding and reduced downstream flow. This may impact the availability of drinking water. Water and wastewater infrastructure may be physically damaged by mass movements.

Environment

Landslides can affect a number of different facets of the environment, including the landscape itself, water quality, and habitat health. Following a landslide, soil and organic materials may enter streams, reducing the potability of the water and the quality of the aquatic habitat. Additionally, mass

movements of sediment may result in the stripping of forest trees and soils, which in turn impacts the habitat quality of the animals that live in those forests. Flora in the area may struggle to re-establish following a significant landslide because of a lack of topsoil.

Vulnerability Summary



Based on the above assessment, New Salem has a hazard index rating of “Low” for landslides.

3.13 EXTREME TEMPERATURES

Potential Impacts of Climate Change

Beyond the overall warming trend associated with global warming and climate change, New Salem will experience increasing days of extreme heat in the future. Generally, extreme heat is considered to be over 90 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), because at temperatures above that threshold, heat-related illnesses and mortality show a marked increase. The average summer across the Commonwealth during the years between 1971 and 2000 included 4 days over 90°F. Climate scientists project that by mid-century, the state could have a climate that resembles that of southern states today, with between 10-28 days over 90°F. By the end of the century, extreme heat could occur between 13-56 days during summer, depending on how successful we are in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.⁴⁰

Figure 3-24: Impacts of Climate Change on Extreme Temperatures

Potential Effects of Climate Change		
	RISING TEMPERATURES ➔ HIGHER EXTREME TEMPERATURES	The average summer across the Massachusetts during the years between 1971 and 2000 included 4 days over 90°F (i.e. extreme heat days). Climate scientists project that by mid-century, the state could have a climate that resembles that of southern states today, with an additional 10-28 days over 90°F during summer. By the end of the century, extreme heat could occur between 13-56 days during summer.
	RISING TEMPERATURES ➔ HIGHER AVERAGE TEMPERATURES	Compared to an annual 1971-2000 average temperature baseline of 47.6°F, annual average temperatures in Massachusetts are projected to increase by 3.8 to 10.8 degrees (likely range) by the end of the 21st century; slightly higher in western Massachusetts.

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

There is no universal definition for extreme temperatures. The term is relative to the usual weather in the region based on climatic averages. Extreme heat for Massachusetts is usually defined as a period of three or more consecutive days above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), but more generally as a prolonged period of excessively hot weather, which may be accompanied by high humidity. Extreme cold is also considered relative to the normal climatic lows in a region.

Massachusetts has four seasons with several defining factors, and temperature is one of the most significant. Extreme temperatures can be defined as those that are far outside the normal ranges. The average highs and lows of the hottest and coolest months in Franklin County (using Greenfield data as a proxy) are provided in Table 3-36.

⁴⁰ ResilientMA: Climate Change Clearing House for the Commonwealth: <http://resilientma.org/changes/rising-temperatures>. Accessed March 1, 2019.

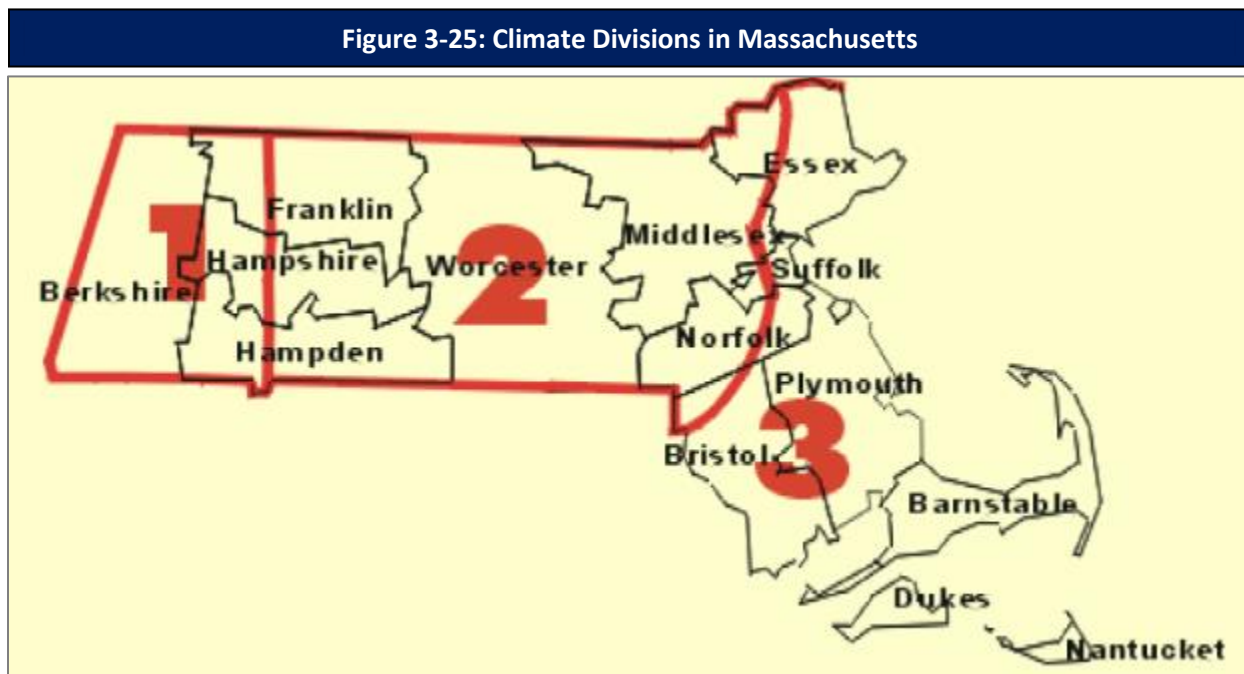
Table 3-36: Annual Average High and Low Temperatures (Greenfield)		
	July (Hottest Month)	January (Coldest Month)
Average High (°F)	81°	33°
Average Low (°F)	57°	12°

Note: Average temperatures are for the years 1981-2010.

Source: U.S. Climate Data.

Location

According to the NOAA, Massachusetts is made up of three climate divisions: Western, Central, and Coastal, as shown in Figure 3-25. Average annual temperatures vary slightly over the divisions, with annual average temperatures of around 46°F in the Western division (area labeled “1” in the figure), 49°F in the Central division (area labeled “2” in the figure) and 50°F in the Coastal division (area labeled “3” in the figure). New Salem falls in the Central Division.

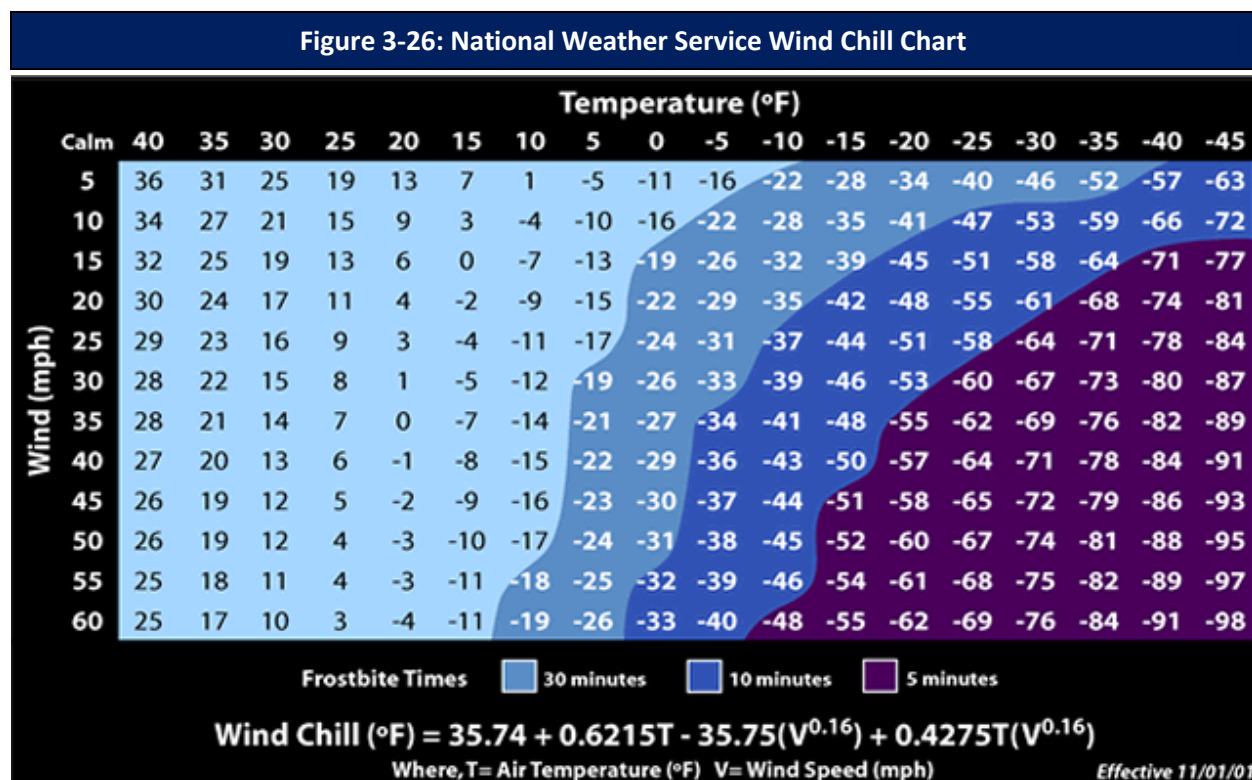


Source: NOAA, as presented in the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, September 2018

Extreme temperature events occur more frequently and vary more in the inland regions of the State where temperatures are not moderated by the Atlantic Ocean. The severity of extreme heat impacts, however, is greater in densely developed urban areas like Boston than in suburban and rural areas, due to the urban “heat island” effect, described in more detail in the Impacts sub-section.

Extent

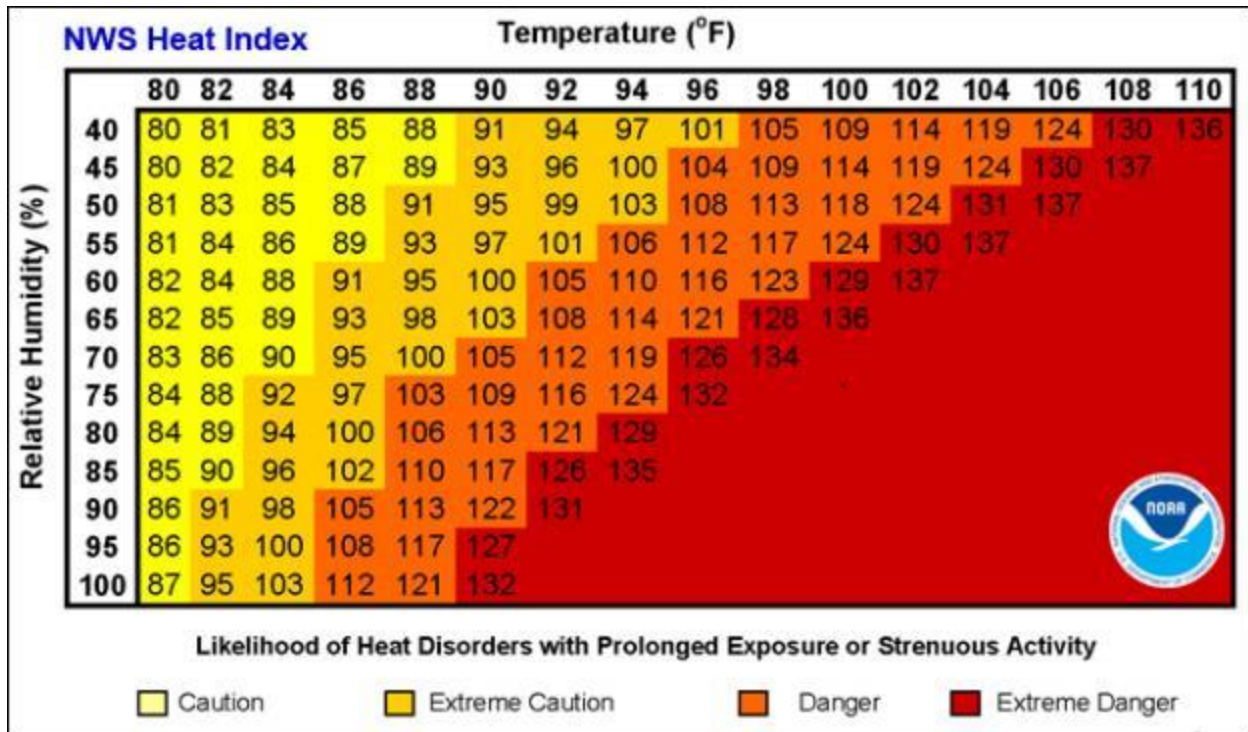
The extent (severity or magnitude) of extreme cold temperatures is generally measured through the Wind Chill Temperature Index. Wind Chill Temperature is the temperature that people and animals feel when they are outside, and it is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin by the effects of wind and cold. As the wind increases, the body loses heat at a faster rate, causing the skin's temperature to drop. The National Weather Service (NWS) issues a Wind Chill Advisory if the Wind Chill Index is forecast to dip to -15°F to -24°F for at least three hours, based on sustained winds (not gusts). The NWS issues a Wind Chill Warning if the Wind Chill Index is forecast to fall to -25°F or colder for at least three hours. On November 1, 2001, the NWS implemented a Wind Chill Temperature Index designed to more accurately calculate how cold air feels on human skin. Figure 3-26 shows the Wind Chill Temperature Index.



Source: National Weather Service: <https://www.weather.gov/safety/cold-wind-chill-chart>

The NWS issues a Heat Advisory when the NWS Heat Index is forecast to reach 100 to 104°F for two or more hours. The NWS issues an Excessive Heat Warning if the Heat Index is forecast to reach 105°F or higher for two or more hours. The NWS Heat Index is based both on temperature and relative humidity, and describes a temperature equivalent to what a person would feel at a baseline humidity level. It is scaled to the ability of a person to lose heat to their environment. The relationship between these variables and the levels at which the NWS considers various health hazards to become relevant are shown in Figure 3-27. It is important to know that the heat index values are devised for shady, light wind conditions. Exposure to full sunshine can increase heat index values by up to 15°F. In addition, strong winds, particularly with very hot, dry air, can increase the risk of heat-related impacts.

Figure 3-27: National Weather Service Heat Index:



Source: National Weather Service: <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-index>

In February 2016, one cold weather event broke records throughout the state. Arctic high pressure brought strong northwest winds and extremely cold wind chills to southern New England. Wind chills as low as 38 below zero were reported in Orange.

According to the NOAA's Storm Events Database, there have been 43 warm weather events (ranging from Record Warmth/Heat to Excessive Heat events) since 1995 in Massachusetts. Excessive heat results from a combination of temperatures well above normal and high humidity. Whenever the heat index values meet or exceed locally or regionally established heat or excessive heat warning thresholds, an event is reported in the database. Information on excessive heat was not available for New Salem or Franklin County prior to 2018.

In 2012, Massachusetts temperatures broke 27 heat records. Most of these records were broken between June 20 and June 22, 2012, during the first major heat wave of the summer to hit Massachusetts and the East Coast. In July 2013, a long period of hot and humid weather occurred throughout New England. One fatality occurred on July 6, when a postal worker collapsed as the Heat Index reached 100°F. In Franklin County, excessive heat was recorded for July 1, 2018, when a heat index of 107°F was observed at the Orange Municipal Airport from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

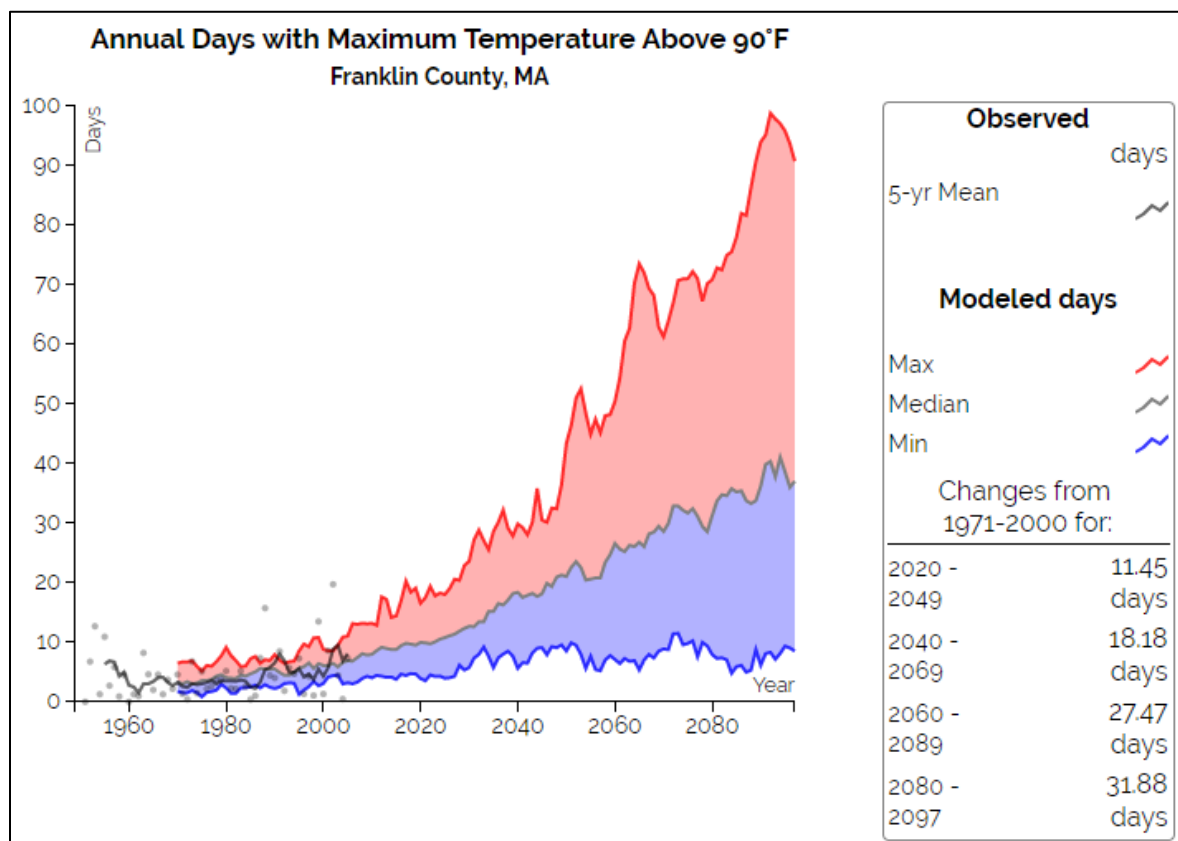
Probability of Future Events

There are a number of climatic phenomena that determine the number of extreme weather events in a

specific year. However, there are significant long-term trends in the frequency of extreme hot and cold events. In the last decade, U.S. daily record high temperatures have occurred twice as often as record lows (as compared to a nearly 1:1 ratio in the 1950s). Models suggest that this ratio could climb to 20:1 by midcentury, if GHG emissions are not significantly reduced. The data support the trends of an increased frequency of extreme hot weather events and a decreased frequency of extreme cold weather events.

The average, maximum, and minimum temperatures in Franklin County are likely to increase significantly over the next century (resilient MA, 2018). This gradual change will put long-term stress on a variety of social and natural systems, and will exacerbate the influence of discrete events. Significant increases in maximum temperatures are anticipated, particularly under a higher GHG emissions scenario. Figure 3-28 displays the projected increase in the number of days per year over 90°F. The number of days per year with daily maximum temperatures over 90°F is projected to increase by 18 days by the 2050s, and by 32 days by the end of the century (for a total of 36 days over 90°F), compared to the average observed range from 1971 to 2000 of 4 days per year. Under a high emissions scenario, however, there could be as many as 100 days with a maximum temperature above 90°F by the end of the century.

Figure 3-28: Projected Annual Days with a Maximum Temperature Above 90°F



Source: resilient MA, 2018.

Impact

Extreme Cold

Extreme cold is a dangerous situation that can result in health emergencies for susceptible people, such as those without shelter or who are stranded or who live in homes that are poorly insulated or without heat. Extreme cold events are events when temperatures drop well below normal in an area. Extreme cold temperatures are characterized by the ambient air temperature dropping to approximately 0°F or below.

When winter temperatures drop significantly below normal, staying warm and safe can become a challenge. Extremely cold temperatures often accompany a winter storm, which may also cause power failures and icy roads. During cold months, carbon monoxide may be high in some areas because the colder weather makes it difficult for car emission control systems to operate effectively, and temperature inversions can trap the resulting pollutants closer to the ground.

Staying indoors as much as possible can help reduce the risk of car crashes and falls on the ice, but cold weather also can present hazards indoors. Many homes may be too cold, either due to a power failure or because the heating system is not adequate for the weather. Exposure to cold temperatures, whether indoors or outside, can cause other serious or life-threatening health problems. Power outages may also result in inappropriate use of combustion heaters, cooking appliances, and generators in indoor or poorly ventilated areas, leading to increased risk of carbon monoxide poisoning or fire.

Extreme Heat

A heat wave is defined as three or more days of temperatures of 90°F or above. A basic definition of a heat wave implies that it is an extended period of unusually high atmosphere-related heat stress, which causes temporary modifications in lifestyle and which may have adverse health consequences for the affected population. Heat waves cause more fatalities in the U.S. than the total of all other meteorological events combined.

Heat impacts can be particularly significant in urban areas. Buildings, roads, and other infrastructure replace open land and vegetation. Dark-colored asphalt and roofs also absorb more of the sun's energy. These changes cause urban areas to become warmer than the surrounding areas. This forms "islands" of higher temperatures, often referred to as "heat islands." The term "heat island" describes built-up areas that are hotter than nearby rural or shaded areas. Heat islands occur on the surface and in the atmosphere. On a hot, sunny day, the sun can heat dry, exposed urban surfaces to temperatures 50°F to 90°F hotter than the air. Heat islands can affect communities by increasing peak energy demand during the summer, air conditioning costs, air pollution and GHG emissions, heat-related illness and death, and water quality degradation.

Extreme heat events can also have impacts on air quality. Many conditions associated with heat waves or more severe events—including high temperatures, low precipitation, strong sunlight and low wind

speeds—contribute to a worsening of air quality in several ways. High temperatures can increase the production of ozone from volatile organic compounds and other aerosols. Weather patterns that bring high temperatures can also transport particulate matter air pollutants from other areas of the continent. Additionally, atmospheric inversions and low wind speeds allow polluted air to remain in one location for a prolonged period of time.

Vulnerability

The entire town of New Salem is vulnerable to extreme temperatures.

Society

Vulnerable Populations

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, populations most at risk to extreme cold and heat events include: (1) people over the age of 65, who are less able to withstand temperature extremes due to their age, health conditions, and limited mobility to access shelters; (2) infants and children under 5 years of age; (3) individuals with pre-existing medical conditions that impair heat tolerance (e.g., heart disease or kidney disease); (4) low-income individuals who cannot afford proper heating and cooling; (5) people with respiratory conditions, such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; and (6) the general public who may overexert themselves when working or exercising during extreme heat events or who may experience hypothermia during extreme cold events. Additionally, people who live alone—particularly the elderly and individuals with disabilities—are at higher risk of heat-related illness due to their isolation and potential reluctance to relocate to cooler environments.

An additional element of vulnerability to extreme temperature events is homelessness, as homeless individuals have a limited capacity to shelter from dangerous temperatures. Two homeless people died from exposure to extreme cold in January 2019 in Greenfield.

Table 3-37 estimates the number of vulnerable populations and households in New Salem. Individuals and households may fall into multiple categories, so the numbers should not be added. Rather, the table provides Town officials and emergency response personnel with information to help plan for responding to the needs of New Salem residents during an extreme temperature event.

Table 3-37: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Vulnerable Population Category	Number	Percent of Total Population*
Population Age 65 Years and Over	240	24%
Population with a Disability	138	14%
Population who Speak English Less than "Very Well"	0	0%

Table 3-37: Estimated Vulnerable Populations in New Salem		
Vulnerable Household Category	Number	Percent of Total Households*
Low Income Households (annual income less than \$35,000)	94	21%
Householder Age 65 Years and Over Living Alone	40	9%
Households Without Access to a Vehicle	9	2%

*Total population = 1,009; Total households = 441

Note: Individuals and households may be counted under multiple categories.

Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019 Five-Year Estimates.

Health Impacts

When people are exposed to extreme heat, they can suffer from potentially deadly illnesses, such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat is the leading weather-related killer in the U.S., even though most heat-related deaths are preventable through outreach and intervention. A study of heat-related deaths across Massachusetts estimated that when the temperature rises above the 85th percentile (hot: 85-86°F), 90th percentile (very hot: 87-89°F) and 95th percentile (extremely hot: 89-92°F) there are between five and seven excess deaths per day in Massachusetts. These estimates were higher for communities with high percentages of African American residents and elderly residents on days exceeding the 85th percentile.⁴¹ A 2013 study of heart disease patients in Worcester, MA, found that extreme heat (high temperature greater than the 95th percentile) in the 2 days before a heart attack resulted in an estimated 44 percent increase in mortality. Living in poverty appeared to increase this effect.⁴² In 2015, researchers analyzed Medicare records for adults over the age of 65 who were living in New England from 2000 to 2008. They found that a rise in summer mean temperatures of 1°C resulted in a 1 percent rise in the mortality rate due to an increase in the number and intensity of heat events.⁴³

Hot temperatures can contribute to deaths from heart attacks, strokes, other forms of cardiovascular disease, renal disease, and respiratory diseases such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder. Human bodies cool themselves primarily through sweating and through increasing blood flow to body surfaces. Heat events thus increase stress on cardiovascular, renal, and respiratory systems, and may lead to hospitalization or death in the elderly and those with pre-existing diseases.

Massachusetts has a very high prevalence of asthma: approximately 1 out of every 11 people in the

⁴¹ Hattis, D. et al. 2012. The Spatial Variability of Heat-Related Mortality in Massachusetts. Applied Geography. 33(2012) pg 45-52. <http://wordpress.clarku.edu/yogneva/files/2012/04/Hattis-et-al-2011-The-spatial-variability-of-heat-related-mortality-in-Massachusetts.pdf>

⁴² Madrigano J, Mittleman MA, Baccarelli A, Goldberg R, Melly S, von Klot S, Schwartz J. Temperature, myocardial infarction, and mortality: effect modification by individual- and area-level characteristics. Epidemiology. 2013 May;24(3):439-46.

⁴³ Shi L. et al. 2015. Impacts of temperature and its variability on mortality in New England. Nature Climate Change. Volume 5. November 2015.

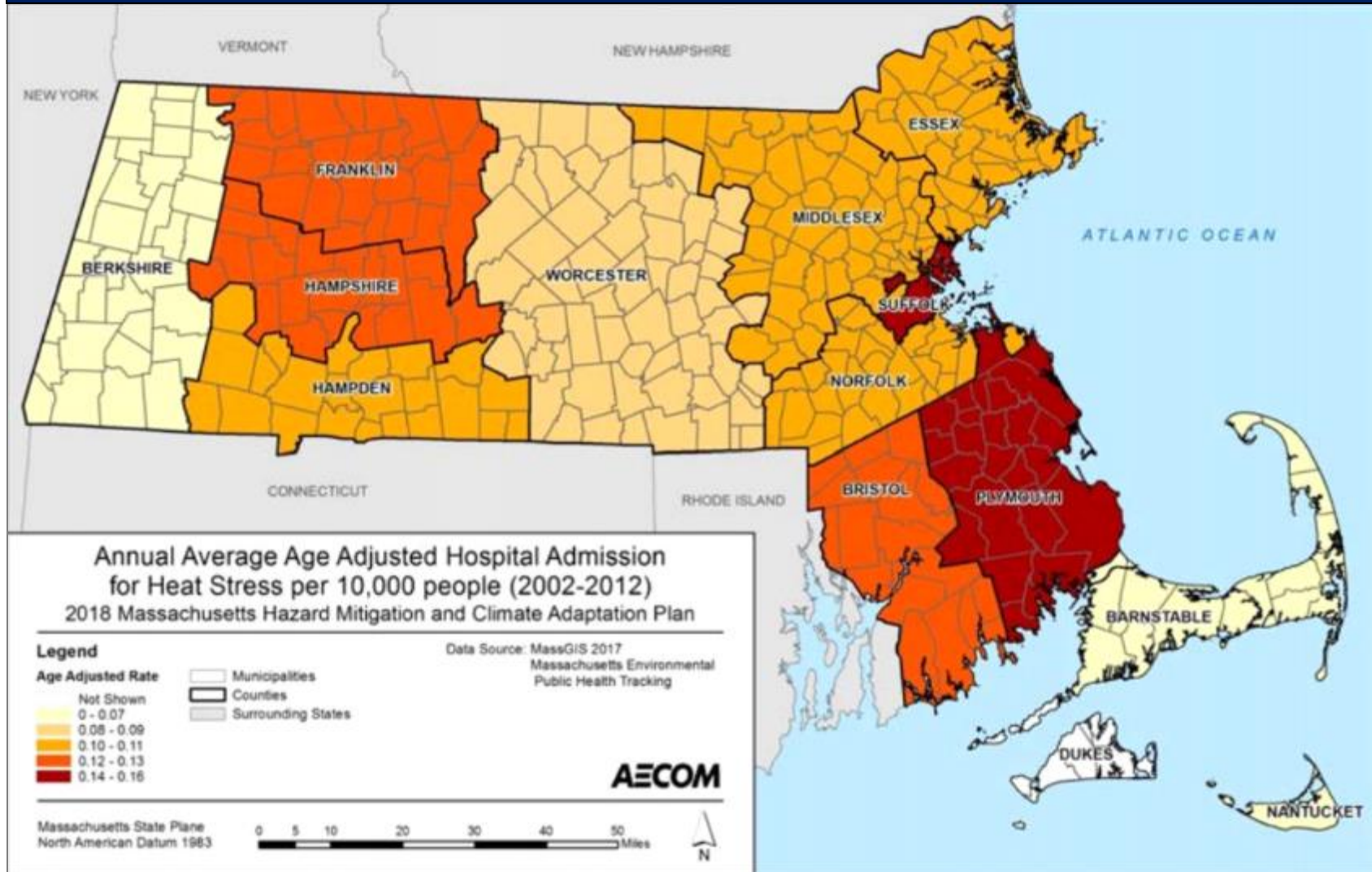
state currently has asthma. In Massachusetts, poor air quality often accompanies heat events, as increased heat increases the conversion of ozone precursors in fossil fuel combustion emissions to ozone. Particulate pollution may also accompany hot weather, as the weather patterns that bring heat waves to the region may carry pollution from other areas of the continent. Poor air quality can negatively affect respiratory and cardiovascular systems, and can exacerbate asthma and trigger heart attacks.

The rate of hospital admissions for heat stress under existing conditions is shown in Figure 3-29. Between 2002 and 2012, the annual average age-adjusted rate of hospital admission for heat stress was highest in Plymouth and Suffolk Counties. Franklin County ranked among the second highest rate of 0.12-0.13 admissions per 10,000 people. As displayed in Figure 3-30, Franklin County experienced the highest annual average age-adjusted hospital admissions for heart attacks (4.29 to 4.17 per 10,000 people) during this period, along with Plymouth, Bristol, and Berkshire Counties. Hamden County had the highest annual average age emergency department visits due to asthma (see Figure 3-31), while Franklin County's rate was statistically significantly lower.

Some behaviors increase the risks of temperature-related impacts. These behaviors include voluntary actions, such as drinking alcohol or taking part in strenuous outdoor physical activities in extreme weather, but may also include necessary actions, such as taking prescribed medications that impair the body's ability to regulate its temperature or that inhibit perspiration.

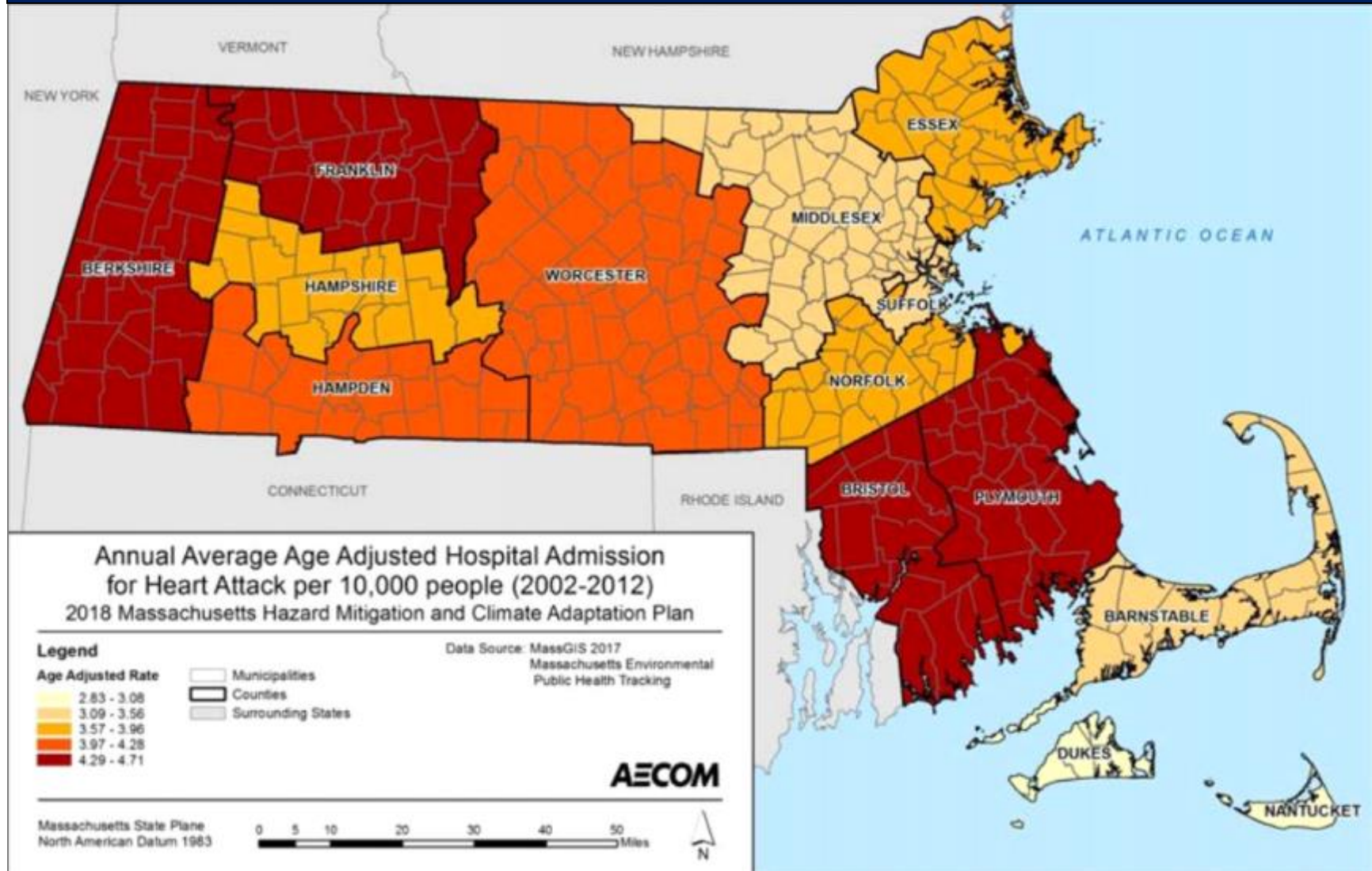
Cold-weather events can also have significant health impacts. The most immediate of these impacts are cold-related injuries, such as frostbite and hypothermia, which can become fatal if exposure to cold temperatures is prolonged. Similar to the impacts of hot weather that have already been described, cold weather can exacerbate pre-existing respiratory and cardiovascular conditions. Additionally, power outages that occur as a result of extreme temperature events can be immediately life-threatening to those dependent on electricity for life support or other medical needs. Isolation of these populations is a significant concern if extreme temperatures preclude their mobility or the functionality of systems they depend on. Power outages during cold weather may also result in inappropriate use of combustion heaters, cooking appliances, and generators in indoor or poorly ventilated areas, leading to increased risk of carbon monoxide poisoning or fires.

Figure 3-29: Rates of Heat Stress-Related Hospitalization by County



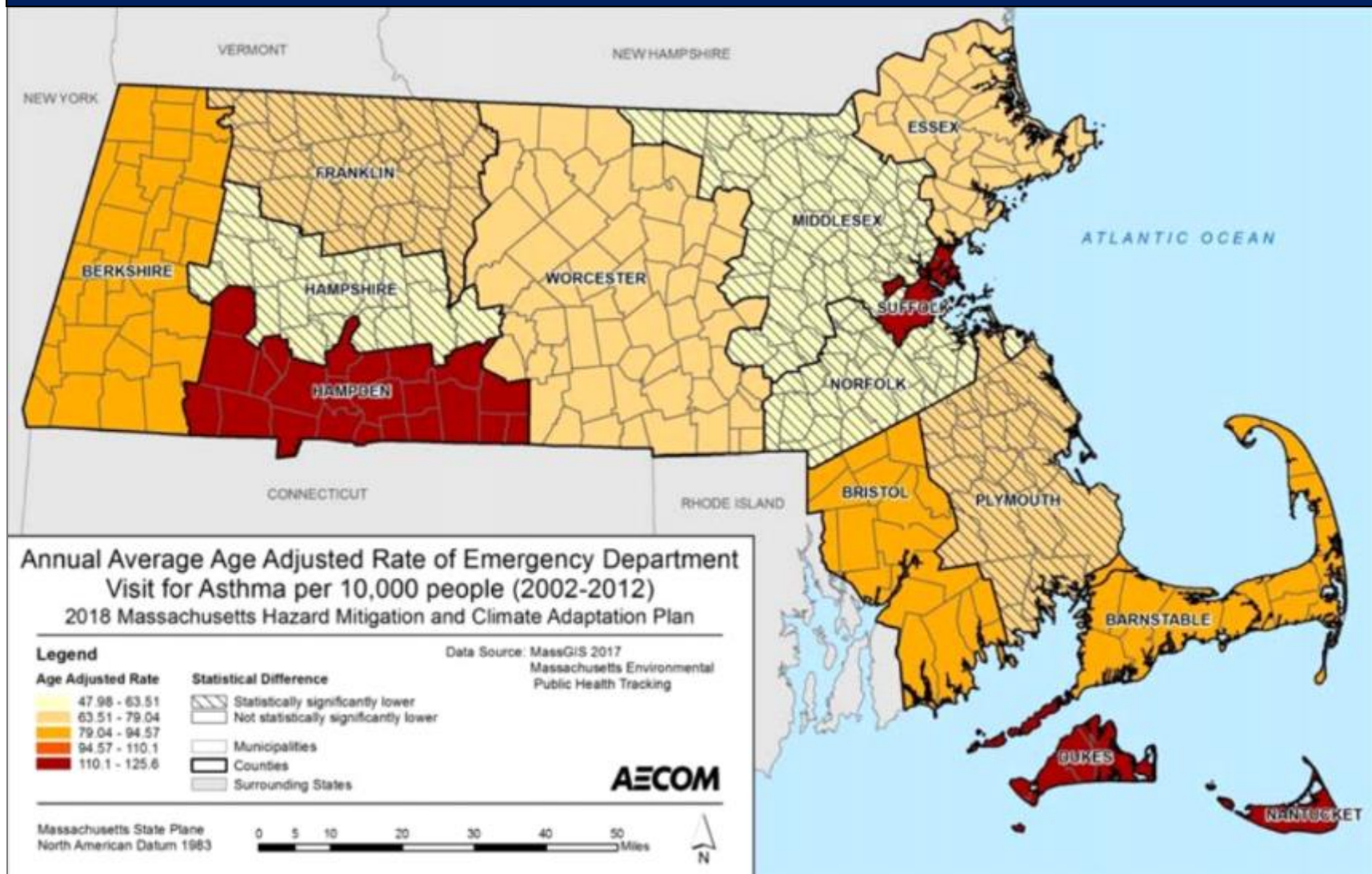
Source: Massachusetts Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, September 2018.

Figure 3-30: Rates of Hospital Admissions for Heart Attacks by County



Source: Massachusetts Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, September 2018.

Figure 3-31: Rates of Emergency Department Visits Due to Asthma by County



Source: Massachusetts Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, September 2018.

Economic Impacts

Extreme temperature events also have impacts on the economy, including loss of business function and damage to and loss of inventory. Business owners may be faced with increased financial burdens due to unexpected building repairs (e.g., repairs for burst pipes), higher than normal utility bills, or business interruptions due to power failure (i.e., loss of electricity and telecommunications). Increased demand for water and electricity may result in shortages and a higher cost for these resources. Industries that rely on water for business (e.g., landscaping businesses) will also face significant impacts. There is a loss of productivity and income when the transportation sector is impacted and people and commodities cannot get to their intended destination. Businesses with employees that work outdoors (such as agricultural and construction companies) may have to reduce employees' exposure to the elements by reducing or shifting their hours to cooler or warmer periods of the day.

The agricultural industry is most directly at risk in terms of economic impact and damage due to extreme temperature and drought events. Extreme heat can result in drought and dry conditions, which directly impact livestock and crop production. Increasing average temperatures may make crops more susceptible to invasive species. Higher temperatures that result in greater concentrations of ozone negatively impact plants that are sensitive to ozone. Additionally, as described in the Environment subsection, changing temperatures can impact the phenology.

Livestock are also impacted, as heat stress can make animals more vulnerable to disease, reduce their fertility, and decrease the rate of milk production. Additionally, scientists believe the use of parasiticides and other animal treatments may increase as the threat of invasive species and pests grows.

Infrastructure

All elements of the built environment are exposed to the extreme temperature hazard. The impacts of extreme heat on buildings include: increased thermal stresses on building materials, which leads to greater wear and tear and reduces a building's useful lifespan; increased air-conditioning demand to maintain a comfortable temperature; overheated heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems; and disruptions in service associated with power outages. Extreme cold can cause materials such as plastic to become less pliable, increasing the potential for these materials to break down during extreme cold events. In addition to the facility-specific impacts, extreme temperatures can impact critical infrastructure sectors of the built environment in a number of ways, which are summarized in the subsections that follow.

Agriculture

Above average, below average, and extreme temperatures are likely to impact crops—such as apples, peaches, and maple syrup—that rely on specific temperature regimes. Unseasonably warm temperatures in early spring that are followed by freezing temperatures can result in crop loss of fruit-bearing trees. Increasing heat stress days (above 90°F) may stress livestock and some crops. More pest pressure from insects, diseases and weeds may harm crops and cause farms to increase pesticide use. Farmers may have the opportunity to introduce new crops that are viable under warmer conditions and

longer growing seasons; however, a transition such as this may be costly.⁴⁴

Energy

In addition to increasing demand for heating and cooling, periods of both hot and cold weather can stress energy infrastructure. Electricity consumption during summer may reach three times the average consumption rate of the period between 1960 and 2000; more than 25 percent of this consumption may be attributable to climate change.⁴⁵ In addition to affecting consumption rates, high temperatures can also reduce the thermal efficiency of electricity generation.

Extended-duration extreme cold can lead to energy supply concerns, as the heating sector then demands a higher percentage of the natural gas pipeline capacity. When this occurs, New England transitions electricity generation from natural gas to oil and liquid natural gas. Limited on-site oil and liquid natural gas storage as well as refueling challenges may cause energy supply concerns if the events are colder and longer in duration.

Transportation

Extreme heat has potential impacts on the design and operation of the transportation system. Impacts on the design include the instability of materials, particularly pavement, exposed to high temperatures over longer periods of time, which can cause buckling and lead to increased failures.⁴⁶ High heat can cause pavement to soften and expand, creating ruts, potholes, and jarring, and placing additional stress on bridge joints. Extreme heat may cause heat stress in materials such as asphalt and increase the frequency of repairs and replacements. Roads are also vulnerable to rapid freeze and thaw cycles, which may cause damage to road surfaces. An increase in freeze and thaw cycles can also damage bridge expansion joints.⁴⁷

Railroad tracks can expand in extreme heat, causing the track to “kink” and derail trains. Higher temperatures inside the enclosure-encased equipment, such as traffic control devices and signal control systems for rail service, may result in equipment failure. Rail operations will also be impacted when mandatory speed reductions are issued in areas where tracks have been exposed to high temperatures over many days, resulting in increased transit travel time and operating costs as well as a reduction in track capacity. Finally, extreme temperatures also discourage active modes of transportation, such as bicycling and walking. This will have a secondary impact on sustainable transportation objectives and public health.

Operations are vulnerable to heat waves and associated power outages that affect electrical power supply to rail operations and to supporting ancillary assets for highway operations, such as electronic

⁴⁴ Resilient MA: <http://resilientma.org/sectors/agriculture>. Accessed March 4, 2019.

⁴⁵ Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the Adaptation Advisory Committee (EOEEA). 2011. Massachusetts Climate Change Adaptation Report.

⁴⁶ Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). 2017. Assessment of Extreme Temperature Impacts on MassDOT Assets

⁴⁷ Resilient MA: <http://resilientma.org/sectors/transportation>. Accessed March 4, 2019.

signing. Increased heat also impacts transportation workers, the viability of vegetation in rights-of-way, and vehicle washing or maintenance schedules.⁴⁸ Hot weather increases the likelihood that cars may overheat during hot weather, and also increases the deterioration rate of tires.

Water Infrastructure

Extreme temperatures do not pose as great a threat to water infrastructure as flood-related hazards, but changes in temperature can impact water infrastructure. For example, extreme heat that drives increases in air-conditioning demand can trigger power outages that disrupt water and wastewater treatment.⁴⁹ Hotter temperatures will also likely result in increased outdoor water consumption. Combined with other climate impacts such as an increase in surface water evapotranspiration, changing precipitation patterns, and groundwater recharge rates, increased water demand may challenge the capacity of water supplies and providers. Extreme heat can damage aboveground infrastructure such as tanks, reservoirs, and pump stations. Warmer temperatures can also lead to corrosion, water main breaks, and inflow and infiltration into water supplies. Extreme heat is likely to result in increased drought conditions, and this has significant implications for water infrastructure, as discussed in the Drought Section.

Extreme cold can freeze pipes, causing them to burst. This can then lead to flooding and mold inside buildings when frozen pipes thaw.

Environment

There are numerous ways in which changing temperatures will impact the natural environment. Because the species that exist in a given area have adapted to survive within a specific temperature range, extreme temperature events can place significant stress both on individual species and the ecosystems in which they function. High-elevation spruce-fir forests, forested boreal swamp, and higher-elevation northern hardwoods are likely to be highly vulnerable to climate change. Higher summer temperatures will disrupt wetland hydrology. Paired with a higher incidence and severity of droughts, high temperatures and evapotranspiration rates could lead to habitat loss and wetlands drying out.⁵⁰ Individual extreme weather events usually have a limited long-term impact on natural systems, although unusual frost events occurring after plants begin to bloom in the spring can cause significant damage. However, the impact on natural resources of changing average temperatures and the changing frequency of extreme climate events is likely to be massive and widespread.

One significant impact of increasing temperatures may be the northern migration of plants and animals. Over time, shifting habitat may result in a geographic mismatch between the location of conservation land and the location of critical habitats and species the conserved land was designed to protect. One specific way in which average temperatures influence plant behavior is through changes in phenology,

⁴⁸ Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). 2017. Assessment of Extreme Temperature Impacts on MassDOT Assets

⁴⁹ Resilient MA: <http://resilientma.org/sectors/water-resources>. Accessed March 4, 2019.

⁵⁰ Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences (MCCS) and Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW). 2010. Climate Change and Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife: Volume 3 Habitat Management.

the pattern of seasonal life events in plants and animals. A recent study by the National Park Service found that of 276 parks studied, three-quarters are experiencing earlier spring conditions, as defined by the first greening of trees and first bloom of flowers, and half are experiencing an “extreme” early spring that exceeds 95% of historical conditions.⁵¹ These changing seasonal cues can lead to ecological mismatches, as plants and animals that rely on each other for ecosystem services become “out of sync.” For example, migratory birds that rely on specific food sources at specific times may reach their destinations before or after the species they feed on arrive or are in season. Additionally, invasive species tend to have more flexible phenologies than their native counterparts; therefore, shifting seasons may increase the competitiveness of present and introduced invasive species.

Wild plants and animals are also migrating away from their current habitats in search of the cooler temperatures to which they are accustomed. This is particularly pertinent for ecosystems that (like many in the northeastern U.S.) lie on the border between two biome types. For example, an examination of the Green Mountains of Vermont found a 299- to 390-foot upslope shift in the boundary between northern hardwoods and boreal forests between 1964 and 2004.⁵² Such a shift is hugely significant for the species that live in this ecosystem as well as for forestry companies or others who rely on the continued presence of these natural resources. Massachusetts ecosystems that are expected to be particularly vulnerable to warming temperatures include:

- Coldwater streams and fisheries
- Vernal pools
- Spruce-fir forests
- Northern hardwood (Maple-Beech-Birch) forests, which are economically important due to their role in sugar production
- Hemlock forests, particularly those with the hemlock wooly adelgid
- Urban forests, which will experience extra impacts due to the urban heat island effect

Additional impacts of warming temperatures include the increased survival and grazing damage of white-tailed deer, increased invasion rates of invasive plants, and increased survival and productivity of insect pests, which cause damage to forests.⁵³ As temperature increases, the length of the growing season will also increase.

Vulnerability Summary

Based on the above assessment, New Salem has a “High” vulnerability to extreme temperatures. The following problem statements summarize New Salem’s areas of greatest concern regarding extreme temperatures.

⁵¹ National Park System (NPS). 2016. Project Brief: Phenology and Climate Change. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/upload/2016-10-26-NPS-Phen-Project-Brief.pdf>

⁵² U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP). 2014. Hatfield, J. et al., Ch. 6: Agri-culture. Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment, J. M. Melillo, Terese (T.C.) Richmond, and G. W. Yohe, Eds., pp 150-174



⁵³ Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences (MCCS) and Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW). 2010. Climate Change and Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife: Volume 3 Habitat Management.

3.14 INVASIVE SPECIES

Potential Impacts of Climate Change

A warming climate may place stress on colder-weather species while allowing non-native species accustomed to warmer climates to spread northward. This northward trend is already well documented, and is expected to accelerate in the future. Another way in which climate change may increase the frequency of natural species threat is through the possibility of climate refugees. As populations move to escape increasingly inhospitable climates, they are likely to bring along products, food, and livestock that could introduce novel (and potentially invasive) species to the areas in which they settle.

Extreme winter temperatures are also critical limiting factors for many forest pests, and warming is expected to increase their survival and lead to expansions and outbreaks. For example, in Massachusetts, it's likely that winter temperatures have been limiting the impact of hemlock wooly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*), as many infested forest stands are surviving while in more southerly ranges there is near complete mortality from this pest. But the adelgid has already expanded its range with warming winter temperatures and is likely to have increased survival and higher reproductive rates in the northern portion of its range as temperatures warm, likely leading to more significant impacts on forests.⁵⁴

Figure 3-32: Impacts of Climate Change on Invasive Species		
Potential Effects of Climate Change		
	RISING TEMPERATURES → WARMING CLIMATE	A warming climate may place stress on colder-weather species, while allowing non-native species accustomed to warmer climates to spread northward.
	RISING TEMPERATURES AND CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION → ECOSYSTEM STRESS	Changes in precipitation and temperature combine to create new stresses for Massachusetts' unique ecosystems. For example, intense rainfall in urbanized areas can cause pollutants on roads and parking lots to get washed into nearby rivers and lakes, reducing habitat quality. As rainfall and snowfall patterns change, certain habitats and species that have specific physiological requirements may be affected. The stresses experienced by native ecosystems as a result of these changes may increase the chances of a successful invasion of non-native species.

Source: Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. September 2018

Hazard Description

“Invasives” are species recently introduced to new ecosystems that cause or are likely to cause significant harm to the environment, economy, or human health. Invasives compete with native plants and wildlife for resources, disrupt beneficial relationships, spread disease, cause direct mortality, and can significantly alter ecosystem function. Some of the more common invasives in Massachusetts may already be familiar - problematic invasive plants include purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*),

⁵⁴ MassWildlife Climate Action Tool: <http://climateactiontool.org/content/invasive-plants-and-animals>. Accessed March 4, 2019.

Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). Invasive animals include forest pests such as the hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelgis tsugae*), Asian longhorn beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*), and the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*). The zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*) is a particularly detrimental aquatic invasive species that has recently been detected in Western Massachusetts.⁵⁵

The Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG), a collaborative representing organizations and professionals concerned with the conservation of the Massachusetts landscape, is charged by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to provide recommendations to the Commonwealth to manage invasive species. MIPAG defines invasive plants as "non-native species that have spread into native or minimally managed plant systems in Massachusetts, causing economic or environmental harm by developing self-sustaining populations and becoming dominant and/or disruptive to those systems." These species have biological traits that provide them with competitive advantages over native species, particularly because in a new habitat they are not restricted by the biological controls of their native habitat. As a result, these invasive species can monopolize natural communities, displacing many native species and causing widespread economic and environmental damage. MIPAG recognized 69 plant species as "Invasive," "Likely Invasive," or "Potentially Invasive."

Massachusetts has a variety of laws and regulations in place that attempt to mitigate the impacts of these species. The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) maintains a list of prohibited plants for the state, which includes federally noxious weeds as well as invasive plants recommended by MIPAG and approved for listing by MDAR. Species on the MDAR list are regulated with prohibitions on importation, propagation, purchase, and sale in the Commonwealth. Additionally, the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (310 CMR 10.00) includes language requiring all activities covered by the Act to account for, and take steps to prevent, the introduction or propagation of invasive species.

In 2000, Massachusetts passed an Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan, making the Commonwealth eligible for federal funds to support and implement the plan through the federal Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act. MassDEP is part of the Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel, which was established under the federal Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force. This panel allows managers and researchers to exchange information and coordinate efforts on the management of aquatic invasive species. The Commonwealth also has several resources pertaining to terrestrial invasive species, such as the Massachusetts Introduced Pest Outreach Project, although a strategic management plan has not yet been prepared for these species.

Code of Massachusetts Regulation (CMR) 330 CMR 6.0(d) requires any seed mix containing restricted noxious weeds to specify the name and number per pound on the seed label. Regulation 339 CMR 9.0 restricts the transport of currant or gooseberry species in an attempt to prevent the spread of white

⁵⁵ MassWildlife Climate Action Tool: <http://climateactiontool.org/content/invasive-plants-and-animals>. Accessed March 4, 2019.

pine blister rust. There are also a number of state laws pertaining to invasive species. Chapters 128, 130, and 132 of Part I of the General Laws of the state include language addressing water chestnuts, green crabs, the Asian longhorn beetle, and a number of other species. These laws also include language allowing orchards and gardens to be surveyed for invasive species and for quarantines to be put into effect at any time.

Identification and monitoring is an important element in mitigating impacts from invasive species. The Outsmart Invasive Species project is a collaboration between the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MA DCR) and the Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health at the University of Georgia. The goal of the project is to strengthen ongoing invasive-species monitoring efforts in Massachusetts by enlisting help from citizens. The web- and smartphone-based approach enables volunteers to identify and collect data on invasive species in their own time, with little or no hands-on training. By taking advantage of the increasing number of people equipped with iPhone or digital camera/web technology, this approach will expand the scope of invasive-species monitoring, in an effort to help control outbreaks of new or emergent invasive species that threaten our environment.⁵⁶

Location

The damage rendered by invasive species is significant. The massive scope of this hazard means that the entire Town of New Salem may experience impacts from these species. Furthermore, the ability of invasive species to travel far distances (either via natural mechanisms or accidental human interference) allows these species to propagate rapidly over a large geographic area. Similarly, in open freshwater ecosystems, invasive species can quickly spread once introduced, as there are generally no physical barriers to prevent establishment, outside of physiological tolerances, and multiple opportunities for transport to new locations (by boats, for example).

One of the immediate threats to New Salem is the Hemlock wooly adelgid, a small insect that attacks and kills Hemlocks, which has been sighted at several locations in nearby Wendell. The pest may spread unimpeded, leading to widespread hemlock mortality.

Extent

Invasive species are a widespread problem in Massachusetts and throughout the country. The geographic extent of invasive species varies greatly depending on the species in question and other factors, including habitat and the range of the species. Some (such as the gypsy moth) are nearly controlled, whereas others, such as the zebra mussel, are currently adversely impacting ecosystems throughout the Commonwealth. Invasive species can be measured through monitoring and recording observances.

⁵⁶ <https://masswoods.org/outsmart>. Accessed March 5, 2019.

Previous Occurrences

The terrestrial and freshwater species listed on the MIPAG website as “Invasive” (last updated April 2016) are identified in Table 3-38. The table also includes details on the nature of the ecological and economic challenges presented by each species as well as information on where the species has been detected in Massachusetts. Twenty of the invasive species on the list have been observed in New Salem since 2010.

Table 3-38: Invasive Plants Occurring in Western Massachusetts		
Species (Common Name)	Notes on Occurrence and Impact	Observed in New Salem
<i>Acer platanoides</i> L. (Norway maple)	A tree occurring in all regions of the state in upland and wetland habitats, and especially common in woodlands with colluvial soils. It grows in full sun to full shade. Escapes from cultivation; can form dense stands; out-competes native vegetation, including sugar maple; dispersed by water, wind and vehicles.	Y
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i> L. (Bishop's goutweed; bishop's weed; goutweed)	A perennial herb occurring in all regions of the state in uplands and wetlands. Grows in full sun to full shade. Escapes from cultivation; spreads aggressively by roots; forms dense colonies in flood plains.	Y
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i> (P. Miller) Swingle (Tree of heaven)	This tree occurs in all regions of the state in upland, wetland, & coastal habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Spreads aggressively from root suckers, especially in disturbed areas.	Y
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i> (Bieb.) Cavara & Grande (Garlic mustard)	A biennial herb occurring in all regions of the state in uplands. Grows in full sun to full shade. Spreads aggressively by seed, especially in wooded areas.	Y
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i> DC. (Japanese barberry)	A shrub occurring in all regions of the state in open and wooded uplands and wetlands. Grows in full sun to full shade. Escaping from cultivation; spread by birds; forms dense stands.	Y
<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i> A.Gray (Carolina fanwort; fanwort)	A perennial herb occurring in all regions of the state in aquatic habitats. Common in the aquarium trade; chokes waterways.	N
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i> Thunb. (Oriental bittersweet; Asian or Asiatic bittersweet)	A perennial vine occurring in all regions of the state in uplands. Grows in full sun to partial shade. Escaping from cultivation; berries spread by birds and humans; overwhelms and kills vegetation.	Y
<i>Cynanchum louiseae</i> Kartesz & Gandhi (Black swallow-wort, Louise's swallow-wort)	A perennial vine occurring in all regions of the state in upland, wetland, and coastal habitats. Grows in full sun to partial shade. Forms dense stands, out-competing native species: deadly to Monarch butterflies.	N
<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i> Thunb. (Autumn olive)	A shrub occurring in uplands in all regions of the state. Grows in full sun. Escaping from cultivation; berries spread by birds; aggressive in open areas; has the ability to change soil.	Y
<i>Euonymus alatus</i> (Thunb.) Sieb. (Winged euonymus; Burning bush)	A shrub occurring in all regions of the state and capable of germinating prolifically in many different habitats. It grows in full sun to full shade. Escaping from cultivation and can form dense thickets and dominate the understory; seeds are dispersed by	Y

Table 3-38: Invasive Plants Occurring in Western Massachusetts

Species (Common Name)	Notes on Occurrence and Impact	Observed in New Salem
	birds.	
<i>Frangula alnus</i> P. Mill. (European buckthorn; glossy buckthorn)	Shrub or tree occurring in all regions of the state in upland, wetland, and coastal habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Produces fruit throughout the growing season; grows in multiple habitats; forms thickets.	Y
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i> L. (Dame's rocket)	A biennial and perennial herb occurring in all regions of the state in upland and wetland habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Spreads by seed; can form dense stands, particularly in flood plains.	Y
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i> L. (Yellow iris)	A perennial herb occurring in all regions of the state in wetland habitats, primarily in flood plains. Grows in full sun to partial shade. Out-competes native plant communities.	N
<i>Lonicera japonica</i> Thunb. (Japanese honeysuckle)	A perennial vine occurring in all regions of the state in upland, wetland, and coastal habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Rapidly growing, dense stands climb and overwhelm native vegetation; produces many seeds that are bird dispersed; more common in southeastern Massachusetts.	N
<i>Lonicera morrowii</i> A.Gray (Morrow's honeysuckle)	A shrub occurring in all regions of the state in upland, wetland, and coastal habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Part of a confusing hybrid complex of nonnative honeysuckles commonly planted and escaping from cultivation via bird dispersal.	Y
<i>Lonicera x bella</i> Zabel [<i>morrowii</i> x <i>tatarica</i>] (Bell's honeysuckle)	This shrub occurs in all regions of the state in upland, wetland, and coastal habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Part of a confusing hybrid complex of nonnative honeysuckles commonly planted and escaping from cultivation via bird dispersal.	N
<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i> L. (Creeping jenny; moneywort)	A perennial herb occurring in all regions of the state in upland and wetland habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Escaping from cultivation; problematic in flood plains, forests and wetlands; forms dense mats.	Y
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i> L. (Purple loosestrife)	A perennial herb or subshrub occurring in all regions of the state in upland and wetland habitats. Grows in full sun to partial shade. Escaping from cultivation; overtakes wetlands; high seed production and longevity.	Y

Table 3-38: Invasive Plants Occurring in Western Massachusetts

Species (Common Name)	Notes on Occurrence and Impact	Observed in New Salem
<i>Myriophyllum heterophyllum</i> Michx. (Variable water-milfoil; Two-leaved water-milfoil)	A perennial herb occurring in all regions of the state in aquatic habitats. Chokes waterways, spread by humans and possibly birds.	Y
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i> L. (Eurasian or European water-milfoil; spike water-milfoil)	A perennial herb found in all regions of the state in aquatic habitats. Chokes waterways, spread by humans and possibly birds.	N
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> L. (Reed canary-grass)	This perennial grass occurs in all regions of the state in wetlands and open uplands. Grows in full sun to partial shade. Can form huge colonies and overwhelm wetlands; flourishes in disturbed areas; native and introduced strains; common in agricultural settings and in forage crops.	Y
<i>Phragmites australis</i> (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud. subsp. <i>australis</i> (Common reed)	A perennial grass (USDA lists as subshrub, shrub) found in all regions of the state. Grows in upland and wetland habitats in full sun to full shade. Overwhelms wetlands forming huge, dense stands; flourishes in disturbed areas; native and introduced strains.	Y
<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i> Sieb. & Zucc. (Japanese knotweed; Japanese or Mexican Bamboo)	A perennial herbaceous subshrub or shrub occurring in all regions of the state in upland, wetland, and coastal habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade, but hardier in full sun. Spreads vegetatively and by seed; forms dense thickets.	Y
<i>Polygonum perfoliatum</i> L. (Mile-a-minute vine or weed; Asiatic tearthumb)	This annual herbaceous vine is currently known to exist in several counties in MA, and has also has been found in RI and CT. Habitats include streamside, fields, and road edges in full sun to partial shade. Highly aggressive; bird and human dispersed.	N
<i>Potamogeton crispus</i> L. (Crisped pondweed; curly pondweed)	A perennial herb occurring in all regions of the state in aquatic habitats. Forms dense mats in the spring and persists vegetatively.	N
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i> L. (Lesser celandine; fig buttercup)	A perennial herb occurring on stream banks, and in lowland and uplands woods in all regions of the state. Grows in full sun to full shade. Propagates vegetatively and by seed; forms dense stands especially in riparian woodlands; an ephemeral that outcompetes native spring wildflowers.	N
<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i> L. (Common buckthorn)	A shrub or tree occurring in all regions of the state in upland and wetland habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Produces fruit in fall; grows in multiple habitats; forms dense thickets.	Y

Table 3-38: Invasive Plants Occurring in Western Massachusetts		
Species (Common Name)	Notes on Occurrence and Impact	Observed in New Salem
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> L. (Black locust)	A tree that occurs in all regions of the state in upland habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. While the species is native to central portions of Eastern North America, it is not indigenous to Massachusetts. It has been planted throughout the state since the 1700's and is now widely naturalized. It behaves as an invasive species in areas with sandy soils.	Y
<i>Rosa multiflora</i> Thunb. (Multiflora rose)	A perennial vine or shrub occurring in all regions of the state in upland, wetland and coastal habitats. Grows in full sun to full shade. Forms impenetrable thorny thickets that can overwhelm other vegetation; bird dispersed.	Y
<i>Trapa natans</i> L. (Water-chestnut)	An annual herb occurring in the western, central, and eastern regions of the state in aquatic habitats. Forms dense floating mats on water.	N

Source: Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group, <https://www.massnrc.org/mipag/invasive.htm>, and Franklin County Flora Group, 2019.

Although there are less clear-cut criteria for invasive fauna, there are a number of animals that have disrupted natural systems and inflicted economic damage on the Commonwealth, and may impact New Salem (Table 3-39). One invasive species, the Zebra mussel, was first documented in Massachusetts in Laurel Lake in Lee (Berkshire County, Housatonic River watershed) in 2009. Invasive fungi are also included in this table. Because of the rapidly evolving nature of the invasive species hazard, this list is not considered exhaustive.

Table 3-39: Invasive Animal and Fungi Species in Massachusetts	
Species (Common Name)	Notes on Occurrence and Impact
<i>Terrestrial Species</i>	
Lymantria dispar dispar (Gypsy moth (insect))	This species was imported to Massachusetts for silk production, but escaped captivity in the 1860s. It is now found throughout the Commonwealth and has spread to parts of the Midwest. This species is considered a serious defoliator of oaks and other forest and urban trees; however, biological controls have been fairly successful against it.
Ophiostoma ulmi, Ophiostoma himal-ulmi, Ophiostoma novo-ulmi (Dutch elm disease (fungus))	In the 1930s, this disease arrived in Cleveland, Ohio, on infected elm logs imported from Europe. A more virulent strain arrived in the 1940s. The American elm originally ranged in all states east of Rockies, and elms were once the nation's most popular urban street tree. However, the trees have now largely disappeared from both urban and forested landscapes. It is estimated that "Dutch" elm disease has killed more than 100 million trees.
Adelges tsugae (Hemlock woolly adelgid (insect))	This species was introduced accidentally around 1924 and is now found from Maine to Georgia, including all of Massachusetts. It has caused up to 90% mortality in eastern hemlock species, which are important for shading trout streams and provide habitat for about 90 species of birds and mammals. It has been documented in about one-third of Massachusetts cities and towns and threatens the state's extensive Eastern Hemlock groves.
Cryphonectria parasitica (Chestnut blight (fungus))	This fungus was first detected in New York City in 1904. By 1926, the disease had devastated chestnuts from Maine to Alabama. Chestnuts once made up one-fourth to one-half of eastern U.S. forests, and the tree was prized for its durable wood and as a food for humans, livestock, and wildlife. Today, only stump sprouts from killed trees remain.
Anoplophora glabripennis (Asian long-horned beetle)	This species was discovered in Worcester in 2008. The beetle rapidly infested trees in the area, resulting in the removal of nearly 30,000 infected or high-risk trees in just 3 years.
Cronartium ribicola (White pine blister rust (fungus))	This fungus is an aggressive and non-native pathogen that was introduced into eastern North America in 1909. Both the pine and plants in the Ribes genus (gooseberries and currants) must be present in order for the disease to complete its life cycle. The rust threatens any pines within a quarter-mile radius from infected Ribes.

Table 3-39: Invasive Animal and Fungi Species in Massachusetts	
Species (Common Name)	Notes on Occurrence and Impact
<i>Aquatic Species</i>	
Dreissena polymorpha (Zebra mussel)	The first documented occurrence of zebra mussels in a Massachusetts water body occurred in Laurel Lake in July 2009. Zebra mussels can significantly alter the ecology of a water body and attach themselves to boats hulls and propellers, dock pilings, water intake pipes and aquatic animals. They are voracious eaters that can filter up to a liter of water a day per individual. This consumption can deprive young fish of crucial nutrients.

Source: Chase et al., 1997; Pederson et al., 2005, CZM, 2013, 2014; Defenders of Wildlife; Gulf of Maine; EOEAA, 2013a, 2013b; as presented in the 2018 Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan.

Probability of Future Events

Because the presence of invasive species is ongoing rather than a series of discrete events, it is difficult to quantify the frequency of these occurrences. However, increased rates of global trade and travel have created many new pathways for the dispersion of exotic species. As a result, the frequency with which these threats have been introduced has increased significantly. Increased international trade in ornamental plants is particularly concerning because many of the invasive plants species in the U.S. were originally imported as ornamentals.

More generally, a warming climate may place stress on colder-weather species while allowing non-native species accustomed to warmer climates to spread northward. The impacts of invasive species and climate change is discussed in more detail below.

Impact

The impacts of invasive species may interact with those of climate change, magnifying the negative impacts of both threats. Furthermore, due to the very traits that make them successful at establishing in new environments, invasives may be favored by climate change. These traits include tolerance to a broad range of environmental conditions, ability to disperse or travel long distances, ability to compete efficiently for resources, greater ability to respond to changes in the environment with changes in physical characteristics (phenotypic plasticity), high reproductive rates, and shorter times to maturity.

To become an invasive species, the species must first be transported to a new region, colonize and become established, and then spread across the new landscape. Climate change may impact each stage of this process. Globally, climate change may increase the introduction of invasive species by changing transport patterns (if new shipping routes open up), or by increasing the survival of invasives during transport. New ornamental species may be introduced to Massachusetts to take advantage of an expanded growing season as temperatures warm. Aquatic invasives may survive in ships' ballast waters with warmer temperatures. Extreme weather events or altered circulation patterns due to climate change could also allow the dispersal of invasive species to new regions via transportation of seeds,

larvae and small animals.

Species may shift their ranges north as the climate warms and be successful in regions they previously had not colonized. Invasives may also be able to spread more rapidly in response to climate change, given their high dispersal rates and fast generation times. These faster moving species may be at a competitive advantage if they can move into new areas before their native competitors.

Here in the Northeast, warming conditions may be particularly concerning for some invasives because species ranges in temperate regions are often limited by extreme cold temperatures or snowfall. There is concern that aquatic species, such as hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) and water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), may be able to survive and overwinter in Massachusetts with increased temperatures and reduced snowfall. Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*), large, non-native, semi-aquatic rodents that are currently established in Maryland and Delaware, are likely to move north with warming temperatures - perhaps as far as Massachusetts.

Extreme winter temperatures are also critical limiting factors for many forest pests, and warming is expected to increase their survival and lead to expansions and outbreaks. For example, in Massachusetts, it's likely that winter temperatures have been limiting the impact of hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*), as many infested forest stands are surviving while in more southerly ranges there is near complete mortality from this pest. But the adelgid has already expanded its range with warming winter temperatures and is likely to have increased survival and higher reproductive rates in the northern portion of its range as temperatures warm, likely leading to more significant impacts on forests.

Invasive species are often able to thrive or take advantage of areas of high or fluctuating resource availability such as those found in disturbed environments. For example, for invasive plants, insect outbreaks or storms often free up space in the forest allowing light to penetrate and nutrients and moisture balances to change, allowing invasive plants to move in. Climate change is likely to create these types of opportunities through increased disturbances such as storms and floods, coastal erosion and sea level rise.

Invasives may also be better able to respond to changing environmental conditions that free up resources or create opportunities. For example, greater plasticity in response to their environment may allow some invasive plants to respond faster to increases in spring temperature than native plants. These invasives are able to leaf-out earlier in warmer years, taking up available space, nutrients, and sunlight, and achieving a competitive advantage against native species. Increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere may also benefit some weedy plant species, allowing them to compete for other resources (like water) more effectively than their native counterparts.

Species roles may change as the climate changes, further complicating the management and policy response. As species ranges shift and existing inter-species relationships are broken, there is the potential that some species, including native species, may become pests because the interspecies

interactions (e.g., predation, herbivory) that used to keep their population numbers in check are no longer functional.⁵⁷

Once established, invasive species often escape notice for years or decades. Introduced species that initially escaped many decades ago are only now being recognized as invasives. Because these species can occur anywhere (on public or private property), new invasive species often escape notice until they are widespread and eradication is impractical. As a result, early and coordinated action between public and private landholders is critical to preventing widespread damage from an invasive species.

Vulnerability

Because plant and animal life is so abundant in New Salem, the entire town is considered to be exposed to the invasive species hazard, which has the potential to cause “Limited” impacts. Areas with high amounts of plant or animal life may be at higher risk of exposure to invasive species than less vegetated areas; however, invasive species can disrupt ecosystems of all kinds.

Society

The majority of invasive species do not have direct impacts on human well-being; however, as described in the following subsections, there are some health impacts associated with invasive species.

Vulnerable Populations

Invasive species rarely result in direct impacts on humans, but sensitive people may be vulnerable to specific species that may be present in the state in the future. These include people with compromised immune systems, children under the age of 5, people over the age of 65, and pregnant women. Those who rely on natural systems for their livelihood or mental and emotional well-being are more likely to experience negative repercussions from the expansion of invasive species.

Health Impacts

Of particular concern to human health are species like the Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*). This invasive mosquito, originally from southeast and subtropical Asia has moved through the Eastern U.S. and has recently arrived in Massachusetts. Capable of spreading West Nile Virus, Equine Encephalitis, and numerous other tropical diseases, this aggressive mosquito is likely range-limited by cold winter temperatures, suitable landscape conditions (it prefers urban areas), and variation in moisture. As winter temperatures increase, the species is likely to become more prevalent in Massachusetts and throughout the Northeast, increasing the risk of serious illness for residents in summer months.⁵⁸

Additional invasive species have negative impacts on human health. The Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) produces powerful allelochemicals that prevent the reproduction of other species and can

⁵⁷ This section excerpted from the MassWildlife Climate Action Tool: <http://climateactiontool.org/content/invasive-plants-and-animals>. Accessed March 5, 2019.

⁵⁸ MassWildlife Climate Action Tool: <http://climateactiontool.org/content/invasive-plants-and-animals>. Accessed March 5, 2019.

cause allergic reactions in humans. Similarly, due to its voracious consumption, the zebra mussel accumulates aquatic toxins, such as polychlorinated biphenyls or polyaromatic hydrocarbons, in their tissues at a rapid rate. When other organisms consume these mussels, the toxins can accumulate, resulting in potential human health impacts if humans consume these animals.

Loss of urban tree canopy from invasive species and pests can lead to higher summertime temperatures and greater vulnerability to extreme temperatures. Health impacts from extreme heat exposure is discussed in the Extreme Temperature section.

Economic Impacts

Economic impacts include the cost to control invasive species on public and private land. Individuals who are particularly vulnerable to the economic impacts of this hazard include all groups who depend on existing ecosystems in New Salem for their economic success. This includes all individuals working in forestry and agriculture-related fields, as well as those whose livelihoods depend on outdoor recreation activities such as hunting, hiking, or aquatic sports. Businesses catering to visitors who come to a town for outdoor recreation opportunities can also suffer from loss of business. Additionally, homeowners whose properties are adjacent to vegetated areas or waterbodies experiencing decline from an invasive species outbreak could experience decreases in property value.

Infrastructure

The entire town of New Salem is considered exposed to this hazard; however, the built environment is not expected to be impacted by invasive species to the degree that the natural environment is. Buildings are not likely to be directly impacted by invasive species. Amenities such as outdoor recreational areas that depend on biodiversity and ecosystem health may be impacted by invasive species. Facilities that rely on biodiversity or the health of surrounding ecosystems, such as outdoor recreation areas or agricultural/forestry operations, could be more vulnerable to impacts from invasive species.

Agriculture

The agricultural sector is vulnerable to increased invasive species associated with increased temperatures. More pest pressure from insects, diseases, and weeds may harm crops and cause farms to increase pesticide use. In addition, floodwaters may spread invasive plants that are detrimental to crop yield and health. Agricultural and forestry operations that rely on the health of the ecosystem and specific species are likely to be vulnerable to invasive species.

Public Health

An increase in species not typically found in Massachusetts could expose populations to vector-borne disease. A major outbreak could exceed the capacity of hospitals and medical providers to care for patients.

Transportation

Water transportation may be subject to increased inspections, cleanings, and costs that result from the

threat and spread of invasive species. Species such as zebra mussels can damage aquatic infrastructure and vessels.

Water Infrastructure

Water storage facilities may be impacted by zebra mussels. Invasive species may lead to reduced water quality, which has implications for the drinking water supplies and the cost of treatment.

Environment

New Salem is 88% forested, and is therefore vulnerable to invasive species impacts to forests. Invasive plants can out-compete native vegetation through rapid growth and prolific seed production. Increased amounts of invasive plants can reduce plant diversity by dominating forests. When invasive plants dominate a forest, they can inhibit the regeneration of native trees and plants. This reduced regeneration further reduces the forest's ability to regenerate in a timely and sufficient manner following a disturbance event. In addition, invasive plants have been shown to provide less valuable wildlife habitat and food sources.

As discussed previously, the movement of a number of invasive insects and diseases has increased with global trade. Many of these insects and diseases have been found in New England, including the hemlock woolly adelgid, the Asian long-horned beetle, and beech bark disease. These organisms have no natural predators or controls and are significantly affecting our forests by changing species composition as trees susceptible to these agents are selectively killed.

Invasive species interact with other forest stressors, such as climate change, increasing their negative impact. Examples include:

- A combination of an earlier growing season, more frequent gaps in the forest canopy from wind and ice storms, and carbon dioxide fertilization will likely favor invasive plants over our native trees and forest vegetation.
- Preferential browse of native plants by larger deer populations may favor invasive species and inhibit the ability of a forest to regenerate after wind and ice storms.
- Warming temperatures favor some invasive plants, insects, and diseases, whose populations have historically been kept in check by the cold climate.
- Periods of drought weaken trees and can make them more susceptible to insects and diseases.⁵⁹

Aquatic invasive species pose a particular threat to water bodies. In addition to threatening native species, they can degrade water quality and wildlife habitat. Impacts of aquatic invasive species include:

- Reduced diversity of native plants and animals
- Impairment of recreational uses, such as swimming, boating, and fishing
- Degradation of water quality
- Degradation of wildlife habitat

⁵⁹ Catanzaro, Paul, Anthony D'Amato, and Emily Silver Huff. *Increasing Forest Resiliency for an Uncertain Future*. University of Massachusetts Amherst, University of Vermont, USDA Forest Service. 2016

- Increased threats to public health and safety
- Diminished property values
- Local and complete extinction of rare and endangered species

Vulnerability Summary

Overall New Salem faces a “Medium” vulnerability to invasive species. Impacts from invasive species have the potential to dramatically alter New Salem’s forests and other natural landscapes.

3.15 OTHER HAZARDS

In addition to the hazards identified above, the Committee reviewed the full list of hazards listed in the Massachusetts Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. Due to the location and context of the Town of New Salem, coastal erosion, coastal flooding, and tsunamis were determined not to be a threat. Manmade hazards are not addressed in the State plan, but were addressed in the 2014 New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan, and are considered a risk to the Town.

This plan does not address all manmade hazards that could affect New Salem. A complete hazards vulnerability analysis was not within the scope of this update. For the purposes of the 2021 plan, the Committee discussed and updated the information from the 2014 Plan, where available, and discussed non-natural hazards that are of an accidental nature, including industrial transportation accidents and industrial accidents in a fixed facility. New to the 2021 plan are evaluations of vector-borne diseases and cyber-security, which have become threats of greater concern in recent years.

3.15.1 VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES⁶⁰

Hazard Profile

The Town of New Salem chose to include a discussion of the hazards posed by vector-borne disease in their community as part of this Plan update. Vector-borne disease is defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as illnesses in humans that are caused by contact (being bitten by) a vector such as mosquito, tick, or flea. Examples of mosquito-borne diseases include Chikungunya, Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), Zika and West Nile Virus. Examples of tick-borne disease include Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis/Ehrlichiosis, Babesiosis and Powassan.

In the US in 2016, a total of 96,075 cases of vector-borne diseases were reported, 1,827 of which were reported in Massachusetts. The CDC indicates that cases of vector-borne diseases are substantially underreported. Tick-borne illnesses more than doubled between 2004 and 2016 and accounted for 77% of all vector-borne disease reports in the United States. Lyme disease accounted for 82% of all tick-borne cases, but cases of Spotted fever rickettsioses, Babesiosis and Anaplasmosis/Ehrlichiosis also increased. Between 2004 and 2016, nine vector-borne human diseases were reported for the first time from the United States and its territories. According to the CDC, vector-borne diseases have been difficult to prevent and control, and a Food and Drug Administration approved vaccine is only available for yellow fever virus. Insecticide resistance is widespread and is increasing.

The impacts of vector-borne diseases can be significant in a community and can affect residents' quality

⁶⁰ This section relies heavily on a template prepared by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) for towns in their region that are working to update local hazard mitigation plans. New Salem requested that this section be added to their 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan. FRCOG updated available statistics for Massachusetts using information from MA DPH's website and for Franklin County (FRCOG Public Health Nurse and MAVEN).

of life and ability to work. Other impacts of these diseases can include an increase in life-long morbidity and an increase in mortality.

Probability of Occurrence

According to the CDC, the geographic and seasonal distribution of vector populations and the diseases they can carry depends not only on the climate, but also on land use, socioeconomic and cultural factors, pest control, access to health care, and human responses to disease risk. Climate variability can result in vector/pathogen adaptation and shifts or expansions in their geographic ranges. Infectious disease transmission is sensitive to local, small-scale differences in weather, human modification of the landscape, the diversity of animal hosts and human behavior that affects vector/human contact.

Franklin County provides many and varied outdoor recreation opportunities for both residents and visitors, including hiking, swimming, mountain biking, and camping. Increased exposure to the outdoors, particularly to areas with heavy tree and forest cover, and areas with tall grass or standing water, significantly increase a person's exposure to vector-borne illnesses. Increases in average year-round temperature during the past few decades has also led to the over-wintering of ticks in Franklin County and across the Commonwealth. A lengthening warm season has also increased tick and mosquito populations significantly.

Location

The entire Town of New Salem is likely already impacted by vector-borne disease and is likely to be increasingly impacted. Exposure to any outdoor area with tall grasses, standing water, and trees increases risk. Residents and visitors can be exposed at home and in more commercial areas, although exposure in commercial areas is generally less likely.

Extent⁶¹

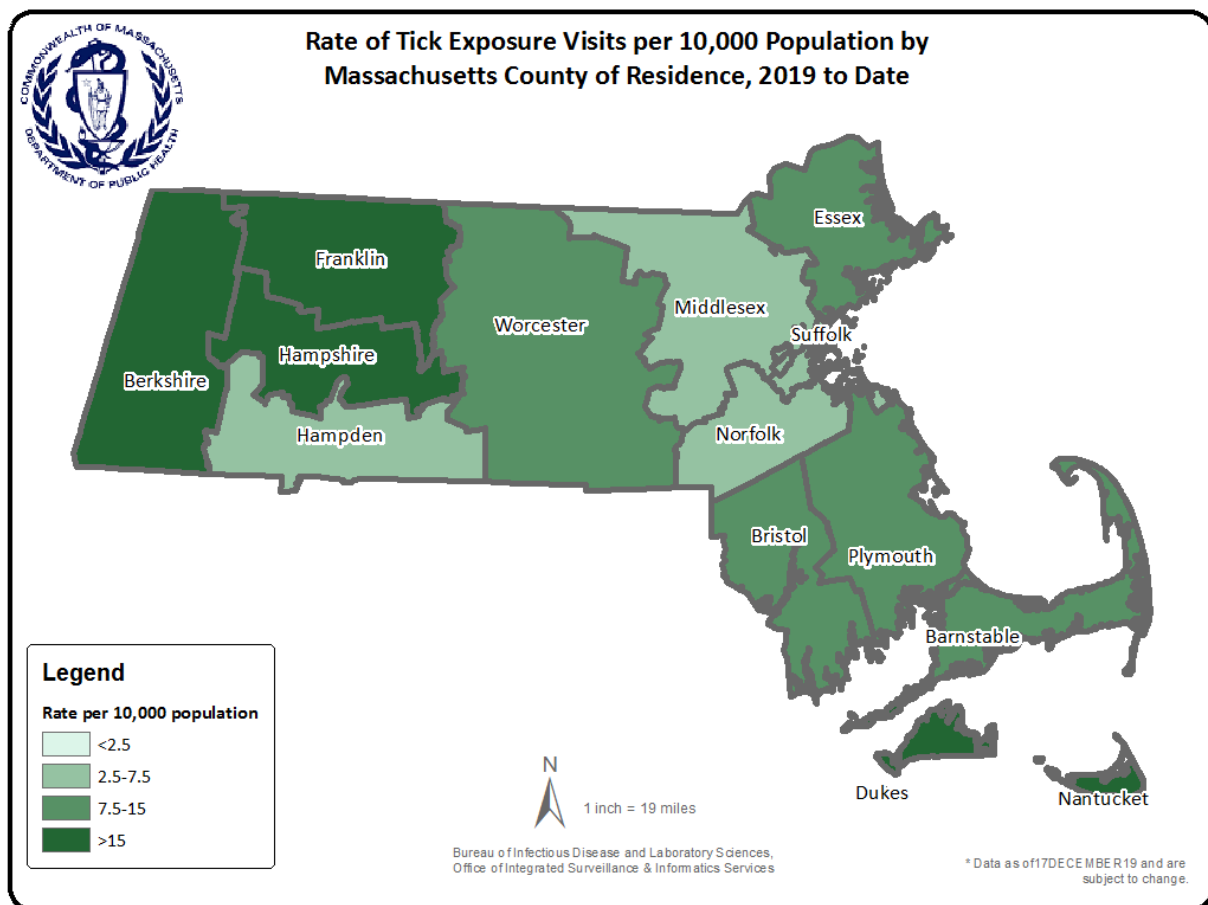
Tick-borne Illness

Massachusetts has seen cases of once non-existent or very rare tick-borne illnesses rise, including Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, Lyme, Powassan, Spotted fever rickettsiosis and Tularemia. Tick activity and tick-borne diseases occur year-round in Massachusetts. Although tick activity is weather dependent, there are two peaks during the year; the first begins in March/April and lasts through August, and the second occurs in October-November. The majority of cases of tick-borne disease occur in June through August.

The map on the following page shows the rate, per 10,000 total population, of ED visits by patients who had a visit related to a tick exposure, by Massachusetts county of residence, 2019 to date. Although

⁶¹ <https://www.mass.gov/lists/tick-borne-disease-surveillance-summaries-and-data#monthly-tick-report-page-> accessed March 19, 2020.

there are differences in the rate of patient visits, this shows that people are exposed to ticks throughout all of Massachusetts and should take recommended steps to reduce the chance of being bitten.⁶²



The following information was downloaded from the website of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.⁶³

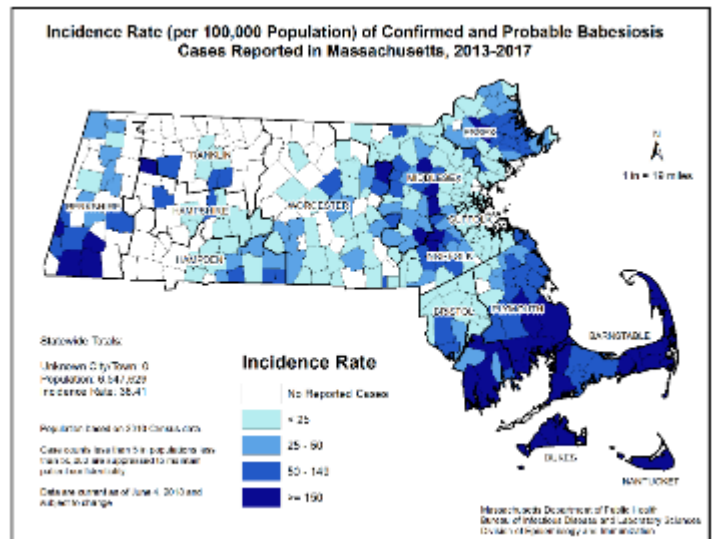
Babesiosis:

- 590 confirmed and probable cases of Babesiosis were reported in Massachusetts in 2017, a 13% increase from 2016. Overall, 1,677 suspect cases of Babesiosis were investigated.
- 2 confirmed cases in Franklin County.**
- Statewide, Babesiosis incidence increased from 7.9 to 9.0 cases per 100,000 residents. The incidence in Berkshire, Dukes, Hampden, Hampshire, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester counties increased slightly. Counties with the highest incidence continued to be Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket.

⁶² <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/monthly-tick-report-november-2019> accessed March 19, 2020.

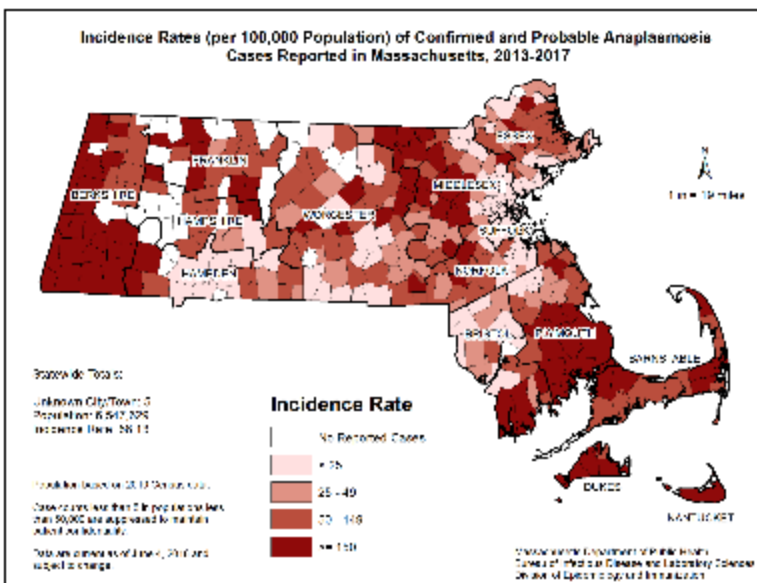
⁶³ <https://www.mass.gov/lists/tick-borne-disease-surveillance-summaries-and-data#lyme-disease-surveillance-data> accessed March 19, 2020.

- ✱ The majority of cases occurred in June, July and August, with only 35% of cases reporting awareness of a recent tick bite.
- ✱ People aged 60 years and older continue to be at greatest risk for clinical disease (59% of all patients identified with Babesiosis were 60 years or older) and 66% of all cases were male.



Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis (HGA):

- ✱ 1,209 confirmed and probable cases of HGA were reported in Massachusetts in 2017, a 38% increase over 2016. Overall 2,473 suspect cases of HGA were investigated Statewide, HGA incidence increased from 13.3 to 18.4 cases per 100,000 residents. The counties with the highest incidence are Barnstable, Berkshire, Dukes, **Franklin**, Nantucket and Plymouth. Berkshire County had the greatest change in incidence, from 66.3 to 133.4 cases per 100,000 residents.
- ✱ **27 confirmed cases in Franklin County.**
- ✱ The majority of cases occurred in May, June, and July, with only 45% of cases reporting awareness of a recent tick bite.
- ✱ People aged 60 years and over continue to be at greatest risk for clinical disease (56% of patients identified with HGA were 60 or over) and 64% of all cases were male.
- ✱ Nearly one out of three patients with HGA (29%) was hospitalized. The symptoms most commonly reported included fever (93%), malaise (72%), and muscle aches and pain (63%). There were three fatalities.



Lyme disease:

- ✱ 3,830 confirmed Lyme disease cases, and 1,770 probable cases, were reported in Massachusetts in 2014, which is a decrease of 1% from the number of confirmed and probable cases reported in 2013
- ✱ **50 confirmed cases in Franklin County in 2014.**
- ✱ The highest incidence rates were among children aged 5-9 years and adults aged 65-74 years.

- * The majority of cases had onsets in June, July, and August.
- * 66% of confirmed cases had a reported erythema migrans (“bulls-eye”) rash.

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments’ Cooperative Public Health Services (CPHS) Public Health Nurse supplied the following information for reported cases of vector-borne illnesses in 2019:^{64,65}

- * In 2019, 92 suspect Lyme
 - In 2018, 76 suspect Lyme
 - In 2017, 86 suspect Lyme
- * Babesiosis 1 (5 were reported but 4 were revoked-determined not to be Babesiosis)
- * HGA Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis (37 total reported, 11 confirmed, 14 suspect, 1 probable and 10 revoked)
- * Erlichiosis 1 (6 reported: 1 probable, 5 revoked)
- * No other tick-borne illnesses reported in 2019.

Mosquito-borne Illnesses⁶⁶

West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE or “Triple E”) are viruses that occur in Massachusetts and can cause illness ranging from a mild fever to more serious disease like encephalitis or meningitis. There are other diseases spread by mosquitoes that people may be exposed to when traveling in other regions of the world. These include Zika virus, Dengue fever, and Chikungunya.

Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) is a rare but serious disease caused by a virus that can affect people of all ages. EEE is generally spread to humans through the bite of a mosquito infected with the virus. EEE can cause severe illness and possibly lead to death in any age group; however, people under age 15 are at particular risk.⁶⁷

EEE has a 30-50% mortality and lifelong neurological disability among many survivors. The first symptoms of EEE are fever (often 103° to 106°F), stiff neck, headache, and lack of energy. These symptoms show up three to ten days after a bite from an infected mosquito. Inflammation and swelling of the brain, called encephalitis, is the most dangerous and frequent serious complication. The disease rapidly worsens and some patients may go into a coma within a week. There is no treatment for EEE. In Massachusetts, approximately half of the people identified with EEE have died from the infection. People who survive this disease will often be permanently disabled due to neurologic damage. Few people recover completely.

Historically, clusters of human cases have occurred over a period of two to three years, with a variable

⁶⁴ Note: It is never clear if these trends actually represent an increase in infection/illness as small sample, underreporting is assumed, reporting of cases determined by clinical judgement. Virtually all of the reports that reach MAVEN are due to a laboratory result.

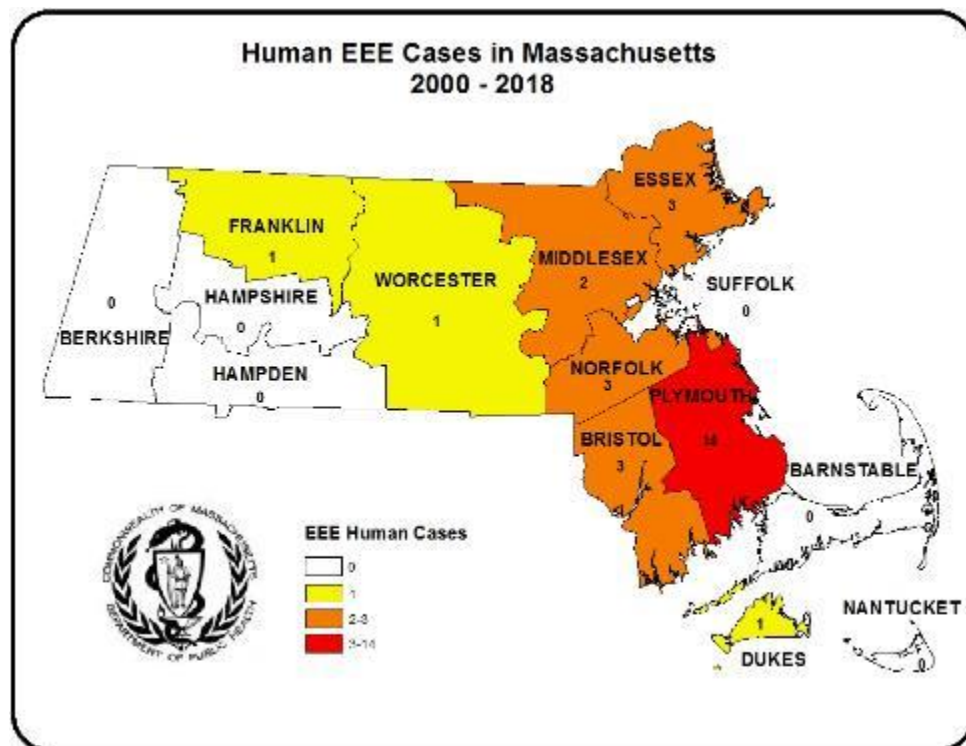
⁶⁵ New Salem is not a member of FRCOG’s CPHS. The data from other Towns in Franklin County are meant to demonstrate case rates in a nearby area.

⁶⁶ <https://www.mass.gov/mosquito-borne-diseases> accessed March 20, 2020.

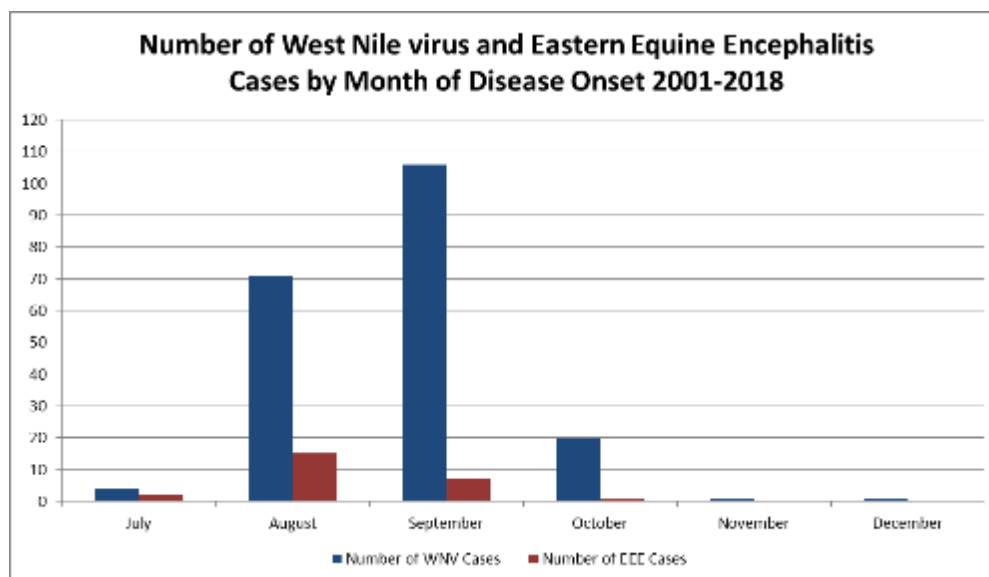
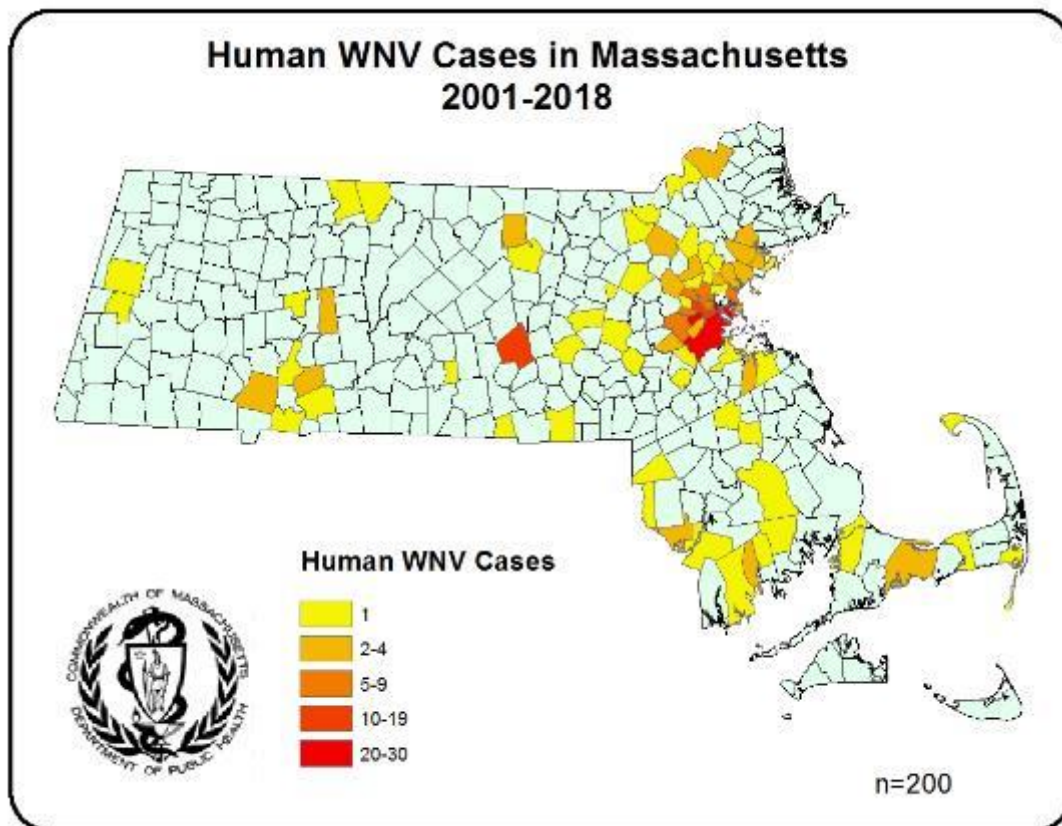
⁶⁷ <https://www.mass.gov/guides/eee-in-massachusetts> accessed March 20, 2020

number of years between clusters. In the years between these case clusters or outbreaks, isolated cases can and do occur. Outbreaks of human EEE disease in Massachusetts occurred in 1938-39, 1955-56, 1972-74, 1982-84, 1990-92, and, 2004-06. Two cases of EEE occurred in each of 2010 and 2011; one case each of these years occurred in visitors to Massachusetts. Seven human cases of EEE occurred in 2012, a single case in 2013 and no cases from 2014 - 2018.

The narrative above and the following figures are from the MA Department of Public Health's 2019 Arbovirus Surveillance and Response Plan.⁶⁸



⁶⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/lists/arbovirus-surveillance-plan-and-historical-data> accessed March 20, 2020. Narrative copied from p. 1 of the report. Figures from pp. 24-26.



West Nile virus (WNV) first appeared in the United States in 1999. Since the initial outbreak in New York City, the virus has spread across the US from east to west. Following the identification of WNV in birds and mosquitoes in Massachusetts during the summer of 2000, MDPH arranged meetings between local, state, and federal officials, academicians, environmentalists and the public to develop recommendations

to adapt the arbovirus surveillance and response plan to include activities appropriate for WNV. Four workgroups addressed the issues of surveillance, risk reduction interventions, pesticide toxicity, and communication.

WNV infection may be asymptomatic in some people, but it leads to morbidity and mortality in others. WNV causes sporadic disease of humans, and occasionally significant outbreaks. Nationally, 2,554 human cases of WNV neuroinvasive disease (meningitis and encephalitis) and WNV fever were reported to the CDC in 2018. The majority of people who are infected with WNV (approximately 80%) will have no symptoms. A smaller proportion of people who become infected (~ 20%) will have symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands. They may also develop a skin rash on the chest, stomach, and back. Less than 1% of people infected with WNV will develop severe illness, such as encephalitis or meningitis. The symptoms of severe illness can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness, and paralysis. Persons older than 50 years of age have a higher risk of developing severe illness. In Massachusetts, there were at least 12 fatal WNV human cases identified between 2002 and 2018. All but three of these fatalities were in individuals 80 years of age or older; all of them were in individuals over 60.⁶⁹

The number of EEE and WNV cases in Massachusetts in 2019 is shown below.⁷⁰

2019 Arbovirus results summary			
	Mosquito samples positive	Animals positive	Humans positive
WNV	87	0	3
EEE	428	9	12

LAST UPDATED: November 14, 2019

Vulnerability Assessment

Society

Vector-borne illness has a significant impact on humans and on a community. These illnesses can significantly impact the health, long-term morbidity and mortality, and quality of life of Town residents and can reduce a person's ability to work or contribute to the community in other ways. In addition, pesticides and herbicides used to control vector populations can also negatively impact human health.

⁶⁹ <https://www.mass.gov/lists/arbovirus-surveillance-plan-and-historical-data> accessed March 20, 2020. pp.3-4.

⁷⁰ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-arbovirus-update> accessed March 20, 2020.

Infrastructure

Vector-borne illnesses pose little threat to infrastructure and the built environment. Overtime, changes in development patterns may occur as people respond to the increase in disease carrying insects.

Natural Environment

Increases in vector-borne illnesses can increase the likelihood that a community needs to use chemical pesticides and herbicides to control vector populations. The increased use of these products and chemicals can negatively impact the natural environment, including vegetation, rivers and streams, and animal populations. Reducing populations of ticks and mosquitoes can reduce the food source for other dependent animal populations. Additionally, diseases carried by insects can affect wildlife. There is also the risk of people reacting to the threat of disease by altering the environment to not support vector habitat, which can severely damage the long-term health of ecosystems.

Economy

The economy is susceptible to the indirect impacts of vector-borne illnesses. If a community decides to engage in a pest-control program or another program to reduce vector populations, this can significantly affect their operating budget. Incorporation of any program to reduce vector populations in a community will likely cause tax increases within the municipality. Long-term, the more individuals in a population affected by vector-borne disease that results in life-long morbidity or mortality will reduce the overall economic participation and output of the population in a municipality. The can also be impacts on the outdoor recreation economy, which is a major revenue driver for Franklin County. People today choose to or may be advised by public health officials to avoid outdoor activities for fear of tick and mosquito bites.

Future Conditions

Continued changes to the climate, extreme precipitation events, issues with the control of stormwater, changes to animal and vector populations, and increases in insecticide resistance will lead to an ongoing and growing threat to individuals, governments and businesses. Local governments will need to invest in methods to reduce or prevent exposure to vector-borne diseases and should strongly consider methods that do not include the increased use of insecticides and herbicides. This may include methods such as promoting populations of bats, opossums and other animals that consume vectors of concern, increasing opportunities for residents to get ticks tested, reducing the cost and burden of tick testing and increasing the level of education and outreach to the public and health care practitioners about current and new vector-borne illnesses so treatment can be expedited. Towns should implement educational programs for residents and visitors for bite-prevention and detection.



3.15.2 MANMADE HAZARDS

Hazard Description

Most non-natural or manmade hazards fall into two general categories: intentional acts and accidental events, although these categories can overlap. Some of the hazards included in these two categories, as defined by MEMA, consist of intentional acts such as explosive devices, biological and radiological agents, arson and cyberterrorism and accidental events such as nuclear hazards, invasive species, infrastructure failure, industrial and transportation accidents. Accidental events can arise from human activities such as the manufacture, transportation, storage, and use of hazardous materials.

Hazardous materials in various forms can cause death, serious injury, long-lasting health effects, and damage to buildings, homes, and other property. Many products are shipped daily on the nation's highways, railroads, waterways, and pipelines. Chemical manufacturers are one source of hazardous materials, but there are many others, including service stations, hospitals, and hazardous materials waste sites. Hazardous materials come in the form of explosives, flammable and combustible substances, poisons, and radioactive materials. These substances are most often released as a result of transportation accidents or because of chemical accidents in plants.

Location and Extent

A release may occur at a fixed facility or in transit. Communities with a large industrial base, may be more inclined to experience a hazardous materials release due to the number of facilities using such materials in their manufacturing process. Communities with several major roadways may be at a greater risk due to the number and frequency of trucks transporting hazardous materials passing through, with similar risks associated with the location of railways in a town.

Industrial Accidents - Transportation

Franklin County transportation systems include road, rail, and air. Accessible and efficient freight transportation plays a vital function in the economy of the region. Most freight and goods being transported to and from Franklin County are by truck; however, a significant amount of freight that moves through the county is being hauled over the three main rail lines. Given that any freight shipped via air needs first to be trucked to an airport outside the region, air transportation is not being evaluated in this plan.

According to the Franklin County Hazardous Material Emergency Plan,⁷¹ 13 or more trucks per hour travel through the region containing hazardous materials (Table 3-40). Most of these vehicles are on Interstate 91 and up to one truck per hour may be carrying hazardous materials along Routes 5/10, neither of which pass through New Salem. Additionally, approximately 2 trucks per hour travel on Route 2, and 1 truck per hour travels on Route 63.

⁷¹ Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee, Franklin County Hazardous Material Emergency Plan and Maps, 2015.

Table 3-40: Estimated Levels of Hazardous Material Transported on Area Roadways	
Roadway	Number of Tank or Van Trucks Carrying Hazardous Materials per hour
Interstate 91	10
Route 2	2
Other major roadways (<i>Routes 5/10, 63, 47, 116, 202, 8A, 78, 122, 142, and 2A</i>)	1 or 0

The following hazardous materials are frequently transported on Interstate 91 and Routes 5/10:

- Gasoline
- Fuel oil
- Kerosene
- Liquefied Petroleum Gas
- Propane

Routes 202 and 122 are the major transportation route that pass through New Salem. The Committee is unsure of which hazardous materials are carried on these roadways, but would like to conduct a study to find out what passes through New Salem. Accidents are somewhat common on Routes 202 and 122, so it is important to determine the likelihood of the Town needing to respond to a hazardous spill, and if hazardous materials are being carried through Town more frequently than expected.

Safe and efficient transportation routes for trucks to and through the region are important to the region's economy and to the safety of its citizens. The safer the transportation routes are, the less likely a transportation accident will occur.

Two to three trains per day travel on the Pan Am Systems Connecticut River Line, which does not run through New Salem. Rail accidents can be caused by flooding that washes out track beds, like what happened in neighboring Wendell in 2018; faulty or sabotaged track; collision with another train, vehicle or other object on the track; mechanical failure of the train; or driver error. Depending on the freight, an accident could cause residents to evacuate the area.

The hazardous chemicals carried by rail through the county in 2013 were:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Petroleum crude | • Hydrochloric acid | • Batteries, wet |
| • Liquefied petroleum | • Acetone | • Adhesives |
| • Petroleum gases | • Methanol | • Caustic alkali |
| • Sodium chlorate | • Air bag inflation chemicals | • Helium, compressed |
| • Sodium hydroxide | • Methyl methacrylate | • Fire extinguisher chemicals |
| • Carbon dioxide | • Alkylphenols | • Sulfuric acid |
| • Phenol molten | | |

- Paint
- Gasoline
- Toluene
- Hydrogen peroxide

Table 3-41: Estimated Level of Hazardous Material Transport on Area Train Lines			
Train Line*	Trains per Day (General Merchandise)	Average Number of Cars per Train	Average Number of Cars per Train with Hazardous Materials
Main Freight Line, Pan Am Systems	10 to 24	50	4
Connecticut River Line, Pan Am Systems	2 to 3	30	2
East Deerfield Rail Yard, Pan Am Systems	10 to 15 trains passing through yard	n/a	2 to 5
New England Central	2	60	5

* None of these train lines pass through New Salem.

Industrial Accidents - Fixed Facilities

An accidental hazardous material release can occur wherever hazardous materials are manufactured, stored, transported, or used. Such releases can affect nearby populations and contaminate critical or sensitive environmental areas. Those facilities using, manufacturing, or storing toxic chemicals are required to report their locations and the quantities of the chemicals stored on-site to state and local governments.

The Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) tracks the management of over 650 toxic chemicals that pose a threat to human health and the environment. U.S. facilities in different industry sectors that manufacture, process, or otherwise use these chemicals in amounts above established levels must report how each chemical is managed through recycling, energy recovery, treatment, and environmental releases. *Note: a “release” of a chemical means that it is emitted to the air or water, or placed in some type of land disposal.* The information submitted by facilities to the EPA and states is compiled annually as the Toxics Release Inventory or TRI, and is stored in a publicly accessible database. TRI information helps support informed decision-making by industry, government, non-governmental organizations and the public. Note that TRI does not provide any safety or health information about these chemicals and compounds. TRI data, in conjunction with other information, can be used as a starting point in evaluating exposures that may result from industrial activities, which involve toxic chemicals.⁷²

It is important to note that inclusion on the TRI in no way indicates any issues with any of the sites, but rather is an inventory of those facilities meeting TRI reporting requirements. There are no TRI facilities located in New Salem.⁷³

⁷² <https://www.epa.gov/enviro/tri-overview>

⁷³ <https://www.epa.gov/enviro/tri-search>. Accessed March 2020.

The following facilities listed in Table 3-42 are known to store toxic chemicals onsite.

Table 3-42: Hazardous Materials Storage in New Salem		
Facility	Street Address	Hazardous Chemical Inventory
DPW Headquarters	22 Wendell Road	Diesel
Swift River School	201 Wendell Road	Home Heating Oil

Source: New Salem CEM Plan

Also worth consideration is that many farmers store agricultural chemicals on their properties. Given that much farmland is located in or near floodplains and their adjacent water bodies, the potential for an accidental hazardous materials spill to impact water quality is present. This plan does not include an in-depth evaluation of hazardous materials as they relate to farming. In many cases, farmers do use and store pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers on their property. And in most cases, farmers are utilizing best management practices in the use and storage of agricultural chemicals and have undergone any required training and licensing if they are applying these chemicals to the land. Despite training and best management practices, an accidental release of hazardous materials can occur and potentially threaten human health and the environment. The Committee noted that the storage of chemicals on farms in New Salem is no longer of great concern, as the majority of large farming operations have ceased to operate.

Another potential source of contamination from hazardous materials stored and use on-site could be the many local public and private schools that maintain sports fields, often with the use of pesticides and herbicides. These sites and the chemicals that are stored there should be documented as well. These actions would assist first responders in being adequately prepared to protect human health and prevent contamination of the environment in the event of a major spill or other accidental release of hazardous materials.

Cyber Threats

A failure of networked computer systems could result in the interruption or disruption of Town services (including public safety and other critical services), the disruption or interruption of the functioning of Town departments, and the potential for loss or theft of important data (including financial information of the Town and residents).

There are many possible causes of a network failure, but most either happen because of damage to the physical network/computer system infrastructure or damage to the network in cyberspace. Physical damages are incidents that damage physical telecommunications infrastructure or server/computer hardware. Examples are a water main break above a server room, fire/lighting strike that destroys equipment, construction accident damaging buried fiber line, or power outage and other issues effecting the Internet Service Provider (ISP) that interrupts access to the internet to the Town.

Damage to the cyber infrastructure can be malicious attacks or critical software errors that affect

computer systems, from individual computers to the entire network. These virtual hazards can cause lack of access to the network, permanent data loss, permanent damage to computer hardware, and impact the ability to access programs or systems on the network.

When incidents are malicious attacks, they can impact:

- Confidentiality: protecting a user's private information.
- Integrity: ensuring that data is protected and cannot be altered by unauthorized parties.
- Availability: keeping services running and giving administration access to key networks and controls.
- Damage: irreversible damage to the computer or network operating system or "bricking" and physical, real world damages, caused by tampering with networked safety systems.
- Confidence: confidence of stakeholders in the organization who was victim of the attack.

Motives for cyber-attacks can vary tremendously, ranging from the pursuit of financial gain—the primary motivation for what is commonly referred to as “cyber-crimes” is for profit, retribution, or vandalism. Other motivations include political or social aims. Hacktivism is the act of hacking, or breaking into a computer system, for a political or social purpose. Cyber espionage is the act of obtaining secrets without permission of the holder of the information, using methods on the Internet, networks, or individual computers.⁷⁴ These threats are not only external; many acts of cyber-crime happened from current or former employees who were given network access legitimately.

For New Salem, the most likely cyber-threat affecting the Town and Town departments comes from malware and social engineering. These crimes prey on the vulnerable and unprepared and every individual and organization that connects a device to the internet is a potential mark.

Social Engineering:

Social engineering involves obtaining confidential information from individuals through deceptive means by mail, email, over the phone, and increasingly through text messages.⁷⁵ These techniques are referred to as ‘Phishing’.

Malware

Malware, or malicious software, is any program or file that is harmful to a computer user. Types of malware can include computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses, and spyware. These malicious programs can perform a variety of different functions such as stealing, encrypting or deleting sensitive data, altering or hijacking core computing functions and monitoring users' computer activity without their permission. The most common way for malware to infect a Town's network is through an employee opening an infected email attachment.

⁷⁴ NYC Hazard Mitigation, Cyber Threats, <https://nychazardmitigation.com/hazard-specific/cyber-threats/what-is-the-hazard/>

⁷⁵ Cybersecurity Precautions, MA Executive Office of Technology Services & Security, 2017

Previous Occurrences

Over the past few years a type of malware called ransomware has been targeted at local governments. Cyber-criminals will use social-engineering to infect a network, take control and block user access to that network, then request a ransom from the organization. Once the ransomware is on the network, it can be extremely expensive and time consuming to restore that network without paying the ransom. When the cost of the ransom is less than the cost of resorting the system, is when the cyber-criminals succeed.

In July 2019, school districts all across the United States were targeted by ransomware. Since 2013, there have been some 170 attacks against state and local governments and there is no sign that this trend is slowing. Unlike other hazards, cyber-threats are global. Cyber-criminals don't care where you are or how small your town is. Many cyber-crimes are not just lone criminals, they are more often than not committed by sophisticated criminal organizations and foreign governments who work around the clock looking to exploit small towns and big businesses alike.

The best way to prevent a cyber-attack is to follow best practices in cyber-security. Following these best practices will greatly mitigate the likelihood a cyber-attack is successful. MA Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS)⁷⁶ is the chief MA State program that can assist local governments with cyber-security. There are educational opportunities available throughout the region that aim to assist municipalities learn and implement these best practices.

⁷⁶ <https://www.mass.gov/cybersecurity>

4 MITIGATION CAPABILITIES & STRATEGIES

4.1 NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR HAZARD MITIGATION & CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Nature-Based Solutions are actions that work with and enhance nature to help people adapt to socio-environmental challenges. They may include the conservation and restoration of natural systems, such as wetlands, forests, floodplains and rivers, to improve resiliency. NBS can be used across a watershed, a town, or on a particular site. NBS use natural systems, mimic natural processes, or work in tandem with engineering to address natural hazards like flooding, erosion and drought.

The 2018 Massachusetts Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan and the MVP program both place great emphasis on NBS, and multiple state and federal agencies fund projects that utilize NBS. For this plan, Low Impact Development (LID) and Green Infrastructure (GI) are included under the blanket term of NBS. Following are examples of how NBS can mitigate natural hazards and climate stressors, and protect natural resources and residents:

- Restoring and reconnecting streams to floodplains stores flood water, slows it down and reduces infrastructure damage downstream
- Designing culverts and bridges to accommodate fish and wildlife passage also makes those structures more resilient to flooding, allowing for larger volumes of water and debris to safely pass through
- Managing stormwater with small-scale infiltration techniques like rain gardens and vegetated swales recharges drinking water supplies, reduces stormwater runoff, and reduces mosquito habitat and incidents of vector-borne illness by eliminating standing pools of water following heavy rain events
- Planting trees in developed areas absorbs carbon dioxide, slows and infiltrates stormwater, and provides shade, reducing summertime heat, lowering energy costs for village residents and improving air quality by reducing smog and particulate matter
- Vegetated riparian buffers absorb and filter pollutants before they reach water sources, and reduce erosion and water velocity during high flow events

This New Salem Community Resilience Building and Hazard Mitigation Regional Plan incorporates Nature-Based Solutions into mitigation strategies where feasible.

4.2 EXISTING AUTHORITIES POLICIES, PROGRAMS, & RESOURCES

One of the steps of this Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan update process is to evaluate all of the Town's existing policies and practices related to natural hazards and

identify potential gaps in protection.

New Salem has most of the no cost or low cost hazard mitigation capabilities in place, such as land use zoning, and other policies and regulations that include hazard mitigation best practices, such as limitations on development in floodplains, stormwater management, tree maintenance, etc. New Salem has appropriate staff dedicated to hazard mitigation-related work for a community its size, including a Town Clerk, Emergency Management Director, a Highway Department, and a Tree Warden. In addition to Town staff, New Salem has a volunteer Planning Board that reviews all proposed developments.

New Salem has some recommended plans in place, including a Community Development Plan, Capital Improvements Plan, a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, a Continuity of Operations Plan, and a 2004 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). The OSRP and Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan should be updated. The Town also has very committed and dedicated volunteers who serve on Boards and Committees and in other important volunteer positions, such as the Energy Committee and Conservation Commission. The Town collaborates closely with surrounding communities and is party to Mutual Aid agreements through MEMA. New Salem is also a member community of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, and participates in the Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC).

Overview of Mitigation Strategies by Hazard

An overview of the general concepts underlying mitigation strategies for each of the hazards identified in this plan is as follows:

Flooding

The key factors in flooding are the water capacity of water bodies and waterways, the regulation of waterways by flood control structures, and the preservation of flood storage areas (like floodplains) and wetlands. As more land is developed, more flood storage is required by the town's water bodies and waterways. FEMA has identified no flood control structures within the Town of New Salem.

The Town of New Salem has adopted several land use regulations that serve to limit or regulate development in floodplains, to manage stormwater runoff, and to protect groundwater and wetland resources, the latter of which often provide important flood storage capacity. Although flooding is not a major concern for the town, there are a number of measures that can be taken to ensure that the risk of flooding – both within the 100-year floodplain and localized flooding – is minimized. These regulations are summarized in Table 4-1.

Infrastructure like dams and culverts are also in place to manage the flow of water. However, some of this infrastructure is aging and in need of replacement, or is undersized and incapable of handling heavier flows our region is experiencing due to climate change.

Severe Snowstorms / Ice Storms

Winter storms can be especially challenging for emergency management personnel even though the duration and amount of expected amount of snowfall is usually forecasted beforehand. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) serves as the primary coordinating entity in the statewide management of all types of winter storms and monitors the National Weather Service (NWS) alerting systems during periods when winter storms are expected.

To the extent that some of the damages from a winter storm can be caused by flooding, flood protection mitigation measures also assist with severe snowstorms and ice storms. The Town has adopted the State Building Code, which ensures minimum snow load requirements for roofs on new buildings. Additionally, the Town's Subdivision Rules and Regulations require the undergrounding of all utilities and communication lines in new subdivisions.

Severe snowstorms or ice storms can often result in a small or widespread loss of electrical service. Should a natural hazard cause a power outage, New Salem residents would be vulnerable to losing domestic heat and water supplies reliant on electricity.

Hurricanes and Tropical Storms

Hurricanes provide the most lead warning time of all identified hazards, because of the relative ease in predicting the storm's track and potential landfall. MEMA assumes "standby status" when a hurricane's location is 35 degrees North Latitude (Cape Hatteras) and "alert status" when the storm reaches 40 degrees North Latitude (Long Island). Even with significant warning, hurricanes cause significant damage – both due to flooding and severe wind.

The flooding associated with hurricanes can be a major source of damage to buildings, infrastructure and a potential threat to human lives. Flood protection measures can thus also be considered hurricane mitigation measures. The high winds that often accompany hurricanes can also damage buildings and infrastructure, similar to tornadoes and other strong wind events. For new or recently built structures, the primary protection against wind-related damage is construction according to the State Building Code, which addresses designing buildings to withstand high winds. The Town of New Salem has its own building inspector to enforce the State Building Code.

Severe Thunderstorms / Winds / Microbursts and Tornadoes

Most damage from tornadoes and severe thunderstorms come from high winds that can fell trees and electrical wires, generate hurtling debris and, possibly, hail. According to the Institute for Business and Home Safety, the wind speeds in most tornadoes are at or below design speeds that are used in current building codes, making strict adherence to building codes a primary mitigation strategy. In addition, current land development regulations, such as restrictions on the height and setbacks of telecommunications towers, can also help prevent wind damages.

Wildfires / Brushfires

Nearly 90 percent of New Salem's land is forested. A large portion of the Town is therefore at risk of fire. Wildfire and brushfire mitigation strategies involve educating people about how to prevent fires from starting, controlling burns within the town, as well as managing forests for fire prevention.

The New Salem Fire Department has several ongoing educational programs to educate residents on fire safety, including fire drills in the school and outreach to seniors. The New Salem Fire Department is actively involved in teaching fire safety during Fire Prevention Week. Burn permits for the Town of New Salem are issued from the Shelburne Dispatch Control Center of the Massachusetts State Police. During this process, the applicant is read the State Law, which includes guidelines for when and where the burn may be conducted as well as fire safety tips provided by the control center. Specific burn permit guidelines are established by the state, such as the burning season and the time when a burn may begin on a given day.

Elements of the Town's Subdivision Rules and Regulations are related to preventing wildfire outbreaks. These elements are summarized in Table 4-1.

Earthquakes

Although there are five mapped seismological faults in Massachusetts, there is no discernible pattern of previous earthquakes along these faults nor is there a reliable way to predict future earthquakes along these faults or in any other areas of the state. Consequently, earthquakes are arguably the most difficult natural hazard for which to plan. Most buildings and structures in the state were constructed without specific earthquake resistant design features. In addition, earthquakes precipitate several potential devastating secondary effects such as building collapse, utility pipeline rupture, water contamination, and extended power outages. Therefore, many of the mitigation efforts for other natural hazards identified in this plan may be applicable during the Town's recovery from an earthquake.

Dam Failure

Dam failure is a highly infrequent occurrence, but a severe incident could prove catastrophic. In addition, dam failure most often coincides with flooding, so its impacts can be multiplied, as the additional water has nowhere to flow. The only mitigation measures currently in place are the state regulations governing the construction, inspection, and maintenance of dams. This is managed through the Office of Dam Safety at the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Owners of dams are responsible for hiring a qualified engineer to inspect their dams and report the results to the DCR. Owners of High Hazard Potential dams and certain Significant Hazard Potential dams are also required to prepare, maintain, and update Emergency Action Plans. Potential problems may arise if the ownership of a dam is unknown or contested. Additionally, the cost of hiring an engineer to inspect a dam or to prepare an Emergency Action Plan may be prohibitive for some owners. There are no dams identified in New Salem.

Drought

The Northeast is generally considered to be a moist region with ample rain and snow, but droughts are

not uncommon. Widespread drought has occurred across the region as recently as 2016, and before that in the early 2000s, 1980s, and mid-1960s. More frequent and severe droughts are expected as climate change continues to increase temperatures, raise evaporation rates, and dry out soils - even in spite of more precipitation and heavier rainfall events.⁷⁷

There is no community public water supply in New Salem. Businesses and residents throughout the town rely on individual wells for drinking water. Participants in the MVP workshop discussed the possibility of the Town siting and building a public well that could be used as a back-up water supply in times of drought.

Forest landowners in town can be encouraged to conserve and manage their forests for climate resiliency. Strategies for promoting a resilient forest include increasing the diversity of tree species and age of trees in a forest, and promoting trees not currently threatened by pests or diseases that will thrive in a warming climate.⁷⁸

Extreme Temperatures

A primary mitigation measure for extreme temperatures is establishing and publicizing warming or cooling centers in anticipation of extreme temperature events. Getting the word out to vulnerable populations, especially the homeless and elderly, and providing transportation is particularly important but can be challenging.

Planting and maintaining shade trees in villages and developed areas of towns can help mitigate extreme heat in these areas. Roofs and paving absorb and hold heat from the sun, making developed areas hotter during the summer than surrounding forested areas. Trees that shade these surfaces can significantly lower the temperature in a neighborhood, making it easier to be outside and reducing cooling costs for homeowners.

Invasive Species

The spread of invasive species is a serious concern as species ranges shift with a changing climate. People can also be a carrier of invasive plant species. Installing boot brushes at hiking entrances can help slow the spread of invasive species by removing seeds being carried in soil on hiking boots. Landowners can learn the top unwanted plants and look for them when out on their land, and can be encouraged to work with neighbors to control invasive exotic plants.

Before implementing any forest management, landowners should be sure to inventory for invasive exotic species. They will need to be controlled before harvesting trees and allowing sunlight into the forest, which will trigger their growth and spread. Also, the timber harvester should be required to powerwash their machines before entering the woods. Financial assistance may be available to

⁷⁷ MassWildlife Climate Action Tool: <https://climateactiontool.org/content/drought>. Accessed March 8, 2019.

⁷⁸ Catanzaro, Paul, Anthony D'Amato, and Emily Silver Huff. *Increasing Forest Resiliency for an Uncertain Future*. University of Massachusetts Amherst, University of Vermont, USDA Forest Service. 2016

landowners through the USDA NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to address invasive species.⁷⁹ In addition, New Salem can require only native, non-invasive species be used in new development and redevelopment.

All Hazards

New Salem has a practice of setting up an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the Fire Department in the event of an emergency. When the EOC is activated, residents are able to go to the station in order to charge their cellphones, power medical devices, or other equipment. The EOC can also serve as a warming shelter as needed. The Swift River School is identified as the Town's other primary sheltering facility, but it is in need of a backup generator. The School is also connected to a well, so it would not be able to provide residents with water during an extended power outage. Obtaining a larger backup generator is a high priority for the Fire Department to ensure residents can have access to a charging station and warming shelter.

A regional sheltering plan that identifies regional shelter sites was completed for Franklin County with funds from the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (WRHSAC). The Franklin County REPC is now working on operationalizing the plan by creating Shelter Management Teams and cost sharing agreements between towns. New Salem officials can participate in this process to ensure its residents have clear guidance on where to shelter during an emergency.

Primary and secondary evacuation routes are shown on the Critical Infrastructure map for New Salem. Route 202 and Orange Road are the primary and secondary evacuation routes, respectively. Route 202 is a relatively well-traveled road in the area, and accidents on this road would complicate access to needed resources.

A regional disaster debris management plan was created for Franklin County in 2015. The Franklin County REPC is currently working to verify the sites identified in the plan and complete agreements between towns for use of the regional sites. Towns may need to identify a site in their own town if regional agreements cannot be made.

⁷⁹ MassWildlife Climate Action Tool: <https://climateactiontool.org/content/maintain-or-restore-soil-quality-limit-recreational-impacts>. Accessed March 8, 2019.

Existing Mitigation Capabilities

The Town of New Salem had numerous policies, plans, practices, programs and regulations in place that help to mitigate the impact of natural hazards in the Town of New Salem. These various initiatives are summarized, described and assessed on the following pages and have been evaluated in the “Effectiveness” column.

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies				
Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program	Program	As of 2018, there were no homeowners with flood insurance policies.	Flooding	Effective, provided the town remains enrolled in the National Flood Insurance Program.
High-risk culvert inventory	Local Plan	The FRCOG has assessed and mapped high-risk culverts to inform replacement prioritization planning.	Flooding	Effective for mitigating localized flooding of roads and other infrastructure.
Earth Removal Regulations	Zoning Bylaw	Regulates the removal of sod, loam, clay, sand & gravel through a permitting process.	Flooding, Landslides	Not effective for controlling localized flooding. This bylaw does not specifically address the potential for localized flooding that soil removal can cause. This was recommended in the last plan; zoning bylaws have not been updated since 2012 so this is still relevant.
Submission and Contents of Definitive Plan of Subdivision	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Requires that the definitive plan shall contain (in part) existing watercourses and indication of areas subject to the Wetland Protection Act, M.G.L. c. 131, section 40; the Watershed Protection Act, M.G.L. c. 92, section 107A; and public drinking water supply recharge areas.	Flooding, Landslides	Effective for mitigating or preventing localized erosion and flooding and the associated impacts to existing watercourses, wetlands, public drinking water supply recharge areas, and other

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies

Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
		<p>Requires the applicant to submit as part of the definitive plan proposed layout of storm drainage, including cross sections and profiles, invert elevations, slopes, capacity, and velocity, and base flood elevations.</p> <p>Requires the applicant to submit of an erosion control plan indicating measures to be employed during and after site preparation and construction, including location of temporary stockpiles, spoil areas, temporary drainage systems, slope stabilization techniques, sediment basins, and description of plans for controlling runoff of water and sediment into streets, drainage systems, waterways, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas.</p>		environmentally sensitive areas.
Review of Definitive Plans	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Requires the Conservation Commission to review definitive plan and, if any part of the proposed subdivision is subject to enactments affecting the use and protection of the environment, to provide approval prior to the construction activity in the designated areas.	Flooding, Landslides	Effective for mitigating or preventing localized erosion, flooding and other impacts to environmentally sensitive areas.
Completion of Subdivisions	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Requires submission by applicant of “as built” plan with location and inverts of required utilities and drainage.	Flooding	Effective for ensuring the subdivision is built as proposed and for mitigating or preventing localized erosion, flooding and other impacts to streets, drainage systems, existing water courses, wetlands, public drinking water supply recharge areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies

Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
Improvements and Design Standards	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	<p>Requires the preservation of (in part) of mature trees, desirable vegetation, natural watercourses, and topsoil – and if such features are disturbed or destroyed during construction, they be restored or replaced before subdivision is deemed to be complete.</p> <p>Requires the planting of suitable, well-rooted plantings along water body banks that tend to wash or erode.</p> <p>Requires drainage and erosion control to the extent possible be provided by natural or “enhanced” natural means, including diversion, limitation of non-permeable areas, vegetative cover, and grassed waterways, using existing topography or minimal changes to existing topography as will allow for effective drainage and erosion control. Also requires that the drainage and erosion control not channelize flow.</p> <p>Requires that an erosion and sedimentation control plan for site preparation and construction phases is as part of the submission of the subdivision plan per section, to which the Board reserves the right to require changes in the event that the planned measures prove inadequate for actual conditions encountered during site preparation and construction.</p> <p>Requires that post-development peak discharge rates</p>	Flooding, Landslides	Effective for having minimal disturbance of the site and for requiring environmentally responsible development. Also effective for mitigating or minimizing localized erosion, flooding and other impacts to streets, drainage systems, existing water courses, wetlands, public drinking water supply recharge areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies

Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
		<p>shall not exceed pre-development rates on the site at any site boundary.</p> <p>Requires that stormwater conveyances not discharge untreated water into natural wetlands, waterways, or bodies of water nor cause erosion.</p> <p>Requires that drainage and erosion control systems shall be designed as if all upgradient areas and/or areas that may contribute runoff to the site are fully developed unless such areas are permanently restricted from development by deed or law at the time the final plans are submitted.</p> <p>Requires that drainage and erosion control features prevent erosion and undue sedimentation, permit the unimpeded flow of natural watercourses, ensure adequate drainage of streets, and intercept stormwater runoff along streets.</p> <p>Requires that systems be designed so that water velocity in drains, culverts, gutters, etc. shall be between two and ten feet per second and not more than five feet per second on vegetated ground surfaces.</p> <p>Requires that catch basins be installed on both sides of streets on continuous grades, at intervals not to exceed 300 feet; at low points, near corners at intersecting streets; and as otherwise required by the Board.</p>		

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies

Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
		<p>Requires that storm sewers be designed for ten-year storms; retention and detention basins for 25-year storms, and culverts for 50-year storms, in all cases with consideration to avoiding damage in 100-year storms.</p> <p>Requires that wetlands not be used for increased retention or detention and that flow into wetlands shall not be increased.</p> <p>Requires that wetlands not be used for increased retention or detention and that flow into wetlands shall not be increased.</p>		
Debris Management Plan	Local Plan	Plan and location for storing storm debris. The Town has identified areas that could be used for storage, but has not formalized a plan.	Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms, Earthquakes	Somewhat effective. The Town should formalize debris storage locations.
State Building Code	Local Regulations	The Town of New Salem has adopted the State Building Code.	Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms, Earthquakes	Effective.
Improvements and Design Standards	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Requires the undergrounding of all utilities and communication lines in new subdivisions, except where there would be undue hardship by reason of	Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes,	Effective for ensuring that utility service is uninterrupted by the impacts of severe winter storms

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies

Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
		topography, subsoil conditions, or other conditions unique to the site.	Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms	in new areas of residential development.
Wireless Telecommunications Facilities and Towers - Purpose	Zoning Bylaws	Includes protecting resources from adverse safety effects, and from damage or loss.	Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms	The bylaw is effective for mitigating hazards (see relevant sections below), but mitigating the impacts of high-wind hazards could be added as part of the purpose.
Wireless Telecommunications Facilities and Towers - General	Zoning Bylaws	Includes specifications for the height, structural requirements, set-backs and distance from housing and other structures and facilities. Requires the location of all houses within 800 feet of tower, and all schools, daycare facilities, playgrounds, and sports fields within 1,500 feet of town. Also requires certification from Town building inspector that no building permits have been granted for houses within 800 feet of proposed tower.	Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms	Effective for mitigating the impacts of a high-wind event by ensuring wireless facilities and towers are adequate distances from structure and facilities and ensuring the safety of towers that need to exceed recommended heights.
Wireless Telecommunications Facilities and Towers – Application	Zoning Bylaws	Requires certification by an engineer that proposed tower and/or facility meets all applicable codes and standards, and that it creates no hazard by reason of proximity to flammable or other such materials. Requires the description of any hazardous materials, oil, diesel or gasoline to be used or stored on the site. Requires periodic inspection and certification by an Engineer to be structurally sound and in compliance with all applicable codes.	Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms	Effective for mitigating the impacts of a high-wind event by ensuring the overall safety of the proposed tower and/or facility.

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies

Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
Tree Maintenance	Local Plan	The Tree Warden in New Salem completed an assessment of trees around Town owned buildings and critical infrastructure and developed an action plan to minimize hazards. The Town is working on appointing a Deputy Tree Warden to carry on this work.	Severe Winter Storms, Tornadoes, Hurricanes, Severe Thunderstorms, Wildfires	Effective. The Town could train additional DPW staff on how to complete tree health assessments, as noted in the action plan.
Subdivision Rules and Regulations – Purpose	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Includes enhancing safety in case of fire, flood, and other emergencies	Wildfires	Effective.
Submission, Contents, and Review of Preliminary Plans of Subdivisions	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Requires inclusion of construction of roads, which is provided to the fire chief and other Town Officials.	Wildfires	Effective.
Submission and Contents of Definitive Plan of Subdivisions	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Requires a description of provisions to be made for water for firefighting.	Wildfires	Effective.
Review of Definitive Plan	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Requires the Planning Board to solicit comments from the Fire Department and other Town Officials.	Wildfires	Effective.
Development of Impact Statement	Subdivision Rules and Regulations	Requires provision for a water supply for firefighting.	Wildfires	Effective.
Burn Permits	Regulation	Shelburne Control issues burn permits for New Salem. Personnel provide information on safe burn practices when issuing permits.	Wildfires	Effective.
Fire Safety Public Education and Outreach	Program	The Fire Department has an ongoing educational program in the schools. The Department also works closely with Swift River School staffing on emergency planning efforts.	Wildfires	Effective.
Permits required for new dam construction	State Regulation	State law requires a permit for the construction of any dam.	Dam failure	Effective. Ensures dams are adequately designed.
2004 New Salem Open Space & Recreation	Local Plan	Inventories natural features and environments in the town, including many that contain floodplain areas	Multiple Hazards	Somewhat effective in establishing priorities for

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies

Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
Plan		such as wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, farms, rivers, streams, and brooks. Encourages preservation of wetlands, riparian corridors and other sensitive habitats.		environmentally sensitive development that will mitigate flooding impacts. This plan expired in 2010. Seek funding to update this plan and update priorities for environmentally sensitive development that will mitigate flooding impacts.
Route 122 Scenic Byway 2009 Corridor Management Plan	Local Plan	Recommends the preservation of land along the Byway and the creation of a Corridor Overlay District to protect sensitive habitats. Recommends the Town collaborate with MassDOT to ensure that future Scenic Byway road improvements incorporate best management mitigation techniques to treat road runoff before it is discharged into sensitive habitat areas or waterways.	Multiple Hazards	In order to be effective, these measures (or similar) should be adopted by the Town in order to slow development along Route 122 and to thereby minimize or mitigate the impact of flooding and erosion that can be associated with development.
Sheltering	Local Plan	The Town has a practice of opening the Fire Station as an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during a hazard. Other shelters have been identified in Town and could be used as needed.	All hazards	Somewhat effective. The EOC is in need of a larger generator.
Reverse 911/CodeRED	Program	The Town uses the CodeRED system to notify residents of emergencies.	All hazards	Somewhat effective. The Town recently had broadband service installed; some residents are therefore opting to drop their landline numbers. Additional outreach is needed to ensure residents are signed up with correct contact information.

Table 4-1: Existing Mitigation Strategies

Strategy	Capability Type	Description	Hazard	Current Effectiveness/Improvements since 2014
Emergency Planning for the Swift River School	Program	The Swift River School and the Fire Department work closely together to develop emergency plans and works with school staff and students to make sure they are prepared and know what to do during an emergency.	All hazards	Effective. Continue this practice.

4.3 HAZARD MITIGATION GOAL STATEMENTS AND ACTION PLAN

As part of the hazard mitigation planning process undertaken by the New Salem Hazard Mitigation and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning Committee, existing gaps in protection and possible deficiencies were identified and discussed. The Committee then developed general goal statements and mitigation action items that, when implemented, will help to reduce risks and future damages from multiple hazards. The goal statements, action items, Town department(s) responsible for implementation, and the proposed timeframe for implementation for each category of hazard are described below. It is important to note that the Town of New Salem has limited capabilities and resources (especially staffing) to be able to expand and improve upon existing policies and programs when the town identifies a need for improvement.

Hazard Mitigation Goals

Based on the findings of the Risk Assessment, public outreach, and a review of previous town plans and reports, the New Salem has developed the following goals to serve as a framework for mitigating the hazards identified in this plan:

- To provide adequate shelter, water, food and basic first aid to displaced residents in the event of a natural disaster.
- To provide adequate notification and information regarding evacuation procedures, etc., to residents in the event of a natural disaster.
- To minimize the loss of life, damage to property, and the disruption of governmental services and general business activities due to natural hazards.

Prioritization of Hazards

The Committee examined the results of the Risk Assessment (see Section 3) and used the results to prioritize the identified hazards. The Committee evaluated the natural hazards that can impact the Town based on probability of occurrence, severity of impacts, and area of occurrence. The Committee also reviewed the Town's Existing Mitigation Strategies (Table 4-1) and the work completed since the 2014 plan (Table 4-4) to determine the Priority Level for each hazard.

The Committee developed problem statements and/or a list of key issues for each hazard to summarize the vulnerability of New Salem's structures, systems, populations and other community assets identified as vulnerable to damage and loss from a hazard event. These problem statements were used to identify the Town's greatest vulnerabilities that will be addressed in the mitigation strategy (Section 4). For the most part, those hazards receiving the highest Overall Hazard Vulnerability Rating were also assigned a Priority Level of High, as shown in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2: Hazard Priority Level Rating		
Natural Hazard	Overall Hazard Vulnerability Rating	Priority Level
Severe Winter Storms	High	High
Flooding	Low	Low
Tornadoes	Low	Low
Dam Failure	Low	Low
Hurricanes / Tropical Storms	Medium	Medium
Severe Thunderstorms / Wind / Microbursts	High	Medium
Extreme Temperatures	High	High
Earthquakes	Low	Low
Landslides	Low	Low
Drought	High	High
Wildfires	High	High
Invasive Species	Medium	Medium

Prioritization of Action Items

The Hazard Mitigation Committee identified several strategies that are currently being pursued, and other strategies that will require additional resources to implement. Strategies are based on the work of the Committee, as well as the hazard identification and risk assessment (Section 3) and the information in Tables 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, and 4-4 of this plan.

Prioritization Methodology

The New Salem Hazard Mitigation and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning Committee reviewed and prioritized a list of mitigation strategies using the following criteria:

- **Application to high priority or multiple hazards** – Strategies are assigned a higher priority if they assist in the mitigation of hazards identified as high priorities (Table 4-2) or apply to several natural hazards.

- **Time required for completion** – Projects that are faster to implement, either due to the nature of the permitting process or other regulatory procedures, or because of the time it takes to secure funding, are given higher priority.
- **Estimated benefit** – Strategies which would provide the highest degree of reduction in loss of property and life are given a higher priority. This estimate is based on the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Chapter, particularly with regard to how much of each hazard’s impact would be mitigated.
- **Cost effectiveness** – In order to maximize the effect of mitigation efforts using limited funds, priority is given to low-cost strategies. For example, regular tree maintenance is a relatively low-cost operational strategy that can significantly reduce the length of time of power outages during a winter storm. Strategies that have identified potential funding streams, such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, are also given higher priority.

The following categories are used to define the priority of each mitigation strategy:

- **Low** – Strategies that would not have a significant benefit to property or people, address only one or two hazards, or would require funding and time resources that are impractical.
- **Medium** – Strategies that would have some benefit to people and property and are somewhat cost effective at reducing damage to property and people.
- **High** – Strategies that provide mitigation of high priority hazards or multiple hazards and have a large benefit that warrants their cost and time to complete.
- **Very High** – extremely beneficial projects that will greatly contribute to mitigation of high priority and multiple hazards and the protection of people and property. These projects are also given a numeric ranking within the category.

Cost Estimates

Each of the following implementation strategies is provided with a cost estimate. Projects that already have secured funding are noted as such. Where precise financial estimates are not currently available, categories were used with the following assigned dollar ranges:

- **Low** – cost less than \$25,000
- **Medium** – cost between \$25,000 – \$100,000
- **High** – cost over \$100,000

Cost estimates take into account the following resources:

- Town staff time for grant application and administration (at a rate of \$25 per hour)

- Consultant design and construction cost (based on estimates for projects obtained from town and general knowledge of previous work in town)
- Town staff time for construction, maintenance, and operation activities (at a rate of \$25 per hour)

Project Timeline

The timeframe for implementation of the action items are listed in the Action Plan as Year 0-1, which is the first year following plan adoption, and subsequent years after plan adoption through the 5-year life of the plan (Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5). The Committee recognized that many mitigation action items have a timeframe that is ongoing due to either funding constraints that delay complete implementation and/or the action item should be implemented each of the five years of the plan, if possible. Therefore, a category of Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate was added.

Even when the political will exists to implement the Action Items, the fact remains that New Salem is a small town that relies heavily on a small number of paid staff, many of whom have multiple responsibilities, and a dedicated group of volunteers who serve on town boards. However, some Action Items, when implemented by Town staff and volunteers, result in a large benefit to the community for a relatively small cost.

For larger construction projects, the Town has limited funds to hire consultants and engineers to assist them with implementation. For these projects, the Town may seek assistance through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). However, the availability of FRCOG staff can be constrained by the availability of grant funding.

The 2021 New Salem Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan is shown in Table 4-3, and the Emergency Preparedness and Response Action Plan is shown in Table 4-4. These items are split between the two tables to capture action items that would typically fall beyond the scope of a traditional Hazard Mitigation Plan, but are relevant to the Town's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness planning process.

Potential funding sources for mitigation action items are listed when known. Other potential funding sources are listed in Table 5-1 of this plan. When Town funds are listed as a source to fund hazard mitigation projects or activities, either in part (match) or in full, these funds would be obtained from the Town's "general fund".

Table 4-3: 2021 New Salem Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan									
Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2021 Priority	Current Status
Local Plans and Regulations	Identify Town-owned forested areas that are at higher risk for wildfires (near residential areas, high-wire utilities, etc.) to implement climate resilient forest management practices that reduce the risk of fire hazards (such as the removal of slash). Coordinate with utility company for tree clearing work. Additionally, inventory and map areas of logging slash in Town. Work with landowners as needed to develop a plan to remove slash to decrease the risk of wildfires.	Wildfire	Conservation Commission, Fire Department, Tree Warden, DCR	L	Town, MVP	Year 1	S, I	2021 High	New action item identified during the MVP workshop.
Natural Systems Protection	Work with the state to minimize or prohibit the cutting of trees on Quabbin Reservoir lands to alleviate the risk of wildfires igniting from logging slash. Request the state add slash removal and the re-establishment of fire breaks to the maintenance plan for the Quabbin Reservoir.	Wildfires	Emergency Management Director	L	DCR	Year 1-2, to be reviewed annually and updated in subsequent years (Years 3-5), if new materials become available.	S, I, E	2021 High	Action item description was carried over from the 2014 plan updated for the 2021 plan to reflect the need for re-establishing fire breaks. Town officials and the EMD will coordinate with local legislators to move this forward.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Use the results from FRCOG's 2020 <i>Town of New Salem Culvert Assessment</i> to prioritize repairs and replacements of culverts to build resiliency to severe storms and flooding events. Seek funding for the design and construction of high priority culverts.	Flooding	Highway Department, Conservation Commission	M-H	Town, MVP, DER Culvert Municipal Assistance Grant Program	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually for any changes or additional sites and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate.	I	2014 High 2021 High	Action item description was carried over from the 2014 plan updated for the 2021 plan. Repairing & upgrading the culvert on Cooleyville Road is a high priority for the Town.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Obtain funding for a Rural Roads/Dirt Road assessment to determine low maintenance, low cost climate resilient drainage solutions on the Town's gravel roads. Identify locations where nature based solutions would be most effective.	Flooding	Highway Department	L-M	Town, MVP	Years 2-3	I	2021 High	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. Drainage solutions should be prioritized on residential gravel roads so residents can safely evacuate.

Table 4-3: 2021 New Salem Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan

Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority	Current Status
								2021 Priority	
									This work is currently ongoing; FRCOG identified two potential projects on Cooleyville Road as a part of the <i>Sustainable Stormwater Management Plan for Franklin County</i> . These projects are described in detail in Section 2 of this plan.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Coordinate with MassDOT to cut down trees on Route 202 to mitigate risks associated with downed trees on powerlines. MassDOT is responsible for tree cutting on Route 202, but their work typically stops in Shutesbury and Orange.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director, Select Board	L	Town	Year 1	I	2021 Medium	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. The Town Coordinator has made several efforts to reach out to MassDOT and local legislators to request action from MassDOT but has not received a response, however cutting has begun on Route 202 coming north from Shutesbury.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Develop a program to provide professional assessments of the health and stability of large trees located adjacent to town-owned buildings and private homes, and critical infrastructure. Based on the assessment results, conduct tree trimming or removal where trees are determined to pose a high risk of causing property damage and/or injury or loss of life if compromised by microbursts or thunderstorm winds or other high wind events. As a part of the program, train DPW staff on how to conduct trimming and tree health assessments so this work can be carried forward on an annual basis.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director, Town Tree Warden, Home Owners	L	Town, Property Owners	Year 1-2, to be reviewed annually and updated in subsequent years (Years 3-5), if new materials become available.	I, E	2014 Medium 2021 Medium	Action item description was carried over from the 2014 plan updated for the 2021 plan. The Tree Warden partially completed this item since the writing of the last plan; the Town now has an assessment of trees that are located close to Town buildings or critical infrastructure. The Town is working on appointing a Deputy Tree Warden to continue this work.
Local Plans and Regulations	Hire a consultant to develop an invasive species management plan. The plan should map where invasive species are located and identify priority areas to address, treatment options, and state relative cost estimates.	Invasive Species	Conservation Commission	L	MVP, MassWildlife Habitat Management, DCR	Year 1	E	2021 Medium	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. The Town would need to coordinate with the DCR in order to work on this because much of the land in New

Table 4-3: 2021 New Salem Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan									
Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2021 Priority	Current Status
									Salem is owned/operated by the DCR.
Local Plans and Regulations	Request information from the FRCOG and the Franklin County REPC on any programs being developed to research appropriate vulnerability assessment models for fixed facility and transportation hazardous materials accidents. Once the model has been developed, collect relevant data, and populate model to further prioritize manmade hazard action items.	Manmade Hazards	Emergency Management Director, Franklin County REPC, FRCOG	L	FEMA	Years 2-3	S, I, E	2014 Low 2021 Low	Action item description was carried over from the 2014 plan updated for the 2021 plan. The Town is interested in having an assessment completed to determine the hazardous materials that are being carried on Routes 202 and Route 122, as there are many accidents on this road.
Local Plans and Regulations	Continue to participate in the Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC), which is currently working to complete and operationalize the Debris Management Plan. Coordinate with state and regional agencies to identify a location(s) in the Town for the temporary storage of contaminated and/or hazardous flood debris.	Multiple Hazards	DPW, Franklin County REPC	L	Town	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate.	S, E	2021 Low	New action item. The Town has identified a site that could be used as debris storage (Hagerville Station on Old Dana Road). The use of the Station for debris storage after a hazard event should be formalized.
Local Plans and Regulations	Support local and regional, watershed-wide open space protection efforts, particularly in floodplain areas by participating in a group such as Friends of the Quabbin or Millers River Watershed Council.	Flooding	Conservation Commission	L	Town, Volunteers	Year 2, to be reviewed annually thereafter (Years 3-5)	E	2014 Low 2021 Low	Carried over from previous plan. Not accomplished due to the staffing constraints and high demands on volunteers.
Local Plans and Regulations	Continue to review and update land use regulations to include climate resiliency provisions such as Best Management Practices for River Corridor areas (FRCOG's River Corridor Toolkit), further restricting or limiting new development within the 100-year floodplain and River Corridor, Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater practices, etc.	Flooding, Hurricanes, Tropical Storms, Severe Thunderstorms, Microbursts	Planning Board, Conservation Commission	L	Town, FRCOG technical assistance under the DLTA program, Volunteers	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S, I, E	2014 Low 2021 Low	Related Action Items from the 2014 Plan have been consolidated and the Action Item description updated for the 2021 plan. Related Action Items not implemented due to lack of funding and staffing capacity. The town could consider requesting technical assistance from FRCOG under the DLTA program in future years (2021-2025) if the state continues to

Table 4-3: 2021 New Salem Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan									
Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	<div>2014 Priority2021 Priority</div>	Current Status
									fund the program. The Town also may be interested in adding a cluster development bylaw to preserve open space.
Local Plans and Regulations	Review and amend existing land use regulations (zoning bylaws, general bylaws and subdivision regulations) as needed to include requirements that direct new development to stable slopes and soils, sets limits on land clearing to maintain stable slopes to reduce the risk of landslides, and protect existing development from potential landslides by ensuring that surface water and groundwater are properly managed.	Landslides	Planning Board	L	Town, Volunteers, FRCOG technical assistance under the DLTA program	Year 4	S, E	<div>2014 Low2021 Low</div>	Action Item description has been updated and carried over from 2014 plan. No progress to date due to lack of staff capacity and funding, as well as other Town priorities.

Table 4-4: 2021 New Salem Preparedness and Response Action Plan									
Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2021 Priority	Current Status
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Seek and obtain funding for a new backup generator for the Fire Station, which serves as the Town's Emergency Operations Center.	Multiple Hazards	Fire Department, Emergency Management Director	M	Town, HGMP	Year 1	S	2021 High	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. The generator that the fire station has is undersized; upgrading the backup power supply is critical to ensure the Town's EOC can serve residents during an emergency.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Seek and obtain funding for a battery storage system for the solar PV system already present at the Fire Department's main station.	Multiple Hazards	Fire Department, Emergency Management Director	M	MVP	Year 2	S	2021 High	New action item identified during the MVP workshop.
Local Plans & Regulations	Obtain funding to restore and repair dry hydrants throughout Town and upgrade the water supply tank at the Fire Station. Additionally, seek funding for a utility vehicle that could be used to truck in water for fire suppression efforts.	Wildfire	Fire Department, Emergency Management Director	L	Town, MVP	Year 2	I, E	2021 High	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. Restoring the dry hydrant on Meechum Road and at the Hagerville Station are high priorities.
Public Education and Outreach	Provide information to residents via Town website and the New Salem Newsletter on 'home survival kits' in the event of a severe hazard. Access printable materials and online information at www.ready.gov . Prepare extra home survival kits that can be housed at the Fire Station and distributed to residents.	Severe Winter Storms	Emergency Management Director	L	Town	Year 1	S	2014 Low 2021 High	The Town put together an informational booklet on household preparedness and sent one out to all residents after the production of their last Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Town would like to update this packet to include more information about how to shelter in place, evacuation routes, and ensure all information about Town services is accurate.
Public Education and Outreach	Publicize the Town's reverse 911 emergency notification system to increase signups. Post information about the system on the Town website, and put a notice in the New Salem News newsletter.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director	L	Town	Year 1	S	2021 High	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. New Salem recently had broadband service installed, and there is a concern that residents are getting rid of their landlines, which were likely used to sign up

Table 4-4: 2021 New Salem Preparedness and Response Action Plan

Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2021 Priority	Current Status
									for the reverse 911 service. The Town has recently completed publicity efforts but will continue work on this item as many calls come back as undeliverable.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	To mitigate the impacts of natural hazards on New Salem residents, complete upgrades at the Swift River school. Disseminate information on this shelter to appropriate Town Officials and to the public.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director	M	Town	Years 1-2	S, I	2014 High 2021 High	Carried over from previous plan. Partially complete. The Swift River School is currently conducting a cost analysis of upgrading the facilities to serve as a shelter. Items needed include a generator, showers, and possibly a commercial kitchen upgrade. They will be obtained as soon as funds are available.
Local Plans & Regulations	Create or join a cross-jurisdictional sharing program for local boards of health to share nursing staff, reduce costs, qualify for funding, and expand capacity to meet current and future pandemic preparedness best practices.	Multiple Hazards	Board of Health, Select Board	L	Town, State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) Program	Year 1	S	2021 High	New action item identified during the MVP workshop.
Local Plans & Regulations	Hire a consultant to conduct a feasibility study for Town well with a backup water supply. All residents are on wells; creating a municipal backup source of potable for the Town will increase resiliency.	Multiple Hazards	Planning Board, Select Board	M	Town, MVP	Year 2	S	2021 Medium	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. Town owned land does not meet the requirements to correctly site a municipal water supply; the Town would either need to partner with a private landowner or purchase land.
Public Education and Outreach	Publicize the Good Neighbors food distribution program to New Salem residents through a mailing, on the Town website, and in the New Salem News newsletter.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director	L	Town	Year 1	S	2021 Medium	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. The program is used by residents but could be better advertised to explain there are no income verification processes needed to join the program.

Table 4-4: 2021 New Salem Preparedness and Response Action Plan

Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2021 Priority	Current Status
Local Plans & Regulations	Support initiatives to increase food resiliency, as there are not many local farms in New Salem and residents need to travel out of Town to get to a grocery store. Options include coordinating on the development of a regional canning center with other Towns in Franklin County and revamping Community Gardening efforts. Additionally, Preserve New Salem's agricultural capacity by working with willing landowners on permanently protecting the remaining parcels of active farmland and those with prime agricultural soils in the action items for food resiliency.	Multiple hazards	Agriculture Commission & Community Garden	L	Town, MVP	Year 3	S, E	2021 Low	New action item identified during the MVP workshop. There is a community kitchen in neighboring Wendell; the Town is interested in collaborating with Wendell on food resiliency.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Utilize the National Register of Historic Places and the Massachusetts Cultural Resources Information System inventories – as well as any inventories conducted at the local level – to assess the vulnerability of the Town's historically valuable resources. Develop a plan to mitigate the impacts of multiple hazards on these resources, such as providing water-proof storage for important historical documents and evaluating the health and stability of large trees located adjacent to historically significant buildings and sites. Additionally, identify municipal records at risk of being damaged during a hazard event and prioritize them for digitization.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director, Historical Commission	L	Massachusetts Historic Commission, Town, Volunteers	Years 2-3, to be reviewed annually and updated in subsequent years (Years 4-5), as appropriate	I	2014 Medium 2021 Low	This was a new action item in the 2014 plan. Participants at the MVP workshop emphasized the importance of digitizing records currently housed at the Town Hall. The Town is interested in completing this but the financial pressures are too high, it is therefore a low priority.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Continue to upgrade municipal buildings to make them more energy efficient. Buildings used as heating or cooling shelters should be prioritized.	Multiple Hazards	New Salem Energy Committee	L-H	DOER Green Communities	Years 1-5	S, I	2021 Low	New action identified during the MVP workshop. Weatherization work is ongoing at the Swift River Elementary School.

Table 4-4: 2021 New Salem Preparedness and Response Action Plan									
Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2021 Priority	Current Status
Public Education and Outreach	Conduct public education and outreach about vector-borne diseases such as Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis/Ehrlichiosis, Babesiosis, Powassan, Chikungunya, Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), Zika and West Nile Virus. Tick-borne diseases are the greatest concern for the Town.	Invasive Species, Extreme Temperatures	Board of Health	L	Town	Year 1	S	2021 Low	New action item identified during the MVP workshop.

Table 4-5: Completed or Obsolete 2014 Hazard Mitigation Actions								
Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	Priority in Past Plan	Current Status
Public Education and Outreach	Publicize to residents when Community Development Block Grant home rehabilitation funds are available to assist low and moderate income homeowners in retrofitting homes vulnerable to high winds. Periodically check with the Franklin county Regional Housing Authority to see if New Salem qualifies.	Tornados, Hurricanes/Tropical Storms, Severe Winter Storms	Select Board, FCRHA	L	Community Development Block Grants	I	High	Obsolete. This is not relevant to New Salem due to income criteria.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	To reduce the risk to property and infrastructure during high wind events, identify priority areas for tree trimming near utility lines in town and submit the list to National Grid for inclusion in its five-year action plan, which includes regular tree trimming to reduce the number of limbs near overhead power lines. Meet biannually with the utility to ensure priority areas are included in the plan.	Tornados, Hurricanes/Tropical Storms, Severe Winter Storms	Highway Department, National Grid	L	Town, National Grid	I	High	Obsolete. National Grid completed tree maintenance on a regular basis and after storms – the Town cannot change their schedule.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	To reduce the risk of flooding and damage to infrastructure, identify areas immediately surrounding bridge abutments and culverts in which there are overgrowths of brush and other vegetation. Develop a plan to remove the vegetation and replace with materials that would allow for an unobstructed flow of water and would alleviate future flooding and potential damage to infrastructure.	Flooding	Highway Department, Conservation Commission	L	Town, MassWildlife Habitat Management	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S, I, E	Obsolete. The Committee noted that there are no longer issues with flooding due to overgrowths of vegetation.
Local Plans & Regulations	Seek funding and technical assistance and convene a team (NRCS, etc.) to develop a beaver management strategy to reduce the risk to infrastructure, private property and residents from flooding associated with beavers. Maintain communication with property owners on roads where beaver dams are a known concern. Monitor additional beaver activity and impoundments in town.	Flooding	Highway Department, Conservation Commission	L	Town, Volunteers, MEMA, DCR, NRCS, FRCOG GIS services under DLTA funding	Year 1	E	Complete. The Town has an issue with one beaver dam on Shutesbury road, but they installed a beaver deceiver and hired a company to check periodically on the device. The Committee noted the Conservation Commission keeps track of any other issues.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Contact the Towns of Orange and Athol to determine the status of developing inundation maps of the North and South Mattawa Dams. Attend meetings as necessary to be included in the planning process. Additionally, work with the Towns to develop Emergency Action Plans for the Dams; attend meetings as needed. Disseminate the EAPs to the appropriate Town officials and first responders.	Dam Failure	Town of Orange, Town of Athol, Emergency Management Director	L	Towns	Years 1-2	S, I	Obsolete. If the one of the Mattawa dams were to fail, New Salem would not be impacted.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Conduct outreach via the New Salem Agricultural Commission to farmers in town. Request a list of the types, quantities and method of on-site storage of agricultural chemicals used by the farms in New Salem. Disseminate this information to appropriate town officials and/or first	Manmade Hazards	Emergency Management Director, Fire Department,	L	Town, Volunteers	Year 1, to be reviewed annually and updated in subsequent years	S, E	Obsolete. The Town's largest farming operations are no longer active so chemical storage is not a concern.

Table 4-5: Completed or Obsolete 2014 Hazard Mitigation Actions								
Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	Priority in Past Plan	Current Status
	responders to mitigate additional impacts of environmental contamination in the event of a major spill or accidental release of hazardous materials.		Agricultural Commission			(Years 2-5), as appropriate		
Local Plans and Regulations	Conduct regular monitoring of brooks and streams during the winter months and identify specific sites prone to ice jams. Develop a plan to conduct improvements to the identified sites to alleviate future ice jams.	Severe Winter Storms, Flooding	Department of Public Works, Conservation Commission	L	Town	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	I, E	Complete. The Town's emergency management staff monitors brooks and streams in the winter during periods of excessive rainfall when localized flooding from ice jams could be an issue.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Review municipal buildings and structures to determine if they are particularly vulnerable to earthquake damage and determine if any retrofitting measures could mitigate this vulnerability.	Earthquakes	Building Inspector, Public Works Superintendent	H	Town	Years 1-5. The search for retro-fitting funding to be conducted annually	S, I	Obsolete. This action item is cost prohibitive.
Critical Facilities and Infrastructure	Hire a consultant to complete a reuse study at the old Town Hall building. It is currently vacant and in need of substantial upgrades to make the building safe for public use. The historic building is vulnerable to all hazards in its current state.	Multiple Hazards	Building Inspector, Select Board	H	Town	Year 3	S, I	Complete/Obsolete. The Town has had multiple consultants come in to look at the old Town Hall building but it would cost at least \$3 million in upgrades to be brought up to code. This is not affordable or reasonable for the Town to take on.
Local Plans and Regulations	Compile and update annually a list of occupied mobile homes in the town. Assess whether these types of homes have been disproportionately impacted by wind events from tornados and other high-wind hazards. Provide these mobile home owners with materials on adequately securing their properties and other strategies for mitigating the risks to mobile homes from high wind events.	Multiple Hazards	Select Board, Assessors	L	Town	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually (Years 2-5), as needed	S, I	Obsolete. There are no mobile homes in Town and they are prohibited in the Town's zoning bylaws.
Public Education and Outreach	Compile a list of occupied old and/or deteriorating homes in town. Provide these homeowners with materials on adequately maintaining their properties, including tree removal and trimming near structures, and potential funding resources for home upgrades to mitigate the impact of wind-related events.	Multiple Hazards	Select Board, Assessors, Emergency Management Director	L	Home Owners, Community Development Block Grants	Year 1, to be reviewed annually and updated in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S, I	Obsolete. Residents in Town know how to maintain their properties but funding is an issue. New Salem no longer qualifies for CDBG funding due to income thresholds.

5 PLAN ADOPTION AND MAINTENANCE

5.1 PLAN ADOPTION

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) provided support to the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning Committee as they underwent the planning process. Town officials such as the Fire Chief and the Town Coordinator were invaluable resources to the FRCOG and provided background and policy information and municipal documents, which were crucial to facilitating completion of the plan.

When the preliminary draft of the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan was completed, copies were disseminated to the Committee for comment and approval. The Committee was comprised of representatives of Town boards and departments who bear the responsibility for implementing the action items and recommendations of the completed plan (see the list of Committee members on the front cover).

Copies of the Final Review Draft of the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan were distributed to Town boards and officials, and to surrounding towns for review. Copies were made available at the Town Hall, and a copy of the plan was also posted on the Town website for public review. Once reviewed and approved by MEMA, the plan was sent to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for their approval. Approval pending adoption was granted on July 12, 2021. On August 9, 2021, the New Salem Board of Selectmen voted to adopt the plan and on October 21, 2021 FEMA approved the plan.

5.2 PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCESS

The implementation of the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan will begin following its approval by MEMA and FEMA and formal adoption by the New Salem Board of Selectmen. Specific Town departments and boards will be responsible for ensuring the development of policies, bylaw revisions, and programs as described in the Action Plan (Tables 4-3 and 4-4). The New Salem Hazard Mitigation and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning Committee will oversee the implementation of the plan.

Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Plan

The measure of success of the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan will be the number of identified mitigation strategies implemented. In order for the Town to become more disaster resilient and better equipped to respond to natural disasters, there must be a coordinated effort between elected officials, appointed bodies, Town employees, regional and state agencies involved in disaster mitigation, and the general public.

Implementation Schedule

Annual Meetings

The New Salem Hazard Mitigation and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning Committee will meet on an annual basis or as needed (i.e., following a natural or other disaster) to monitor the progress of implementation, evaluate the success or failure of implemented recommendations, and brainstorm for strategies to remove obstacles to implementation. Following these discussions, it is anticipated that the Committee may decide to reassign the roles and responsibilities for implementing mitigation strategies to different Town departments and/or revise the goals and objectives contained in the plan. At a minimum, the Committee will review and update the plan every five years. The meetings of the Committee will be organized and facilitated by the New Salem Town Coordinator and the Emergency Management Director.

Bi-Annual Progress Report

The Emergency Management Director will prepare and distribute a biannual progress report in years two and four of the plan. Members of the Local Planning Committee will be polled on any changes or revisions to the plan that may be needed, progress and accomplishments for implementation, failure to achieve progress, and any new hazards or problem areas that have been identified. Success or failure to implement recommendations will be evaluated differently depending on the nature of the individual Action Items being addressed, but will include, at a minimum, an analysis of the following: 1) whether or not the item has been addressed within the specified time frame; 2) whether actions have been taken by the designated responsible parties; 3) what funding sources were utilized; 4) whether or not the desired outcome has been achieved; and 4) identified barriers to implementation. This information will be used to prepare the bi-annual progress report which may be attached as an addendum, as needed, to the local hazard mitigation plan. The progress report will be distributed to all of the local implementation group members and other interested local stakeholders. The Emergency Management Director and the Committee will have primary responsibility for tracking progress and updating the plan.

Five-Year Update Preparation

During the fourth year after initial plan adoption, the Emergency Management Director will convene the Committee to begin preparations for an update of the plan, which will be required by the end of year five in order to maintain approved plan status with FEMA. The team will use the information from the annual meetings and the biannual progress reports to identify the needs and priorities for the plan update.

Updated Local Hazard Mitigation Plan – Preparation and Adoption

FEMA's approval of this plan is valid for five years, by which time an updated plan must be approved by FEMA in order to maintain the town's approved plan status and its eligibility for FEMA mitigation grants. Because of the time required to secure a planning grant, prepare an updated plan, and complete the approval and adoption of an updated plan, the local Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee should begin

the process by the end of Year 3. This will help the town avoid a lapse in its approved plan status and grant eligibility when the current plan expires.

The Committee may decide to undertake the update themselves, request assistance from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, or hire another consultant. However the Committee decides to proceed, the group will need to review the current FEMA hazard mitigation plan guidelines for any changes. The updated New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan will be forwarded to MEMA and to FEMA for approval.

As is the case with many Franklin County towns, New Salem's government relies on a few public servants filling many roles, upon citizen volunteers and upon limited budgets. As such, implementation of the recommendations of this plan could be a challenge to the Committee. As the Committee meets regularly to assess progress, it should strive to identify shortfalls in staffing and funding and other issues which may hinder Plan implementation. The Committee can seek technical assistance from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to help alleviate some of the staffing shortfalls. The Committee can also seek assistance and funding from the sources listed in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1: Potential Funding Sources for Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan Implementation

Program	Type of Assistance	Availability	Managing Agency	Funding Source
National Flood Insurance Program	Pre-disaster insurance	Rolling	DCR	Property Owner, FEMA
Community Assistance Program	State funds to provide assistance to communities in complying with NFIP requirements	Annually	DCR	FEMA/NFIP
Community Rating System (Part of the NFIP)	Flood insurance discounts	Rolling	DCR	Property Owner
Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program	Cost share grants for pre-disaster planning & projects	Annual	MEMA	75% FEMA/ 25% non-federal
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)	Post-disaster cost-share Grants	Post Disaster	MEMA	75% FEMA/ 25% non-federal
Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program	National, competitive grant program for projects & planning	Annual	MEMA	75% FEMA/ 25% non-federal
Small Business Administration Disaster Loans	Post- disaster loans to qualified applicants	Ongoing	MEMA	Small Business Administration
Public Assistance Program	Post-disaster aid to state and local governments	Post Disaster	MEMA	FEMA/ plus a non-federal share
Dam & Seawall Repair & Removal Program	Grant and loan funds for design, permitting, and construction of repair or removal of dams	Annual	EEA	Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Fund
Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)	Funding to assist local emergency management departments in building and maintaining an all-hazards emergency preparedness system, including planning; organizational support; equipment; training; and exercises	When funds are available	MEMA	MEMA
Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program	Grants and materials to towns with less than 10,000 population for technical, financial and other assistance for forest fire related purposes, including training, Class A foam, personal protective gear, forestry tools, and other fire suppression equipment	Annual	DCR	USDA Forest Service
Federal 604b Water Quality Management Planning Grant	Funding for assessment and planning that identifies water quality problems and provides preliminary designs for Best Management Practices to address the problems	Annual	MA DEP	EPA Clean Water Act

Table 5-1: Potential Funding Sources for Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan Implementation

Program	Type of Assistance	Availability	Managing Agency	Funding Source
Section 319 Nonpoint Source Competitive Grant Program	Provides grants for wide variety of activities related to non-point source pollution runoff mitigation	Annual	MassDEP	EPA
Economic Development Administration Grants and Investment	Provides grants for community construction projects, which can include mitigation activities	Rolling	FRCOG	U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA
Emergency Watershed Protection	A disaster recovery program made available in emergency situations when neither the state nor the local community is able to repair a damaged watershed	Post-Disaster	NRCS MA	USDA NRCS
Agricultural Management Assistance	Funding for producers to develop or improve sources of irrigation water supply, construct new or reorganize irrigation delivery systems on existing cropland to mitigate the risk of drought	Rolling	NRCS MA	USDA NRCS
Conservation Stewardship Program	Agricultural producers and forest landowners earn payments for actively managing, maintaining, and expanding conservation activities – like cover crops, rotational grazing, ecologically-based pest management, buffer strips, and pollinator and beneficial insect habitat – while maintaining active agricultural production	Rolling	NRCS MA	USDA NRCS
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	Provides technical and financial assistance to forestry & agricultural producers to plan and install conservation practices that address natural resource concerns including water quality degradation, water conservation, reducing greenhouse gases, improving wildlife habitat, controlling invasive plant species, and on-farm energy conservation and efficiency.	Rolling	NRCS MA	USDA NRCS
Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (ACEP)	Provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands.	Rolling	NRCS MA	USDA NRCS
Forest Stewardship Program	Supports private landowners and municipalities to manage woodlands for timber, soil and water quality, wildlife and fish habitat, and recreation	Rolling	DCR / MA Woodlands Institute	USDA Forest Service

Table 5-1: Potential Funding Sources for Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan Implementation

Program	Type of Assistance	Availability	Managing Agency	Funding Source
Community Forest Stewardship Implementation Grants for Municipalities	Municipalities that manage a town forest or have water supply land currently enrolled in the Forest Stewardship Program apply for 75-25 matching reimbursement grants to implement their forest stewardship plan	Rolling as funding permits	DCR	USDA Forest Service
USDA Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant	Provides grants and loans for infrastructure and public safety development and enhancement in rural areas	Annual	USDA Rural Development MA	USDA Rural Development
Transportation Improvement Program	Prioritized, multi-year listing of transportation projects in a region that are to receive Federal funding for implementation. Projects are limited to certain roadways and are constrained by available funding for each fiscal year. Any transportation project in Franklin County that is to receive federal funding must be listed on the TIP.	Rolling	Franklin County Transportation Planning Organization / FRCOG	80% Federal / 20% State
Chapter 90 Program	Funds maintaining, repairing, improving and constructing town and county ways and bridges which qualify under the State Aid Highway Guidelines	Annual	Mass DOT	State Transportation Bond
Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant	Funds replacement of undersized, perched, and/or degraded culverts located in an area of high ecological value with better designed crossings that meet improved structural and environmental design standards and flood resiliency criteria	Annual	MA Division of Ecological Restoration	State Appropriation
MassWorks Infrastructure Program	Funds for public infrastructure such as roadways, streetscapes, water, and sewer	Annual	EOHED	State Appropriation
Municipal Small Bridge Program	5 year program (FY17 – FY21) to assist cities and towns with replacing or preserving bridges with spans between 10' and 20'	Bi-Annual	MassDOT	State Appropriation
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning and Action Grant Programs	Funding to support cities and towns to begin the process of planning for climate change resiliency and implement priority projects; projects proposing nature-based solutions that rely on green infrastructure or conservation and enhancement of natural systems to improve community resilience are given priority for implementation funding through the MVP Action Grant	Annual	EEA	State Appropriation

Table 5-1: Potential Funding Sources for Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan Implementation

Program	Type of Assistance	Availability	Managing Agency	Funding Source
Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program	Funding for municipalities for the acquisition of parkland, development of a new park, renovation of an existing park, development of trails in an existing conservation or recreation area, or the acquisition of conservation land	Annual	EEA	National Park Service
Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant	Provides financial assistance to public water systems and municipal water departments for the purchase of land in existing Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)-approved drinking water supply protection areas, or land in estimated protection areas of identified and planned future water supply wells or intakes	Annual	EEA	EEA
Landscape Partnership Grant	Funding for large-scale (min. 500 acres), joint conservation projects completed in partnership with federal, state, and local governments, and non-profits	Annual	EEA	EEA
Conservation Partnership Grant	Funds acquisition of conservation or recreation land by non-profit entities	Annual	EEA	EEA
LAND – Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity	Funding for municipal conservation and agricultural commissions to acquire interests in land that will be used for conservation and passive recreation purposes	Annual	EEA	EEA
PARC - Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities	Funding for municipalities to acquire parkland, build a new park, or to renovate an existing park	Annual	EEA	EEA
Table Acronym Key: DCR = MA Department of Conservation & Recreation; FEMA = Federal Emergency Management Agency; MEMA = MA Emergency Management Agency; EEA = MA Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs; USDA = U.S. Department of Agriculture; NRCS = Natural Resource Conservation Service; EDA = U.S. Economic Development Administration; EPA = U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; FRCOG = Franklin Regional Council of Governments; MassDOT = MA Department of Transportation; EOHEd = MA Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development				

Incorporating the Plan into Existing Planning Mechanisms

2014 Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Town of New Salem has taken steps to implement findings from the 2014 Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Town has not adopted or updated any official Town planning documents, but has incorporated findings from the last plan into the following documents or participated in regional planning efforts:

- 2019 New Salem Culvert Assessment, prepared by the FRCOG
- Hazard Tree Maintenance Plan, developed by the New Salem Tree Warden
- *Sustainable Stormwater Management Plan for Franklin County*, forthcoming from the FRCOG

2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan

Upon approval of the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan by FEMA, the Committee will provide all interested parties and implementing departments with a copy of the plan, with emphasis on Tables 4-3 and 4-4: 2021 New Salem Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan and 2021 New Salem Preparedness and Response Action Plan. The Committee should also consider initiating a discussion with each department on how the plan can be integrated into that department's ongoing work. At a minimum, the plan should be distributed to and reviewed with the following entities:

- Fire Department
- Emergency Management Director
- Police Department
- Public Works / Highway Department
- Planning Board
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Conservation Commission
- Franklin County Regional Emergency Planning Committee
- Building Inspector
- Select Board

Some possible planning mechanisms for incorporating the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan into existing planning mechanisms to the fullest extent possible could include:

- Incorporation of relevant Hazard Mitigation and climate change information into the Open Space and Recreation Plan. There are opportunities to discuss findings of the hazard mitigation plan and incorporate them into the Environmental Inventory and Analysis section of the OSRP and to include appropriate action items from the hazard mitigation plan in the OSRP Action Plan. The Town's current OSRP is expired and could be updated.
- Any future development of master plans and scenic byway plans could incorporate relevant material from this plan into sections such as the Natural Resources section and any action plans.

- When the Final Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Town of New Salem is distributed to the Town boards for their review, a letter asking each board to endorse any action item that lists that board as a responsible party would help to encourage completion of action items.
- The Planning Board could include discussions of the Hazard Mitigation Plan Action Items in one meeting annually and assess progress. Current Subdivision Rules and Regulations and Zoning Bylaws should be reviewed and revised by the EMD, Planning Board and Select Board based upon the recommendations of this plan. Technical assistance from the FRCOG may be available to assist in the modification of New Salem's current Bylaws.

Continued Public Involvement

The Town of New Salem is dedicated to continued public involvement in the hazard mitigation planning and review process. During all phases of plan maintenance, the public will have the opportunity to provide feedback. The 2021 Plan will be maintained and available for review on the Town website through 2026. Individuals will have an opportunity to submit comments for the Plan update at any time. Any public meetings of the Committee will be publicized. This will provide the public an opportunity to express their concerns, opinions, or ideas about any updates/changes that are proposed to the Plan.

APPENDIX A: Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness CRB Risk Matrix

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix				www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org					
ALL HAZARDS: severe winter storms, flooding, tornados, dam failure, hurricanes/tropical storms, thunderstorms/microbursts, wildfire, earthquake, landslides, drought, extreme temperatures, invasive species									
_ _ _priority for action over the _hort or _ong term (and _ngoing) _ = Vulnerability _ = Strength				Top Priority Hazards					
				Severe Winter Storms	Extreme Temperatures	Invasive Species	Drought	Priority	Time
								_ _ _	_hort _ong _ngoing
Features	Location	Ownership	V or S						
Infrastructural									
Culverts and bridges	Priority areas such as Cooleyville Road	Town & State		Culverts and bridges throughout town are undersized/under capacity; 19% of New Salem's culverts are in critical condition. Use the results from FRCOG's 2020 Town of New Salem Culvert Assessment to prioritize repairs and replacements of culverts to build resiliency to severe storms and flooding events. Seek funding for the design and construction of high priority culverts.					
Gravel roads	Town-wide & priority areas - West Street, Cooleyville Road	Town		Approximately 50% of the roads in New Salem are unpaved. Gravel roads can exacerbate already present issues with flooding, and become increasingly churned during quick freeze/thaw periods. Identify locations where nature based solutions would be most effective. Seek funding to implement pilot projects designed for Cooleyville Road as a part of the Sustainable Stormwater Management Plan for Franklin County.					
Power lines	Town-wide	Utility		Repetitive and/or long term power outages are a risk the community. The Town gets power from several directions and outages for some residents last a long time. Also, new broadband cables throughout Town are more difficult to repair than electrical wires after being knocked down. Continue to advocate for tree trimming on Route 202, and train DPW staff on how to conduct trimming and tree health assessments so projects identified by the Tree Warden can be carried forward on an annual basis.					
Backup water supply	Town			All New Salem residents use private wells for their water supply, which may run dry during a drought. The Town does not have a municipal backup water supply. Hire a consultant to conduct a feasibility study for Town well with a backup water supply; creating a municipal backup source of potable for the Town will increase resiliency.					
Dry hydrants/water supply for fire suppression	Meechum Road, other priority locations	Town		Obtain funding to restore and repair dry hydrants throughout Town and upgrade the water supply tank at the Fire Station. Additionally, seek funding for a utility vehicle that could be used to truck in water for fire suppression efforts.					
Department of Public Works	Town-wide	Town		The DPW responds quickly to hazards and routinely clears roads to keep emergency evacuation routes open and safe.					
Town records	Town Hall	Town		Town records are not digitized or stored in a fire proof location. Identify municipal records at risk of being damaged during a hazard event and prioritize them for digitization. Develop a plan to mitigate the impacts of multiple hazards on these resources, such as providing water-proof storage for important historical documents and evaluating the health and stability of large trees located adjacent to historically significant buildings and sites.					
Municipal Buildings/Town Solar Array	Town Hall, Swift River School, Fire Department	Town		New Salem is a designated Green Community, signifying that energy efficiency and renewable energy is important to Town officials and residents. The Energy Committee has worked to complete weatherization upgrades at several municipal buildings over the past couple of years. Additionally, the Fire Department has a solar array onsite that completely covers the main station's energy needs.					

Societal						
Emergency Operations Center	Fire Station	Town		New Salem has a practice of setting up an EOC, which residents can go to if they lose power and need assistance with medical devices or to charge cell phones. The EOC also serves as a warming shelter in the winter. The EOC currently has an undersized generator. Seek and obtain funding for a new backup generator for the Fire Station, which serves as the Town’s Emergency Operations Center. Additionally, seek and obtain funding for a battery storage system for the solar PV system already present at the Fire Department’s main station.		
Town Shelter	Swift River School	Town		The Town would like to use the Swift River School as a shelter, but it doesn't have a generator. The School has been evaluated for solar and energy storage - installing solar may be difficult due to the lack of three phase power and roof conditions, but energy storage could be further evaluated. To mitigate the impacts of natural hazards on New Salem residents, complete upgrades at the Swift River school.		
Senior citizens	Town-wide			25% of New Salem's residents are seniors; 9% of resents are 65+ and live alone. Emergency responders have a practice of completing door to door checks after a storm to ensure residents are safe and have necessary resources.		
Household disaster preparedness	Town-wide			Improve the reach and utilization of emergency information, including home survival kits, proper evacuation procedures, and how to prepare homes and structures for flooding and high winds.		
Emergency contact system	Town-wide			Publicize the Town’s reverse 911 emergency notification system to increase signups. Post information about the system on the Town website, and put a notice in the New Salem News newsletter.		
Food resiliency	Town-wide			There are not many farms in Town, which may pose a risk for food resiliency. Support initiatives to increase food resiliency, as there are not many local farms in New Salem and residents need to travel out of Town to get to a grocery store. Options include coordinating on the development of a regional canning center with other Towns in Franklin County and revamping Community Gardening efforts.		
Good Neighbors Wendell	Town-wide			This is a food distribution program in Wendell that covers both towns. It serves 50% of Wendell’s population and 20% of New Salem’s. The program gets food donations from local grocery stores and monetary donations. The program provides pantry staples, fresh fruit, vegetables, and meat. Publicize the Good Neighbors food distribution program to New Salem residents through a mailing, on the Town website, and in the New Salem News newsletter.		
Safety education in schools	Swift River School	Town		The Swift River School and the Fire Department work closely together to develop emergency plans and works with school staff and students to make sure they are prepared and know what to do during an emergency. Continue/expand this practice.		
Vector-borne diseases	Town-wide			Conduct public education and outreach about vector-borne diseases such as Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis/Ehrlichiosis, Babesiosis, Powassan, Chikungunya, Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE), Zika and West Nile Virus. Tick-borne diseases are the greatest concern for the Town.		
Local businesses	Town-wide	Private		Local businesses in Town support each other's businesses by putting out flyers and pamphlets. Some business owners would like to better connected to one another. Form a network so businesses and farms can connect after a storm or to better understand how others are building resiliency.		

Active churches	Central Congregational Church	Private		The Central Congregational Church provides free meals for the community; workshop participants noted this was a strength during times of emergency.		
Pandemic preparedness	Town-wide	Town, Board of Health		Create or join a cross-jurisdictional sharing program for local boards of health to share nursing staff, reduce costs, qualify for funding, and expand capacity to meet current and future pandemic preparedness best practices.		
Environmental						
Contiguous forest	Town-wide	Public/Private	S/V	New Salem's land is nearly 90% forested and vulnerable to wildfire, especially where forest intersects with the built environment. Schools and housing is vulnerable and may be difficult to evacuate. Work with the state to minimize or prohibit the cutting of trees on Quabbin Reservoir lands to alleviate the risk of wildfires igniting from logging slash. Request the state add slash removal and the re-establishment of fire breaks to the maintenance plan for the Quabbin Reservoir.		
Forest debris/standing dead trees/logging slash	Town-wide	Public/Private		New Salem is also vulnerable to wildfires due to the large amount of forest debris from strong wind storms, and the amount of logging slash left behind after logging activities in the Quabbin Reservoir forests and on private land parcels throughout Town. Identify Town-owned forested areas that are at higher risk for wildfires (near residential areas, high-wire utilities, etc.) to implement climate resilient forest management practices that reduce the risk of fire hazards (such as the removal of slash). Coordinate with utility company for tree clearing work. Additionally, inventory and map areas of logging slash in Town. Work with landowners as needed to develop a plan to remove slash to decrease the risk of wildfires.		
Floodplain	Town-wide	Private		There is very little residential development in the floodplain, which safeguards residents against flooding and property damage.		
Invasive species such as Gypsy Moths, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, Emerald Ash borer, Bittersweet	Town-wide	Public/Private		Hire a consultant to develop an invasive species management plan. The plan should map where invasive species are located and identify priority areas to address, treatment options, and state relative cost estimates. Work with the DCR to complete this project, as much of the forested land in Town is managed by the DCR.		
Beaver dams	Shutesbury Road	Town		The Town has an issue with one beaver dam on Shutesbury road, but they installed a beaver deceiver and hired a company to check periodically on the device. The Committee noted the Conservation Commission keeps track of any other issues.		

APPENDIX B: Public Participation

MEETING AGENDA

TOWN OF NEW SALEM

MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS PLAN AND HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE PROJECT

Project Facilitator: Franklin Regional Council of Governments

February 19th, 2020 2:00 PM, via Conference Call

1. Introduce integrated Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan project
2. Review Scope of Work, Hazard Mitigation Plan Sections
3. Review project stakeholders
4. Plan and schedule public kickoff meeting – March 2020

MEETING SIGN IN

Individuals present:

1. Joe Cuneo, New Salem Fire Department Chief
2. Nancy Aldrich, New Salem Town Coordinator
3. Kimberly Noake MacPhee, Franklin Regional Council of Governments
4. Megan Rhodes, Franklin Regional Council of Governments
5. Allison Gage, Franklin Regional Council of Governments

MEETING AGENDA

TOWN OF NEW SALEM

MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS PLAN AND HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE PROJECT

Project Facilitator: Franklin Regional Council of Governments

February 26th, 2020 1:30 PM, New Salem Town Hall

1. Review and complete FEMA's Capability Assessment Worksheet
2. Address other updates to the Hazard Mitigation Plan

MEETING SIGN IN

Individuals present:

1. Joe Cuneo, New Salem Fire Department Chief
2. Nancy Aldrich, New Salem Town Coordinator
3. Kimberly Noake MacPhee, Franklin Regional Council of Governments
4. Allison Gage, Franklin Regional Council of Governments

New Salem holding hazard mitigation kick-off meeting



By DOMENIC POLI

Staff Writer

Published: 3/8/2020 5:16:54 PM

NEW SALEM — The town has partnered with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments' Planning Department to address climate resiliency and disaster mitigation, and residents are invited to a meeting Wednesday to discuss strategy.

The meeting will start at 3 p.m. at the Town Offices, 19 South Main St.

New Salem is crafting a combined Community Resilience Building and Hazard Mitigation Regional Plan through the state's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant program. By doing so, the 58.6-square-mile town would become a certified MVP community, and would therefore become eligible for state and federal grant money to fund projects, once the new plan gets approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

According to information from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the plan's purpose is to identify natural hazards affecting the communities; inventory each town's societal, infrastructural and environmental assets and vulnerabilities; pinpoint the greatest risks of damage by hazards; discuss each town's relevant policies,

programs and regulations; prioritize action steps to prevent loss of life and damage to property; and spot shared needs and resources for making New Salem more resilient in the face of climate change.

Last month, the Baker-Polito administration announced \$11.6 million in grants through the MVP program. New Salem is set to receive \$27,000 of this money.

Contact New Salem Town Coordinator Nancy Aldrich at 978-544-6437 or newsalemwendell@gmail.com for more information about this project and how to get involved.

Reach Domenic Poli at: dpoli@recorder.com or 413-772-0261, ext. 262.

<https://www.recorder.com/New-Salem-holding-hazard-mitigation-kick-off-meeting-33114036>

MEETING AGENDA

New Salem Integrated Multi-Hazard Mitigation & MVP Plan

Project Meeting

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 3:00 - 4:30 pm

New Salem Town Offices

19 South Main Street, New Salem, MA

Project Facilitator: Franklin Regional Council of Governments

1. Introductions
2. Overview of Project and Timeline
3. Review 2014 Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Priority Hazards and Action Items
4. Discuss Current Concerns about Natural Hazards and Climate Change Stressors, including New Salem's Risk to Each Hazard Based on the Location, Extent, Probability, and Severity of Hazards
5. Review of Draft Critical Facilities & Infrastructure Map and Environmental Resources Map
6. Discuss MVP Workshop Logistics, including stakeholder outreach

MVP and HMP Kick-off Meeting

New Salem Town Offices

[illegible]



Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

- The purpose of hazard mitigation is to reduce potential losses from future disasters.
- Mitigation plans identify the natural hazards that impact communities, identify actions to reduce losses from those hazards, and establish a coordinated process to implement the plan.

2014 New Salem Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

- Inventoried *historic* hazard events – frequency, magnitude and damages
- Vulnerability assessment for flooding was prepared based on damages from *past* events and location in 100 year floodplain
- Prioritized all hazards and included action items for each hazard

2014 New Salem Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Top Hazards and Action Items

- Working with the Towns of Orange and Athol to develop Emergency Action Plans for the **North and South Mattawa Dams**
- **Housing rehabilitation / household preparedness**
- **Monitoring and repairing culverts and bridges** to mitigate flood hazards
- Upgrading **sheltering facilities**
- **Repetitive power outages**
- Identification of **high risk beaver dams**

Massachusetts' Changing Climate is Exposing Communities to Greater Risk

Changing weather

- Higher / extreme temperatures
- Changes in precipitation
- More frequent & intense storms

Amplifies existing risks

- Community and regional infrastructure
- Local and regional economies
- Public health
- Natural resources and our environment



Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Launched 2017



MVP Program Overview

Build Resilience and Preparedness to more frequent and intense weather events.

Improve pre-event planning, response & recovery, and long-term actions.

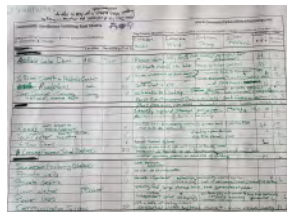
A prepared and resilient town will be able to maintain functions, protect its residents and emerge stronger and better prepared for future storm events and a changing climate.

MVP Planning & Designation Process:

- Community Resilience Building Workshop
- Action Plan Matrix and Summary Report
- Listening Session

Once designated, communities can apply for MVP Action Grants to implement high priority actions.

MVP Community Resilience Building Workshop



Workshop Process and Outcomes

- Review natural hazard background information to provide context for all participants
- Identify and map vulnerabilities and strengths:
 - Infrastructure
 - Society
 - Natural resources
- Develop and prioritize actions and clearly delineated next steps

Combined MVP / Hazard Mitigation Process

Hazard Mitigation:

- Comprehensive inventory of hazards and impacts – must address all hazards in the State HMP
- Identifies past, current and future hazards / impacts
- Results in actions to address all hazards

MVP:

- Focuses on top 4 hazards – defined by the community
- Identifies current and future vulnerabilities and strengths
- Results in targeted number of high priority actions

Combined HMP / MVP Plan

- Consider impacts to:
 - ✓ Critical Facilities and Infrastructure
 - ✓ Population / Society / Economy
 - ✓ Environment
- Determine Top Priority Hazards
- Identify Actions to Address Impacts and Vulnerabilities
- Include Nature Based Solutions

Consider Impacts To:

Critical Facilities / Infrastructure:

- Roads and bridges
- Power grid
- Drinking Water
- Wastewater Treatment
- Communications
- Housing
- Emergency Shelters / Town Buildings
- Schools
- Access to Hospitals / Medical Facilities

Population / Society:

- Public health
- Access to lifelines (food/water, emergency response personnel, etc.)
- Vulnerable populations
- Public services
- Local / regional economy

Environment:

- Invasive species
- Wildlife and plant life
- Forests and farms
- Water quality
- Water supply
- Urban forests / street trees

Vulnerable Populations in New Salem

Vulnerable Population Category	NEW SALEM	
	Number	Percent of Total Population (1,019)
Population Age 65 Years and Over	227	22%
Population with a Disability	130	13%
Population who Speak English Less than "Very Well"	0	0%
Vulnerable Household Category	Number	Percent of Total Households (433)
Low Income Households (annual income less than \$35,000)	81	19%
Householder Age 65 Years and Over Living Alone	57	13%
Households Without Access to a Vehicle	10	2%
Homes Built Prior to 1970	179	37%
Mobile Homes	3	.6%

Note: Individuals and households may be counted under multiple categories.
Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2014-2018 Five-Year Estimates.

Next Steps

Community Resilience Building Workshop:

Monday April 27, 2020

Fire Hall

1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

- Drafting of the integrated Hazard Mitigation and MVP Plan
- Meetings with core team to review drafts
- Public listening session in May
- Submission of plan to MEMA and EEA for review by June 30, 2020
- Questions / comments please contact:
 - Nancy Aldrich, New Salem Town Coordinator- 978-544-6437
coordinator@newsalemma.org

THANK YOU!

GREENFIELD RECORDER

(<https://www.recorder.com>)

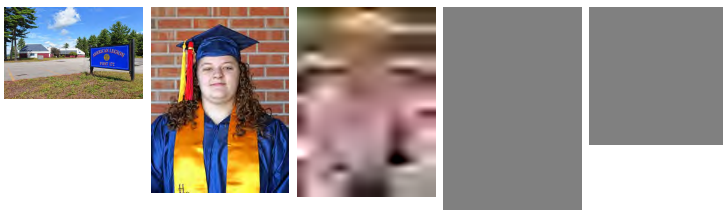
News > Local (</News/Local/>)

North Quabbin Notebook: Sept. 9, 2020



The Orange American Legion Post 172 hopes to have its first meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 14. Staff Photo/PAUL FRANZ

MITCHEL



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Published: 9/8/2020 2:07:33 PM

Storytelling with Michael Humphries

ORANGE — Michael Humphries will lead an afternoon of stories, ballads and humor on the Moore-Leland Library lawn, at 172 Athol Road, on Saturday at 4 p.m.

Seating is limited to 50 people, so registration is required. Call the Wheeler Memorial Library at 978-544-2495, ext. 100 to register.

The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Orange Public Libraries and has a rain date of Sunday.

American Legion meeting canceled

ORANGE — Due to the pandemic, there will be no meeting of the Orange American Legion Post 172 on Wednesday.

According to a notice from President Deb Barber and Commander Walter White, the Orange American Legion post hopes to have its first meeting, with a chance to show support to the officers for the 2020 to 2021 year, on Wednesday, Oct. 14, at 7 p.m.

“We are all looking forward to working on our programs and serving our veterans,” the notice reads. “Please remember that the safety of our members is our priority.”

The joint installation of officer that was scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 26, has been canceled until meetings can be held again.

Mahar alumni continue fundraising efforts without reunion

ORANGE — Although the Mahar 50+ Reunion is typically held the third Saturday of September, bringing together Ralph C. Mahar Regional School alumni from every class that graduated more than 50 years ago, this year’s union has been canceled due to the pandemic.

A notice from Maureen Riendeau states the alumni usually raise money for scholarships through raffles and a silent auction, collecting \$2,500 last year. Instead, at the suggestion of Alana Day, a member of the Mahar 50+ Committee and 1964 graduate, alumni are still providing donations, but not through their usual fundraisers.

Mahar 50+ Committee members from the classes of 1958 through 1969 contacted their class members and explained the plan to continue fundraising without the actual reunion, the notice states. More than \$5,000 was raised.

Muriel Holden, chair of the Mahar 50+ Committee, announced that the \$5,000 check was given to Jeff Cole, president of the Orange Scholarship Foundation. Any other donations received this year will be held for next year’s donation.

According to the notice, the next reunion is planned for Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021.

New Salem holding vulnerability preparedness workshop

NEW SALEM — The town is hosting a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Community Resilience Building Workshop on Wednesday, Sept. 16, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Fire Station, 33 South Main St.

According to a notice from Allison Gage, land use and natural resources planner with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), workshop participants will help define New Salem's greatest vulnerabilities to climate change, as well as existing community strengths, with a goal of increasing New Salem's resilience to the impacts of climate change. The workshop will culminate in a list of actions for New Salem that can help improve the resiliency of town infrastructure, residents and the environment.

Once a MVP plan is adopted by New Salem's Selectboard, the town will be eligible to apply for state grant funding, the notice states.

Register for the workshop with New Salem Town Coordinator Nancy Aldrich at 978-544-6437 or newsalemwendell@gmail.com by Friday.

Orange Community Band awards scholarships

ORANGE — Although the Orange Community Band was forced to cancel both its Spring Pops Concert and the summer 2020 season on the bandstand, the band decided that it would still award scholarships for area students with a love of music.

According to a notice from Maureen Riendeau, this year's five recipients are:

- Brooke Mitchell, who played with the Ralph C. Mahar Regional School band for six years. She will attend Westfield State University.
- Riley Drew, who is headed to the University of Massachusetts. Not a performer now, he did perform with an elementary chorus, and uses music to help with his athletic workouts.
- Jaylynn Eady, who will attend Salem State University. She participated in band, theater and talent shows.
- Jazmyn Vautour, who will attend Bridgewater State University. She was active in musical theater and dance.
- Connor McCarthy, who performed with Mahar's concert band, pep band and marching band. He will attend the University of Massachusetts.



Developer challenges conditions for Dollar

General permit

MEETING AGENDA

New Salem Integrated Multi-Hazard Mitigation & MVP Plan

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BUILDING WORKSHOP

Wednesday, September 16, 2020 1:00pm

New Salem Fire Station

33 South Main Street, New Salem, MA

Project Facilitator: Franklin Regional Council of Governments

1. Introductions
2. Summary of MVP Program, Climate Change and Hazard Information, and Expected Workshop Outcomes
3. Summarize findings from community outreach
4. Review strengths and vulnerabilities for three sectors:
 - a. Infrastructure
 - b. Society
 - c. Environment
5. Identify and prioritize community resiliency actions
6. Determine overall priority actions for New Salem

MVP and HMP Kick-off Meeting

New Salem Fire Station

[illegible]

MEETING AGENDA

TOWN OF NEW SALEM

MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS PLAN AND HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE PROJECT

Project Facilitator: Franklin Regional Council of Governments

February 17th, 2021 10:00 AM, via Conference Call

Phone in: 515-603-3193

Access Code: 1098564#

1. Review Draft 2021 Prioritized Action Plan
 - a. Review will include hazard mitigation action items and emergency response and preparedness action items
2. Review Hazard Risk Assessment Table
3. Review other remaining questions needed to update the plan
4. Schedule the public forum/public comment period and discuss next steps

MEETING SIGN IN

Meeting was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals present:

1. Joe Cuneo, New Salem Fire Department Chief
2. Nancy Aldrich, New Salem Town Coordinator
3. Kimberly Noake MacPhee, Franklin Regional Council of Governments
4. Megan Rhodes, Franklin Regional Council of Governments
5. Allison Gage, Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Public Comment Period

A public listening session and public comment period were held to provide New Salem residents and Town Officials an opportunity to review and comment on the draft New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan.

The public listening session was held as a standalone meeting on March 31st 2021 at 10:00 a.m. via zoom. FRCOG staff presented the MVP program as well as findings from the workshop, provided opportunities for feedback on the Town's top resiliency actions, and answered questions from attendees.

The listening session is summarized below. Overall the meeting attendees were happy with the plan and the presentation.

ATTENDANCE:

Nancy Aldrich, Town Coordinator , newsalemwendell@gmail.com

Marny Ashburne, marny_ashburne@yahoo.com

Susan Cloutier, Broadband Committee, cloutier@tiac.net

Joe Cuneo, Fire Department, nsfdc1@gmail.com

MaryEllen Kennedy, Municipal Light Plan, maryellen.kennedy@gmail.com

Aaron Nelson, Mount Grace Land Trust, nelson@mountgrace.org

Kate Sutcliffe, Mount Grace Land Trust, sutcliffe@mountgrace.org

Alec Wade, Town Planner, Town of Orange, awade@townoforange.org

Andrew Smith, Regional MVP Coordinator, andrew.b.smith@mass.gov

Allison Gage, Land Use & Natural Resources Planner, FRCOG, agage@frcog.org

Megan Rhodes, Land Use/Transportation Planner II, FRCOG, mrhodes@frcog.org

Lisa Finestone, lfinestone@gmail.com

Carol Hillman, cbhillman@gmail.com

Jean Derderian, Jean@historicnewsalem.com

NOTES FROM MEETING:

Introductions & Top Concerns Related to Natural Hazards and their Impact on New Salem

Joe: Fire Chief, EMD. Mitigate effects on delivering emergency response to residents

Nancy A: need to keep residents safe in more frequent emergencies

Susan C: Broadband committee, need to provide clean water and electricity during crisis

Marny: water and electricity, road safety in emergency

Kate: Interested in opportunity to use GI and conservation to build resilience with climate change

Aaron: Interested in farm viability and food system reliability

Alec: Interested in how other towns assist neighbors

Participants were asked to provide comment on some of the Town's vulnerabilities. The following features in each sector were mentioned:

Infrastructure: Roads, power grid, drinking water, critical town facilities

Society: public health, vulnerable populations, access to emergency supplies,

Environment: invasive species, forest degradation

We held a vote on which resiliency actions the Town should take on first and the following responses were recorded:

- 1) Obtain a generator for the EOC
- 2) Action items to improve public health
- 3) Stormwater and gravel road fixes

The public comment period was held from March 31 through April 14, 2021, during which the public was invited to submit comments via email. Copies of comments are on the following pages and were addressed when revising the final plan.

The public listening session and public comment period were advertised on the Town of New Salem's website. The press release, shown below, published in the local newspaper and the event was also advertised via a flyer posted on the Town website.



(<https://www.recorder.com>)

News > Local (</News/Local/>)

New Salem residents invited to hazard mitigation, vulnerability prep meeting



([/byline?byline=](#))

Staff Report

Published: 3/29/2021 2:48:09 PM

NEW SALEM — The town is holding a public meeting via Zoom to review the results of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Community Resilience

Building Workshop, as well as the draft Hazard Mitigation and MVP Plan, on Wednesday at 10 a.m.

Participants at the workshop, held in September, included representation from the New Salem Fire Department, Selectboard, Municipal Light Plant, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust and the Millers River Watershed Council, as well as interested residents, according to a notice from Allison Gage, land use and natural resources planner with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). Workshop attendees helped to define the top local natural and climate-related hazards; identify existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities; and identify and prioritize actions and projects the town can implement to increase its resilience to climate change.



Ads by Google

Send feedback

Why this ad? 

The MVP grant program, available through the state's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, provides support for cities and towns in Massachusetts to begin the process of planning for climate change resiliency and implementing priority projects, the notice explains. The state awards communities with funding to complete vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented plans. Municipalities that complete the MVP program are then eligible for additional grant funding and other opportunities.

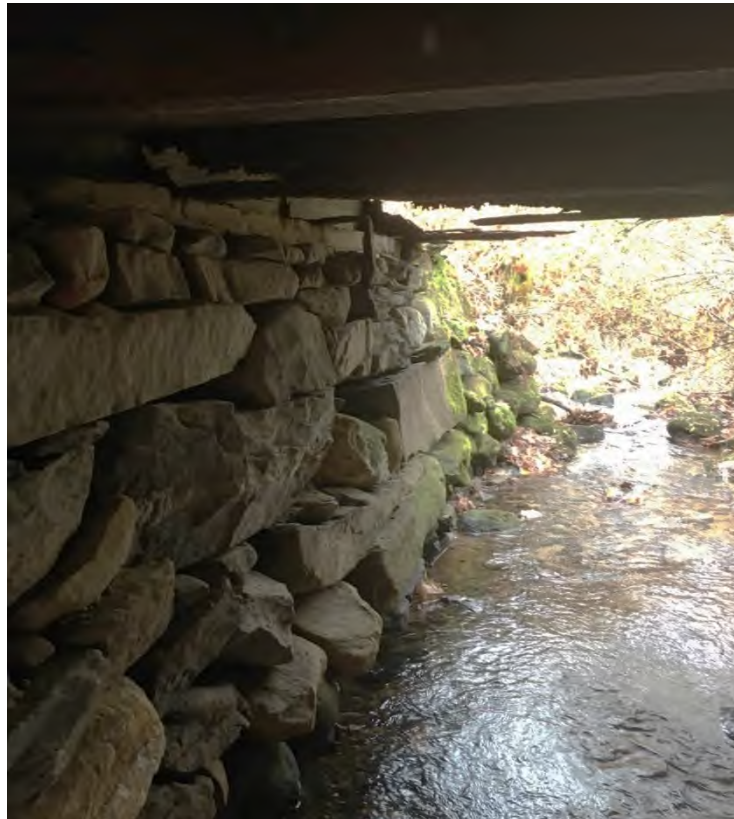
Public comments will be accepted during the meeting, and during a public comment period until April 14. According to Gage's notice, registration details for Wednesday's meeting, the draft Hazard Mitigation and MVP Plan, and public comment information will be posted on the town's website at newsalemma.org (<https://newsalemma.org/>). Comments can be emailed to Gage at agage@frcog.org.

Community MVP* Virtual Listening Session

*Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness

March 31, 2021, 10:00 to 11:00 AM

- ✓ Your Input is Important!
- ✓ Last Step for Town Certification
- ✓ Major Funding for Climate Change Preparedness



Structurally deficient bridge in New Salem

Register in advance for this Zoom session: <https://tinyurl.com/k82asc>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the session.

Questions? Contact Megan Rhodes, mrhodes@frcog.org

Hosted by the Town of New Salem and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)



From: Aaron Nelson <farmconservation_americonps@mountgrace.org>

Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2021 4:26 PM

To: Megan Rhodes <MRhodes@frcog.org>

Subject: RE: New Salem MVP Listening Session follow-up

Hi Megan,

It was great to read through the draft plan that was posted on the New Salem website. I just wanted to pass along a couple of final comments from Mount Grace on it -

- (Page 29 & 34) Add preserving New Salem's agricultural capacity by working with willing landowners on permanently protecting the remaining parcels of active farmland and those with prime agricultural soils in the action items for food resiliency.
- (Page 31) In the section identifying conserved land as a strength, include the role of forestland in carbon sequestration and supporting biodiversity & species migration in addition to its stormwater management value.

Let me know if you have any questions about them.

Regards,
Aaron

From: Megan Rhodes <MRhodes@frcog.org>

Sent: Wednesday, March 31, 2021 1:44 PM

Subject: New Salem MVP Listening Session follow-up

Hi All,

Thank you so much for registering and attending the Listening Session for New Salem's draft combined Hazard Mitigation and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan today. I have attached the powerpoint that was presented today. We welcome feedback until April 14th.

Thank you,

Megan Rhodes, AICP

Senior Transportation and Land Use Planner II

Franklin Regional Council of Governments

12 Olive Street

Greenfield, MA 01301

(413) 774-3167 ext. 132

mrhodes@frcog.org

APPENDIX C: Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Community Outreach Materials



Franklin Regional
Council of Governments

August 17, 2020

Dear New Salem Community Member:

We are continuing to work on updating New Salem's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan and becoming a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP)-designated community. During a kickoff meeting for the plan in early March, we had the opportunity to hear from several community members and learn about some of the Town's strengths and vulnerabilities in the face of unpredictable and severe weather events. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our schedule for follow up meetings changed and we are writing to let you know of next steps and opportunities for stakeholder input:

1. **Phone interviews** – We would like to **conduct a brief phone interview with you in order to gain insight on what climate change related issues are most important to you**; we will call you within the next week to schedule an interview at a convenient time. Included in this packet are background materials on how climate change may affect New Salem, and sample interview questions.
2. **Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Workshop** – We will hold an in person workshop at the **New Salem Firehouse** (details on attached flyer) on **Wednesday, September 16th from 1:00pm – 3:00pm.**

As a reminder, the purpose of the integrated Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan is to help the Town:

- Understand connections between natural hazards and local and regional planning/mitigation efforts;
- Evaluate strengths and vulnerabilities of residents, infrastructure, and natural resources;
- Develop and prioritize resilient actions for the town, residents and our local organizations and businesses; and
- Identify actions that can reduce the impact of hazards and increase resilience.

By going through this planning process, the town will become "MVP certified" and then eligible for state-funded implementation grants to help us be prepared for the lasting effects of climate change. We are eager to hear what issues are important to you and what projects you think are most important for New Salem to undertake. Your thoughts will help us to strengthen our climate resiliency plan and prioritize future projects.

We appreciate your time and we look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Nancy Aldrich, Town of New Salem

Chief Cuneo, Town of New Salem

Megan Rhodes, FRCOG

Allison Gage, FRCOG

Please save the date and come to our
MVP COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BUILDING WORKSHOP

Join us on Wednesday, September 16th
1:00pm – 3:00pm

Please join us for a public workshop to discuss your experiences with climate related threats, such as flooding, severe winter storms, and extreme temperatures. Your thoughts will help to strengthen our climate resiliency plan.

This workshop is a part of New Salem's effort to become a designated MVP Community. During the workshop we will:

- ✓ Review the natural hazards impacting New Salem and how climate change is interacting with these hazards
- ✓ Discuss responses gathered from stakeholder outreach and further outline our strengths and vulnerabilities
- ✓ Brainstorm resiliency actions



WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

The workshop will be held at the New Salem Firehouse:

**33 South Main Street
New Salem, MA 01355**

Please bring your mask and a chair. We will practice social distancing at this event.

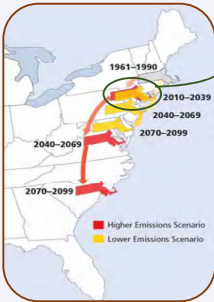
Please RSVP to confirm attendance:

**Nancy Aldrich, Town Administrator
newsalemwendell@gmail.com**

Extreme Temperatures

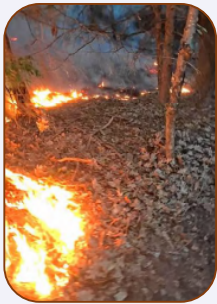
Current Conditions

Since the beginning of the century, temperatures in Massachusetts have increased almost 3 degrees Fahrenheit. Perhaps the most noticeable difference most of us have already recognized is that winter temperatures have risen approximately 4 degrees Fahrenheit.

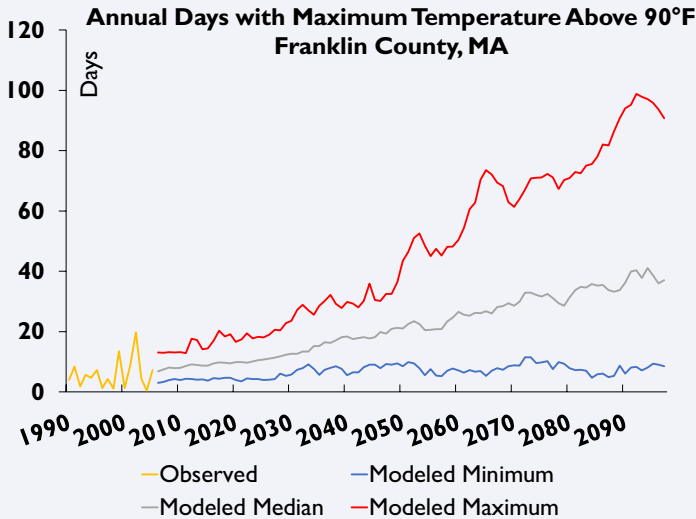


The map on the left shows how summer temperatures in Massachusetts may change through the end of the century. The circled region highlights where we currently are in the modeling scenarios.

Heavily forested areas such as Franklin County may experience more wildfires in the near future due to **drier and hotter conditions**. To the right is an image from a recent wildfire in nearby Leverett, which burned approximately 55 acres. Photo courtesy of the Greenfield Recorder.



Future Conditions



The number of days per year with daily maximum temperatures over 90°F is projected to **increase by 18 days by the 2050s, and by 32 days** by the end of the end of the century. Under a high emissions scenario, however, **there could be as many as 100 days** with a maximum temperature above 90°F by the end of the century.




**PREVENT
LYME
DISEASE!**

- WEAR DEET REPELLENT
- CHECK FOR TICKS DAILY
- SHOWER SOON AFTER BEING OUTDOORS
- TUCK PANTS INTO SOCKS
- CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU ARE BITTEN


Brought to you by your local
of Health and the Commonwealth
Public Health Service
Manager of the Commonwealth
Department of Health




Rising temperatures will undoubtedly have an impact on human health. Warmer climates allow populations of invasive pests such as ticks and mosquitoes to grow and live longer due to a delay of the first frost in the Fall. Additionally, an increase in the growing season means favorable habitats for these pests will expand. For example, ticks favor Japanese Barberry for nesting sites.



**Rising
Temperatures**



Wildfire

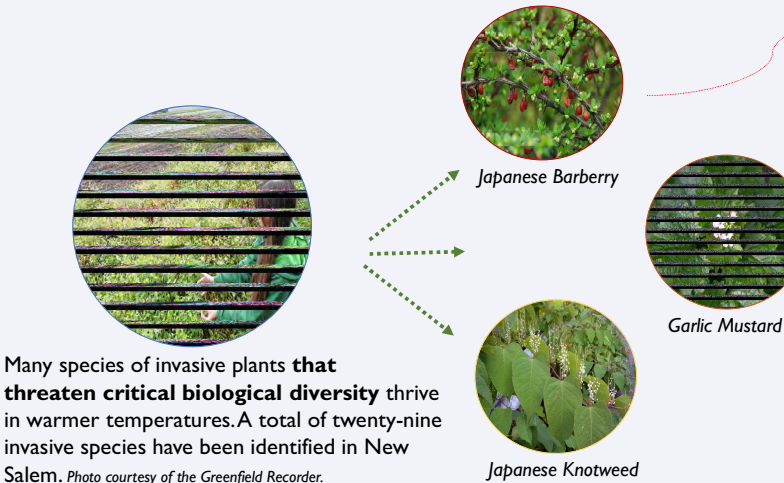


**Invasive
Species**

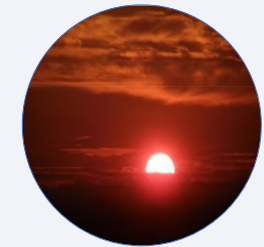
How have these hazards impacted your community?

How do you think they will change over time?

- Some of the potential impacts to our natural resources and habitats:
- Shift in seasons
 - Mismatch of key food sources & wildlife
 - Mismatch of bloom time & pollinators
 - Drying of streams and wetlands
 - Stresses on forest & ecosystem health
 - Loss of ecological diversity



Many species of invasive plants that **threaten critical biological diversity** thrive in warmer temperatures. A total of twenty-nine invasive species have been identified in New Salem. Photo courtesy of the Greenfield Recorder.



Information sourced from:

- FRCOG's A Framework for Resilience
- ResilientMA: Climate Change Clearing House for the Commonwealth

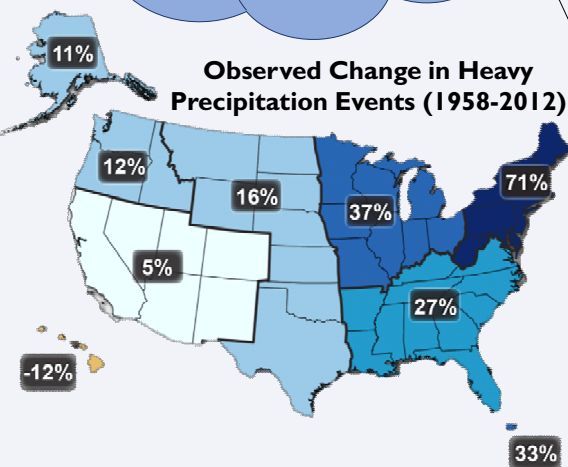
Changes in Precipitation

Annual precipitation in Massachusetts is projected to increase by as much as 7.3 inches by the end of this century

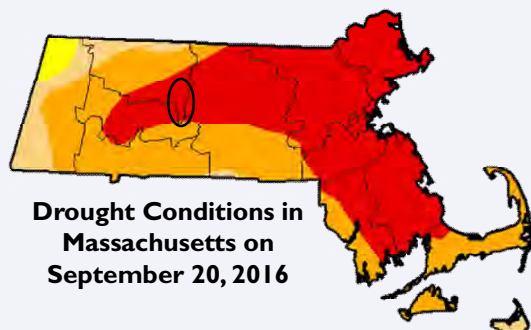
Current Conditions

The Northeast has seen a greater increase in extreme precipitation than any other part of the country, experiencing a **71% increase** in heavy precipitation events between 1958 and 2012.

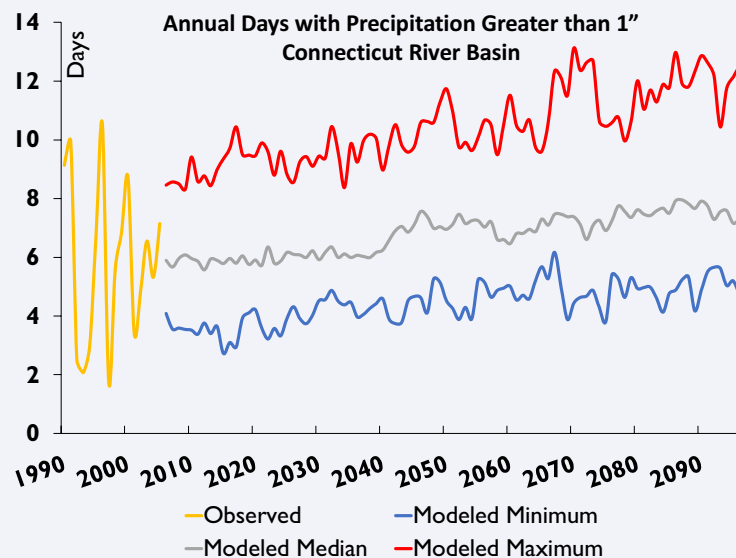
Observed Change in Heavy Precipitation Events (1958-2012)



What about Drought?



Future Conditions



By the end of the century, our area could have **5 additional days** of rainstorms that dump over 1 inch of rain.



Flooding



Drought



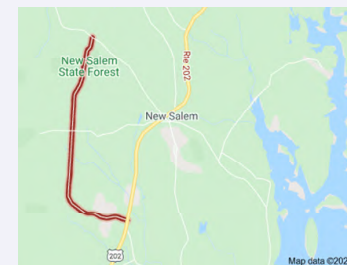
Landslides

How have these hazards impacted your community?

How do you think they will change over time?

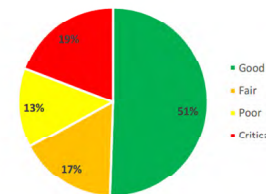
From March 2015 to May 2016, Massachusetts experienced a prolonged drought. By September 2016, the majority of Franklin County entered a "severe drought." The drought devastated many farms in the region.

Although Massachusetts will see an increase in precipitation, it will likely come in the form of winter rain. Massachusetts is expected to see a **75% increase in drought**.



Some areas of West Street (highlighted in red) are unpaved and prone to issues with flooding.

Condition of New Salem's Culverts



Results from a recent assessment of all culverts in New Salem.



A downed tree across Route 202 after a storm in August 2020. Photo courtesy of the New Salem Fire Department.

What other natural or built features in New Salem are affected by changes in precipitation? What areas in Town are most vulnerable to damage from increased precipitation?

Information sourced from:

- FRCOG's A Framework for Resilience
- ResilientMA: Climate Change Clearing House for the Commonwealth

Extreme Weather Events

Goal for Building Resilience to a Changing Climate:

Protect life, property, natural resources and the economy

Current Conditions

Below are some examples of recent extreme weather events that have affected New Salem and surrounding communities in Franklin County.



Flash flood events have recently occurred throughout Greenfield. The summer of 2018 brought frequent rains to Franklin County; in the month of August alone the City received approximately 9 inches of rain. These events damaged crops on many local farms, as pictured to the left.



Pictured to the right is an example of the aftermath of a microburst that struck Orange in June of 2017. This storm included bouts of intense rain and hail, and caused thousands to lose power.



In February 2017, an EF-1 tornado hit Conway. Wind speeds reached 110 mph, and the tornado severely damaged or destroyed several houses and buildings. The United Congregational Church (pictured on the left) was damaged beyond repair and was eventually demolished.



The 2008 ice storm greatly impacted the Northeast. The ice downed numerous trees, branches, and power lines which resulted in wide spread power outages.

Future Conditions

Extreme weather events are anticipated to increase due to climate change. Scientists predict the following factors will all **increase** over time:

Frequency

Intensity

Duration

Geographic extent

Example: A 2017 U.S. Climate Science Special Report noted that there has been an upward trend in North Atlantic hurricane activity since 1970. The report forecasts that future hurricanes formed in the North Atlantic will drop more rain and may have higher wind speeds. This is because a warmer atmosphere will hold more water, and hurricanes are efficient at wringing water out of the atmosphere and dumping it on land.

Hurricanes

Winter Storms

Tornadoes

How have these hazards impacted your community?

How do you think they will change over time?

Some of the potential impacts to our infrastructure and local economy:

- Destruction of property and infrastructure
- Disruption of critical services and transportation
- Crop loss
- Business interruption/economic disruption
- Dam damage/failure

All photos in this panel are courtesy of the Greenfield Recorder.

Information sourced from:
FRCOG's A Framework for Resilience
ResilientMA: Climate Change Clearing House for the Commonwealth

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

Cooleyville Farm. The farm was active in town for over 30 years but is now shutting down – owner is retiring.

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

None

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
- d. Extreme Temperatures
- e. Invasive Species
- f. Other

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

N/A – responded said they have not been impacted by natural hazards

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

Trees fall often during storms – the Town has a lot of dead trees that need to be dealt with.

A tree fell on his home during a recent storm.

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Power supply – he has a generator for the farm.

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

Tree cutting -- cut a bunch of trees around the house 32 years ago, mostly the pine trees but left all of the hardwoods

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- Information on funding
 - A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - Detailed region/sector impacts
 - Contact details for state or city officials
 - Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - Other

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

A recent gypsy moth infestation killed a lot of the oak trees – mentioned that you can see a lot of dead trees if you drive from Belchertown to New Salem.

The state has implemented a large cutting program on Route 202 but there are still a lot of dead trees in town that are not being dealt with.

11. Any other information you would like to provide?

N/A

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

New Salem Police Department

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

Only been in town for the past 2 years – lots of tree damage and lines down due to the weather

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
- d. Extreme Temperatures
- e. Invasive Species
- f. Other

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

Downed trees – lot of tree growth everywhere, all over town.

202 run by the state so they keep it pretty open – storm in 2012 was the only storm that closed off 2020. Otherwise the state keeps the road well cleared.

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

Outer edges of town, and the elderly population. Much higher than in other towns.

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

Response of the DPW – they open roads up very quickly so people can get back to stores/check in on others etc.

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

None – the fire department would cover anything like this because they are responsible for emergency response.

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- Information on funding
 - A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - Detailed region/sector impacts
 - Contact details for state or city officials
 - Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - Other

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

Nothing off the top of his head – would like to defer to other folks who spend more time in Town.

11. ***Any other information you would like to provide?***

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

Ivan Ussach, Director of the Millers River Watershed Council

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

Some things that come to mind:

- Trees are leafing out earlier and leaves drop later in the fall
- Not scientific, but there has been a sense that the main stem of the millers river runs lower in the summer – doesn't have any data to back this up but just a general observation
- Increased amount of stormwater in the watershed and decreased water quality (again no hard data, just commenting as an observation)
- There has been a lot of large-scale solar development in the watershed, and there are a lot of concerns about erosion during development. People have definitely noticed sedimentation when there are construction projects going on. These projects are short lived so when it happens it is a relatively short cycle, but sedimentation is a huge problem.
- The watershed council is now doing temperature monitoring to get a handle of how the river is changing.

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

He isn't all too familiar with what is going on in New Salem.

For Wendell – has worked with folks who live in Wendell and have commented that the drought for the past 6mos/year has been difficult.

Noted questions 4-9 aren't really relevant to his position – he is interested in these plans to provide a regional perspective and learn more about what is going on in these towns.

4. Which hazards have affected Wendell/New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
- d. Extreme Temperatures

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

- e. Invasive Species
 - f. Other
5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.
6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?
7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?
8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- a. If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - b. If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?
9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- a. Information on funding
 - b. A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - c. Detailed region/sector impacts
 - d. Contact details for state or city officials
 - e. Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - f. A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - g. Other
10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

Not sure what types of projects towns would be interested in – has been involved in the MVP process with Towns in Worcester County but isn't sure about specific projects that have been adopted or what towns were most interested in.

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

11. Any other information you would like to provide?

He would be interested in getting people together to talk about these issues regionally, had wanted to do a get together type thing pre-COVID. If many towns in the region/watershed are working on these plans it might be helpful to get folks together and talk about larger scale projects that could be implemented.

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

Joe Cuneo, Fire Chief for Wendell and New Salem

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

Noticed a change in the overall weather patterns since he moved to western mass 20 years ago, it's warmer and wetter and weather events that we do get are more extreme. Also have noticed bird populations appearing earlier in the spring, and different blooming times, maple trees are in decline.

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

He didn't provide a ranking, but noted that the effect is generally manifested in power outages and roads being closed. Damage to infrastructure is a big concern.

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem/Wendell the most?

- a. Flooding
 - i. Up on a hill, don't have many problems with flooding

b. Drought

- i. Have had small brushfires occur over the past few years and they worsen due to drier conditions. Noted that it's very difficult to get fires out once they get going. He does see some fires climb up trees but not like out west, so at present there's not large explosive fires. Has noticed that fires seem to be getting worse when they do have them.

September 2016 – had a lot of people on older shallow wells go dry. That was never really a problem up until then. Maybe 1 or 2 wells this past year that went dry, but more of a concern that it could happen again as droughts become more frequent. One woman was concerned b/c she used her well for livestock.

c. Severe Wind

- i. Severe wind coupled with heavy rainfall, quick rapid heavy rainfall

d. Extreme Temperatures

e. Invasive Species

- i. Have all kinds of problems with this – spoke to this more of an avid gardener and has seen a lot of pests. Concern for food resiliency. Ticks were worse last year than

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

this year – concerned about tick borne diseases that are more common in southern regions becoming prevalent here.

f. Other

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

In addition to comments above:

Couple of places in both Towns where there have been washouts and that periodically happens, usually not a long term issue. Side roads are always a concern in both towns.

Beaver dams are also a concern in both towns.

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

The whole electrical grid – that's the nature of what it is and it's not going to change unless someone buries all the lines, which would be incredibly expensive.

This becomes more acute because the Town now has fiber optic cables for internet service, not something you can just string back up like downed electrical wires.

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

Folks that live around here are very resilient and good at making sure they are prepared

Both fire departments go to great lengths to make sure people are ok – opening EOC and providing water. Don't have shelters but do have basic necessities.

Beyond that – not a whole lot that's super resilient.

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Both Towns from time to time have to work on cleaning out and redesigning culvert systems to allow for better water flow, Towns are already working on this. In terms of other infrastructure and town buildings, not much you can really do with limited funding.

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?

- a. Information on funding
- b. A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
- c. Detailed region/sector impacts
- d. Contact details for state or city officials
- e. Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
- f. A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
- g. Other

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

Would like to get a larger generator for the EOC because the one they have is undersized

Shared school doesn't have a generator, would like to be able to use the Swift River School as a shelter.

More assistance with redesigning culverts and bridges

Cooleyville road in New Salem, Cooleyville road in Wendell top 2 that come to mind (separate roads, there are 2 Cooleyville Roads). Wendell just completed a project on Wendell Depot road that fixed the bridge that goes into Orange.

11. ***Any other information you would like to provide?***

Wendell does have the train tracks going through the Town – there was a derailment 2 years ago and took days to get resolved. Not sure this plan can address that but it comes to mind as a hazard. Railroad crossings themselves are dangerous for drivers if they are not well maintained, fixed the one on Wendell Depot Road.

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

Fletcher Harrington, Community Conservation Program Manager

New Salem – one of the southernmost towns in the region

Has been doing land protection in Mount Grace, meets with private land owners, protects land and supports community function

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

Personally – have seen more extreme weather events clustered closer together, not scientific but the increased amount of insects, less consistency in natural phenomenon (odd times of budding)

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

Haven't had this experience on the ground – has seen brush fires in New Salem

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
- d. Extreme Temperatures
- e. Invasive Species
- f. Other

New Salem is fairly well conserved, noticed participants were concerned about flooding in specific areas
Concerned about

Drought/brushfires are a concern

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

Vulnerabilities – Food security, being able to distribute farms and if the farms in Town are able to weather hazards – not a ton of farms in Town

Not a ton of development pressure

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

Overall, resilience based on the land that is conserved – large tracts of intact habitat, which is more resilient to natural hazards that may take place, and the Town is water rich

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- Information on funding
 - A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - Detailed region/sector impacts
 - Contact details for state or city officials
 - Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - Other

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

From a broad perspective, conserving land along streams, don't want development along streams and should preserve flood storage

Emergency resources, would like to be able to see them do infrastructure changes, remove beaver activity

More protection of farmland in New Salem, any Town's ability to produce food is important, preserve land/make affordable for farmers in the future

11. **Any other information you would like to provide?**

*Greenfield – flooding is a huge issue, protecting additional land along the floodplain. Greenfield hasn't done a CR in 10 years, finding \$ is difficult but the City supports it. Important for flood storage
Green River and some of tributaries have significant erosion issues and invasive issues*

Bernardston – significant beaver issue in the Town Center, will talk to Farm program manager, interested in food system issues

Orange – access to local healthy food is an issue

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

Nancy Aldrich, Town Coordinator for New Salem and Wendell

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

There have not been problems every year, but severe storms have been occurring more frequently which is a concern.

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
- d. Extreme Temperatures

- i. Ice Storm, October snowstorm, knocked out power for days on end. New Salem gets power from 5 different directions so sometimes takes a while.

- e. Invasive Species
- f. Other

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

Most issues are related to a loss of power -- people losing heat in the winter (no one comes to emergency shelters, New Englanders don't want to use shelters) people only come to get water or charge cell phones. Instead of using the shelters, most find neighbors with generators. There are no public utilities to fall back on.

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Getting the roads plowed in the winter, large trees falling after severe wind storms

Nancy wrote letters to DOT/Jo Comerford to do tree clearing along Route 202 – for some reason they keep stopping work in Shutesbury. Belchertown to Shutesbury is clear but as soon as the road enters New Salem they have a habit of stopping work.

Wildfires such as the ones in Orange could convictable happen in heavily forested areas in New Salem and Wendell.

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

They have a great emergency operation center – the EMD gets that up and running quickly. Open it up even if people don't come, and it is used as a warming shelter in the winter. They don't do cooling shelters, because there are no buildings with AC.

The senior center in Wendell might work for a cooling center.

Wellness checks – the fire department completes these after major storms. FD goes door to door in both towns and checks in on people to see if they're ok or need any supplies. There are a lot of seniors in both towns so they want to keep up outreach after a storm event.

The DPW (both towns) quickly clears roads after storms, they work as long as they have to.

Good Neighbors Wendell - Food distribution program in Wendell program that covers both towns. Serve 50% of Wendell's population and 20% of New Salem's, missed a couple of weeks at the beginning of COVID but after that figured out. The program gets food donations from local grocery stores and monetary donations. They are able to provide more than just pantry staples – they have meats and produce as well.

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

Aside from this plan, not much progress has been made. They do their best to keep roads clear and are working to fix high hazard culverts identified in FROCG's report (New Salem). Limited personnel and limited funds to work on these types of projects.

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- a. Information on funding
 - b. A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - c. Detailed region/sector impacts
 - d. Contact details for state or city officials
 - e. Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - f. A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - g. Other

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

Joe will have better answers for this for both Towns – updating generator in New Salem

Maybe equipment for brushfires?

11. *Any other information you would like to provide?*

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

New Salem Preserves

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

Has an apple farm, a lot of what she notices is with the orchards, have an expansive sty, the violence of the storms is overwhelming. Drought has also affected them.

Never seen lilac bushes droopy – but has this year. Need to take particular care of trees, have had to take buckets and buckets of water out to the orchard because they don't have an irrigation system.

Climate change is more than very disturbing. No way of forecasting of when things will happen. Not sure this year, if apples will be big enough to sell because of the drought.

Trees being uprooted – lots of life and death in any environment, but it's been greatly exaggerated.

Community garden has had a particularly hard time. Town is really a grouping of residential areas, not much industry.

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
 - i. Huge old trees – very dangerous in storms
- d. Extreme Temperatures
- e. Invasive Species
 - i. Have a real problem with black bears, have had to put up electric fences on orchards, not sure if this is related to climate change. Also to try to deter moose. Climate change is one of the most important factors.
- f. Other
 - i. Lots of logging done across the street – has disturbed the wildlife and changed their patterns of living, so can't say it's all due to climate change.

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

Mentioned above

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

Pandemic has been a major issue, we are a small business and everything has changed. We are fortunate to have an outdoor cider garden. People can be socially distanced and still partake. Have had to rethink everything.

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

The fire department has provided a place to go if people need electricity. That worked really well that her partner could go down there and be hooked up to his breathing machine. This was during a hurricane.

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

No, there's no way she knows of. Apple trees are weight bearing due to their apples so they typically can weather storms well.

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- Information on funding
 - A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - Detailed region/sector impacts
 - Contact details for state or city officials
 - Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - Other

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

She would like to see businesses be more collaborative, sit down as business people and talk about issues. She has brochures at her shop for other local businesses and she is sure they could help each other more than that.

11. Any other information you would like to provide?

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

*Pamela E. Harris - Resident & Business Owner
Orange Oil Company*

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

Some trees dying from insects. Less water.

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
- d. Extreme Temperatures
- e. Invasive Species
- f. Other

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

Wind damage from storms - loss of power for many.

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

Trees from invasive species - caterpillars etc.

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

We have a generator here at Orange Oil - which was installed 20 years ago. This helps when power is

(CONTINUED ON THE OTHER SIDE)

lost

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

*Cutting branches - trees - if near an area where wind could cause damage to a building
As previously stated - installed generators to help with power - if interrupted*

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- Information on funding
 - A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - Detailed region/sector impacts
 - Contact details for state or city officials
 - Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - Other

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

Perhaps a community shelter to assist those who have no power - where food & sleeping equipment could be provided

11. Any other information you would like to provide?

Allison Gage

From: Dot Frye <dotfryesrvhs@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 5, 2020 5:03 PM
To: Allison Gage
Subject: Swift River Valley Historical Society - New Salem

Hello Allison,

I forwarded your recent correspondence about New Salem's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan to the members of the board of directors of SRVHS for their comments.

To date I have received feedback from one member, Fred Heyes, Vice President. Rather than an interview he asked if I would just pass on his concern.

In Fred's words - "I think we need a reworking of the approach to GRID...I believe they now do all tree trimming...and if they touch a tree you can make them trim the whole tree...recently grid got a huge fine for not trimming back high tension lines sufficiently. Maybe FRCOG could think through a county wide approach to bringing up GRID tree standards and responsibility for preparedness relative to the power source."

I hope this concern is of interest to you.

Regards,
Dot

--

Dot Frye
Administrative Assistant
Swift River Valley Historical Society

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

Jennifer Culkeen, Superintendent of Schools for Erving Union #28

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

Salt in the water – have a well at Swift River and have to measure the salinity of the water. Not sure if it's due to salting the roads, a shift in the water table.

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
- d. Extreme Temperatures
- e. Invasive Species
- f. Other

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

Started teaching 33 years ago, now much hotter in September and May

Increase in snow days in the school, which shortens the school year

Have to use a lot of sand during icy weather, try to balance safety and travel with the environment

Drought – impacts water usage

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

School is generally vulnerable

Schools have an emergency plan on file, it would depend on the type of hazard – have to figure out if there is an early dismissal – plan is updated every other year

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

School doesn't have AC – floors could get slippery with humidity. Hoping new windows will keep temperature at a constant

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

Practiced for some lockdown drills

School is prepared as one can be with emergency plans, and now COVID planning

Worked closely with the fire department and police department

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

Have developed emergency plans – can't speak directly to the plan but can share.

Have safety meetings a couple times a year – state police assist with safety drills

MSBA project – all new windows and doors

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- Information on funding
 - A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - Detailed region/sector impacts
 - Contact details for state or city officials
 - Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - Other

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

Increasing collaborative relationship with boards of health – are there any changes we need to make structurally – outdoor classrooms. How can the Town continue to support the school? More thinking about COVID right now rather than natural hazards.

- 11. Any other information you would like to provide?**

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

Emphasized that there is a really strong relationship between the schools and the town, which is unique. The Fire Department works closely with them on emergency plans, and works with school staffing at all levels in addition to working with students to teach them about preparedness.

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

WAYNE HACHEY (SELECTION)

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

RISEING TEMPS, INVASIVE SPECIES,
COVID 19

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- b. Drought
- c. Severe Wind
- d. Extreme Temperatures
- e. Invasive Species
- f. Other

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

ROAD WASHT OUT
DIRT

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

TALL TREE'S IN FALL ZONE OF ROADS

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards?

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)
- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
 - If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

CLEARING A FIRE BRACE
DROUGHT.

9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- Information on funding
 - A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - Detailed region/sector impacts
 - Contact details for state or city officials
 - Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - Other

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

CUT TREE'S IN FALL & ZONE OF ROADS.

11. Any other information you would like to provide?

[New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions]

Questions for New Salem Community Members

1. What is your name and role in Town? If a business owner, please name your business.

Zara Dowling, Energy Comm.

2. What changes have you seen in the natural environment over the course of your lifetime?

Havnt been in Town too long - extem weather
better in New Salem

3. How have extreme weather events affected New Salem? Please use the ranking list below:

- a. Not at all
- b. Somewhat
- c. Moderate
- d. Frequent
- e. Extreme

4. Which hazards have affected New Salem the most?

- a. Flooding
- ☒ b. Drought → had to put in new well in 2016
- ☒ c. Severe Wind → power outages
- d. Extreme Temperatures
- e. Invasive Species
- f. Other

people have internet now, only downside who may
have had landlines switched for phone + internet

5. Based on your answer to #3, please provide an example of how your selected hazard(s) affected you or the Town.

Warm winters → found a tick in February

6. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) are most vulnerable to hazards?

Have had a lot of issues with beavers + culverts

Pine forest fire, could smell the smoke

7. Which aspects of the Town (or your business or organization, as applicable) do you think are the most resilient to hazards? New Salem Newsletter

Topography of town - fewer areas that flood out often
has been some work 1

Chas Border - good neighbors - neighbors are generally friendly
202 runs through town - good evacuation

New Salem Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness – Outreach Guiding Questions

8. What steps (if any) are you taking to safeguard your home, business, organization services (as applicable) against severe weather hazards? Some examples include developing an emergency plan, installing hurricane windows, basement drainage, partnering with other local businesses)

- If yes, please describe the actions taken.
- If yes, what hazard was the adaptation in response to?

- ① install a deep well - 2016 drought
 - ② getting back up for internet would be good to help people with this if they are low income
 - ③ Talked about energy storage at elementary school - developing shelter - has already been evaluated for solar, would have to new out in some areas. No 3 phase power. Energy storage could be a good option.
9. What resources would be the most beneficial to you?
- Information on funding
 - A workshop on how to prepare/enhance protection
 - Detailed region/sector impacts
 - Contact details for state or city officials
 - Details on how future climate changes will impact New Salem
 - A network of other small groups/organizations businesses (as applicable) in the area who face similar risks
 - Other

10. What actions/projects would you like to see the Town undertake?

Found on resiliency - been of interest - we don't have energy storage, having the school as a shelter would be a great option for New Salem and Wendell to share.

11. Any other information you would like to provide?

Town has been moving towards community choice aggregator for electricity.

Community Resilience Building Workshop

Town of New Salem

September 2020

Participant Introductions

Average/Extreme Temperatures

Hurricanes/Tropical Storms

Wildfires

Severe Winter Storms

Invasive Species

Tornadoes

Other Severe Weather

Earthquake

- Name
- Position/Department
- How have you/your community been impacted by natural hazards?

Workshop Agenda

- Overview of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program
- Review community outreach and top hazards
- Identify Strengths and Vulnerabilities and develop action items
- Discuss next steps

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program

\$25 Million since 2017

MVP Designated Communities
 MVP with Planning Grant Revenues (PGR)
 Regional/Non-MVP

Why the MVP program?

A climate resilient town will be able to maintain functions, protect its residents and emerge stronger and better prepared for future storm events and a changing climate.

The goal of building resilience is protect life, property, natural resources and the economy

Massachusetts' Changing Climate

Changing Weather

Changes in Precipitation

Rising Temperatures

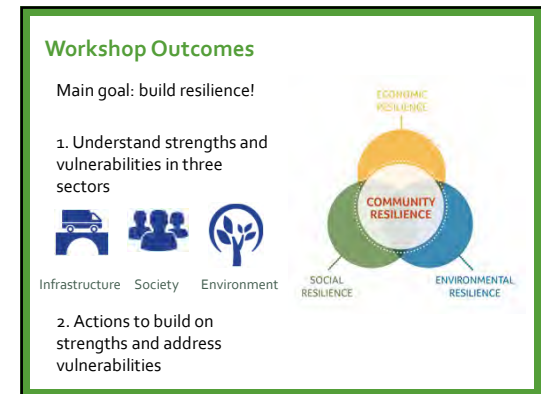
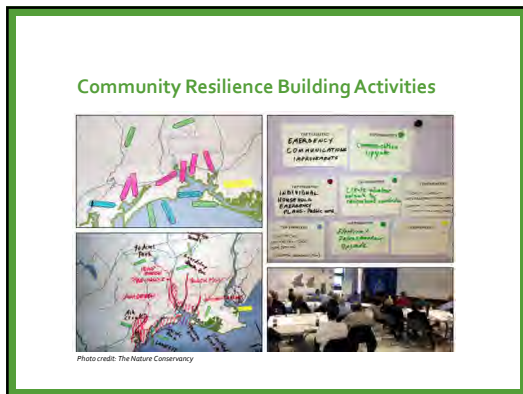
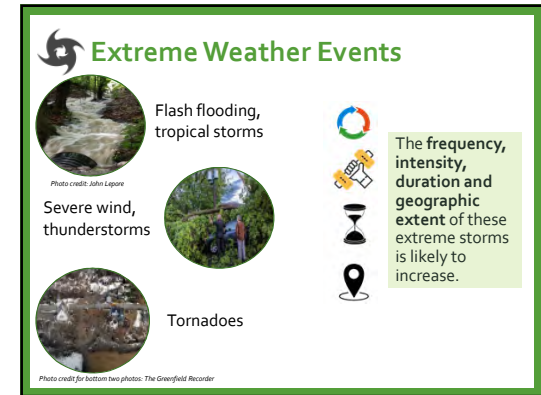
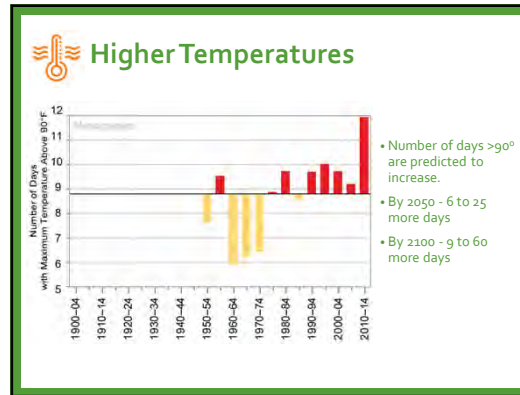
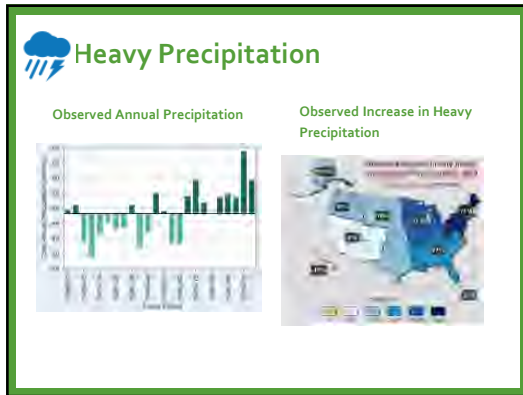
Extreme Weather

Amplifies Existing Risks

Natural resources & habitat

Human health & welfare

Local economy & infrastructure



Community Outreach

- Committee developed a list of 24 community stakeholders
- Local businesses, town departments, conservation organizations
- Asked how they have been impacted by hazards and what their concerns are for the future
- Interviewed 11 community members – heard a variety of perspectives and concerns



Community Outreach

Identified Top Hazards

Severe Storms



Extreme Temperatures



Invasive Species



Drought



Photo credit: New Salem Fire Department

Severe Storms

- Residents and businesses lose power – power comes in from several directions and some residents lose power for days on end
- Severe wind coupled with heavy rainfall can damage infrastructure
- The backup generator for the Emergency Operation Center is undersized

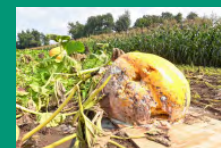


Photo credits: The Greenfield Recorder

Extreme Temperatures

- Vulnerable populations may not have access to heating or cooling equipment – especially a concern for seniors
- Ticks and mosquitoes are more prevalent – dangerous for residents
- Ice storms knock out power supply



Invasive Species

- Gypsy moths have caused extensive damage to oak trees
- Tick populations have increased and are prevalent for longer periods of time
- Concern that the community will see an increase in insect-borne diseases that are more common in warmer climates



Drought

- Small brushfires can grow rapidly during droughts – difficult to extinguish
- Shallow wells may run dry more frequently
- Affects local orchards and vineyards

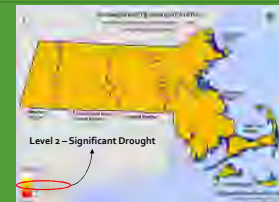





Photo credit: The Greenfield Recorder

Workshop Process

1 Identify strengths and vulnerabilities

	Strength	Vulnerability
 Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees near powerlines are routinely cut 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undersized culverts or bridges
 Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large parcels of conserved land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culverts are blocked by beaver dams
 Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential emergency preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sheltering facility lacks backup power

Workshop Process

2 Brainstorm resiliency projects

Examples:

-  Upgrade culverts, flood-proof drinking water supplies
-  Evacuation drills and extreme weather communications protocols to protect vulnerable populations
-  Protect wetlands and floodplains to improve flood resiliency



Photo credit: Mass DCR

Nature Based Solutions




Rain garden at the Girls Club in Greenfield



Stormwater management project on Olive Street in Greenfield

Community Resilience Building Matrix



Information gathered during stakeholder outreach and the kickoff meeting

We'll focus on brainstorming actions

Next Steps

- Compile Information into New Salem's Integrated MVP/Hazard Mitigation Plan
- **Listening Session** with Town Residents and Stakeholders
- Finalize Integrated HMP/MVP Report and Request **MVP Designation**

APPENDIX D: FEMA Capability Assessment Worksheet

Capability Assessment Worksheet

Jurisdiction: New Salem, Massachusetts

Local mitigation capabilities are existing authorities, policies, programs, and resources that reduce hazard impacts or that could be used to implement hazard mitigation activities. Please complete the tables and questions in the worksheet as completely as possible. Complete one worksheet for each jurisdiction.

Planning and Regulatory

Planning and regulatory capabilities are the plans, policies, codes, and ordinances that prevent and reduce the impacts of hazards. Please indicate which of the following your jurisdiction has in place.

Plans	Yes/No Year	Does the plan address hazards?
		Does the plan identify projects to include in the mitigation strategy? Can the plan be used to implement mitigation actions?
Comprehensive/Master Plan	No	
Capital Improvements Plan	Yes	The Capital Improvements Committee updates a yearly spreadsheet, prioritizing major expenditures for the coming year, doesn't address hazards or address projects to include in the mitigation strategy
Economic Development Plan	No	
Local Emergency Operations Plan	Yes	Out of date CEM Plan. Plan addresses hazards to include.
Continuity of Operations Plan	Yes	a) Yes b) No c) Possibly
Transportation Plan	No	
Stormwater Management Plan	No	Working with the FRCOG on the Franklin County Sustainable Master Plan to identify projects on Cooleyville Road
Community Wildfire Protection Plan	No	
Other special plans (e.g., brownfields redevelopment, disaster recovery, coastal zone management, climate change adaptation)	No	

Worksheet 4.1

Capability Assessment Worksheet

Building Code, Permitting, and Inspections	Yes/No	Are codes adequately enforced?
Building Code	Yes	Version/Year: 9th edition, adequately enforced
Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) Score	No	Score:
Fire department ISO rating	Yes	Rating: 9
Site plan review requirements	Yes	Yes
Land Use Planning and Ordinances	Yes/No	Is the ordinance an effective measure for reducing hazard impacts? Is the ordinance adequately administered and enforced?
Zoning ordinance	Yes	a) no - an assessment needs to be done to evaluate how current zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations could serve to better mitigate natural hazards
Subdivision ordinance	Yes	b) yes *These answers apply for all categories in this section
Floodplain ordinance	No	
Natural hazard specific ordinance (stormwater, steep slope, wildfire)	No	
Flood insurance rate maps	Yes	
Acquisition of land for open space and public recreation uses	No	
Other		
How can these capabilities be expanded and improved to reduce risk?		
Zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations should be evaluated and amended to include climate resiliency provisions. This is addressed in the Action Plan.		

Administrative and Technical

Identify whether your community has the following administrative and technical capabilities. These include staff and their skills and tools that can be used for mitigation planning and to implement specific mitigation actions. For smaller jurisdictions without local staff resources, if there are public resources at the next higher level government that can provide technical assistance, indicate so in your comments.

Administration	Yes/No	Describe capability Is coordination effective?
Planning Commission	Yes	Town Planning Board staffed by local volunteers and coordinate with the FRCOG on regional issues. Coordination is effective.
Mitigation Planning Committee	Yes	a) Select Board appoints committee to oversee mitigation planning with help from the FRCOG. b)
Maintenance programs to reduce risk (e.g., tree trimming, clearing drainage systems)	Yes	The Committee works with the Tree Warden to identify and remove dangerous trees. DPW clears drains on a regular basis.
Mutual aid agreements	Yes	Several mutual aid agreements cover fire, police, EMS, DPW, etc.
Staff	Yes/No FT/PT ¹	Is staffing adequate to enforce regulations? Is staff trained on hazards and mitigation? Is coordination between agencies and staff effective?
Chief Building Official	Yes/PT	a) yes b) yes c) yes
Floodplain Administrator	No	
Emergency Manager	Yes/PT	a) yes b) yes c) yes
Community Planner	No	
Civil Engineer	No	
GIS Coordinator	No	
Other	Police Chief - P/T Fire Chief - P/T DPW Super - F/T	Yes for all

1. Full-time (FT) or part-time (PT) position

Worksheet 4.1

Capability Assessment Worksheet

Technical	Yes/No	Describe capability Has capability been used to assess/mitigate risk in the past?
Warning systems/services (Reverse 911, outdoor warning signals)	Yes	a)Reverse 911 system to leave a message b) yes
Hazard data and information	Yes	Information available through the FRCOG + REPC + MEMA and other emergency service resources. b) yes
Grant writing	Yes	Grant writing through various Town employees with support from the FRCOG
Hazus analysis	No	
Other	No	
How can these capabilities be expanded and improved to reduce risk?		

Financial

Identify whether your jurisdiction has access to or is eligible to use the following funding resources for hazard mitigation.

Funding Resource	Access/ Eligibility (Yes/No)	Has the funding resource been used in past and for what type of activities? Could the resource be used to fund future mitigation actions?
Capital improvements project funding	Yes	a) has not been used in the past b) could be, but many competing requests
Authority to levy taxes for specific purposes	Yes	a) large capital purchases b) in theory, but must be approved by voters
Fees for water, sewer, gas, or electric services	No	
Impact fees for new development	No	
Storm water utility fee	No	
Incur debt through general obligation bonds and/or special tax bonds	Yes	a) broadband, school improvements, buildings b) yes, but many competing items
Incur debt through private activities	No	
Community Development Block Grant	No	
Other federal funding programs	Yes	FEMA programs - eligible, yes Firefighting equipment through AFG b) yes
State funding programs	Yes	a) fire equipment grants, SAFE grants b) yes
Other		
How can these capabilities be expanded and improved to reduce risk?		
<p>The Town is always seeking grant funding opportunities, but it can be challenging to meet the match. It is difficult for Towns to compete on the national level.</p>		

Worksheet 4.1

Capability Assessment Worksheet

Education and Outreach

Identify education and outreach programs and methods already in place that could be used to implement mitigation activities and communicate hazard-related information.

Program/Organization	Yes/No	Describe program/organization and how relates to disaster resilience and mitigation. Could the program/organization help implement future mitigation activities?
Local citizen groups or non-profit organizations focused on environmental protection, emergency preparedness, access and functional needs populations, etc.	No	
Ongoing public education or information program (e.g., responsible water use, fire safety, household preparedness, environmental education)	Yes	a) Fire safety programs - training for schools & seniors b) yes
Natural disaster or safety related school programs	Yes	a) schools required to have their own emergency plans b) yes
StormReady certification	No	
Firewise Communities certification	No	
Public-private partnership initiatives addressing disaster-related issues	No	
Other		
How can these capabilities be expanded and improved to reduce risk?		
Fire safety training could be expanded to include training regarding disasters; the Town could also seek StormReady certification or FireWise certification. Pursuing these certifications would require additional funding.		

Safe Growth Audit

Use this worksheet to identify gaps in your community's growth guidance instruments and improvements that could be made to reduce vulnerability to future development.

Comprehensive Plan	Yes	No
Land Use		
1. Does the future land-use map clearly identify natural hazard areas?		X
2. Do the land-use policies discourage development or redevelopment within natural hazard areas?		X
3. Does the plan provide adequate space for expected future growth in areas located outside natural hazard areas?		X
Transportation		
1. Does the transportation plan limit access to hazard areas?		X
2. Is transportation policy used to guide growth to safe locations?		X
3. Are movement systems designed to function under disaster conditions (e.g., evacuation)?		X

Worksheet 4.2

Safe Growth Audit

Comprehensive Plan (continued)	Yes	No
Environmental Management		
1. Are environmental systems that protect development from hazards identified and mapped?		X
2. Do environmental policies maintain and restore protective ecosystems?		X
3. Do environmental policies provide incentives to development that is located outside protective ecosystems?		X
Public Safety		
1. Are the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan related to those of the FEMA Local Hazard Mitigation Plan?		X
2. Is safety explicitly included in the plan's growth and development policies?		X
3. Does the monitoring and implementation section of the plan cover safe growth objectives?		X

Zoning Ordinance	Yes	No
1. Does the zoning ordinance conform to the comprehensive plan in terms of discouraging development or redevelopment within natural hazard areas?		X
2. Does the ordinance contain natural hazard overlay zones that set conditions for land use within such zones?	X	
New Salem does not have a floodplain overlay district.		
3. Do rezoning procedures recognize natural hazard areas as limits on zoning changes that allow greater intensity or density of use?		X
4. Does the ordinance prohibit development within, or filling of, wetlands, floodways, and floodplains?	X	
Subdivision Regulations	Yes	No
1. Do the subdivision regulations restrict the subdivision of land within or adjacent to natural hazard areas?		X
2. Do the regulations provide for conservation subdivisions or cluster subdivisions in order to conserve environmental resources?		X
The Town is interested in amending the subdivision regulations to provide for cluster subdivisions in an effort to preserve open space.		
3. Do the regulations allow density transfers where hazard areas exist?		X

Worksheet 4.2

Safe Growth Audit

Capital Improvement Program and Infrastructure Policies	Yes	No
1. Does the capital improvement program limit expenditures on projects that would encourage development in areas vulnerable to natural hazards?		X
2. Do infrastructure policies limit extension of existing facilities and services that would encourage development in areas vulnerable to natural hazards?		X
3. Does the capital improvement program provide funding for hazard mitigation projects identified in the FEMA Mitigation Plan?		X
Other	Yes	No
1. Do small area or corridor plans recognize the need to avoid or mitigation natural hazards?		X
2. Does the building code contain provisions to strengthen or elevate construction to withstand hazard forces?	X	
3. Do economic development or redevelopment strategies include provisions for mitigation natural hazards?		X
4. Is there an adopted evacuation and shelter plan to deal with emergencies from natural hazards?	X	
Regional shelter plans are in place		

Questions adapted from Godschalk, David R. Practice Safe Growth Audits, *Zoning Practice*, Issue Number 10, October 2009, American Planning Association. <http://www.planning.org/zoningpractice/open/pdf/oct09.pdf>.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Worksheet

Use this worksheet to collect information on your community's participation in and continued compliance with the NFIP, as well as identify areas for improvement that could be potential mitigation actions. Indicate the source of information, if different from the one included.

NFIP Topic	Source of Information	Comments
Insurance Summary		
How many NFIP policies are in the community? What is the total premium and coverage?	State NFIP Coordinator or FEMA NFIP Specialist	The Town participates in the NFIP program but there are no policies in place.
How many claims have been paid in the community? What is the total amount of paid claims? How many of the claims were for substantial damage?	FEMA NFIP or Insurance Specialist	0
How many structures are exposed to flood risk within the community?	Community Floodplain Administrator (FPA)	There are 12 homes in the flood hazard area
Describe any areas of flood risk with limited NFIP policy coverage	Community FPA and FEMA Insurance Specialist	
Staff Resources		
Is the Community FPA or NFIP Coordinator certified?	Community FPA	
Is floodplain management an auxiliary function?	Community FPA	
Provide an explanation of NFIP administration services (e.g., permit review, GIS, education or outreach, inspections, engineering capability)	Community FPA	
What are the barriers to running an effective NFIP program in the community, if any?	Community FPA	Staff capacity, funding
Compliance History		
Is the community in good standing with the NFIP?	State NFIP Coordinator, FEMA NFIP Specialist, community records	Yes
Are there any outstanding compliance issues (i.e., current violations)?		No
When was the most recent Community Assistance Visit (CAV) or Community Assistance Contact (CAC)?		
Is a CAV or CAC scheduled or needed?		

Worksheet 4.3

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

NFIP Topic	Source of Information	Comments
Regulation		
When did the community enter the NFIP?	Community Status Book http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program/national-flood-insurance-program-community-status-book	12/01/1987
Are the FIRMs digital or paper?	Community FPA	Paper
Do floodplain development regulations meet or exceed FEMA or State minimum requirements? If so, in what ways?	Community FPA	State of MA is developing an updated model
Provide an explanation of the permitting process.	Community FPA, State, FEMA NFIP Flood Insurance Manual http://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance-manual Community FPA, FEMA CRS Coordinator, ISO representative CRS manual http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=2434	N/A
Community Rating System (CRS)		
Does the community participate in CRS?	Community FPA, State, FEMA NFIP	New Salem does not participate in the CRS.
What is the community's CRS Class Ranking?	Flood Insurance Manual http://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance-manual	
What categories and activities provide CRS points and how can the class be improved?		
Does the plan include CRS planning requirements	Community FPA, FEMA CRS Coordinator, ISO representative CRS manual http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=2434	

LOCAL MITIGATION PLAN REVIEW TOOL - Final

Town of New Salem, MA

The *Local Mitigation Plan Review Tool* demonstrates how the Local Mitigation Plan meets the regulation in 44 CFR §201.6 and offers States and FEMA Mitigation Planners an opportunity to provide feedback to the community.

- The Regulation Checklist provides a summary of FEMA's evaluation of whether the Plan has addressed all requirements.
- The Plan Assessment identifies the plan's strengths as well as documents areas for future improvement.
- The Multi-jurisdiction Summary Sheet is an optional worksheet that can be used to document how each jurisdiction met the requirements of each Element of the Plan (Planning Process; Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment; Mitigation Strategy; Plan Review, Evaluation, and Implementation; and Plan Adoption).

The FEMA Mitigation Planner must reference this *Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide* when completing the *Local Mitigation Plan Review Tool*.

Jurisdiction: Town of New Salem, MA	Title of Plan: New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan	Date of Plan: April 26, 2021
Single or Multi-jurisdiction plan? SINGLE		New Plan or Plan Update? UPDATE
Regional Point of Contact: Kimberly Noake MacPhee, P.G., CFM Land Use & Natural Resources Planning Program Manager Franklin Regional Council of Governments 12 Olive Street, Suite 2 Greenfield, MA 01301 Phone: 413-774-3167 x130 Fax: 413-774-3169 Email: KMacPhee@frcog.org		Local Point of Contact: Nancy Aldrich New Salem Town Coordinator 19 S. Main Street New Salem, MA 01355 978-544-6437 newsalemwendell@gmail.com

State Reviewer: Jeffrey Zukowski	Title: MA Hazard Mitigation Planner	Date: 6/1/2021; 10/20/2021
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FEMA Reviewer: Marie-Annette (Nan) Johnson – 1st Review Brigitte Ndikum-Nyada	Title: R1 Community Planner Community Planner	Date: 7/9/2021 7/6/2021 – 7/12/2021; 10/20-10/21/21
Date Received in FEMA Region I	6/1/2021 & 10/20/2021	
Plan Not Approved		
Plan Approvable Pending Adoption	7/12/2021	
Plan Adopted	8/9/2021	
Plan Approved	10/21/2021	

SECTION 1: REGULATION CHECKLIST

INSTRUCTIONS: The Regulation Checklist must be completed by FEMA. The purpose of the Checklist is to identify the location of relevant or applicable content in the Plan by Element/sub-element and to determine if each requirement has been 'Met' or 'Not Met.' The 'Required Revisions' summary at the bottom of each Element must be completed by FEMA to provide a clear explanation of the revisions that are required for plan approval. Required revisions must be explained for each plan sub-element that is 'Not Met.' Sub-elements should be referenced in each summary by using the appropriate numbers (A1, B3, etc.), where applicable. Requirements for each Element and sub-element are described in detail in this *Plan Review Guide* in Section 4, Regulation Checklist.

1. REGULATION CHECKLIST		Location in Plan (section and/or page number)	Met	Not Met
Regulation (44 CFR 201.6 Local Mitigation Plans)				
ELEMENT A. PLANNING PROCESS				
A1. Does the Plan document the planning process, including how it was prepared and who was involved in the process for each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(1))	Section 1, pages 1-6; Appendices A, B	X		
A2. Does the Plan document an opportunity for neighboring communities, local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation activities, agencies that have the authority to regulate development as well as other interests to be involved in the planning process? (Requirement §201.6(b)(2))	Section 1, pages 5-6; Appendices A, B	X		
A3. Does the Plan document how the public was involved in the planning process during the drafting stage? (Requirement §201.6(b)(1))	Section 1, pages 2-5; Appendices A, B	X		
A4. Does the Plan describe the review and incorporation of existing plans, studies, reports, and technical information? (Requirement §201.6(b)(3))	Section 1, page 6	X		
A5. Is there discussion of how the community(ies) will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process? (Requirement §201.6(c)(4)(iii))	Section 5, pages 219-220, 225-226	X		
A6. Is there a description of the method and schedule for keeping the plan current (monitoring, evaluating and updating the mitigation plan within a 5-year cycle)? (Requirement §201.6(c)(4)(i))	Section 5, pages 218-220	X		
ELEMENT A: REQUIRED REVISIONS				
ELEMENT B. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT				
B1. Does the Plan include a description of the type, location, and extent of all natural hazards that can affect each jurisdiction(s)? (Requirement §201.6(c)(2)(i))	Section 3, pages 38-187	X		

1. REGULATION CHECKLIST		Location in Plan (section and/or page number)	Met	Not Met
Regulation (44 CFR 201.6 Local Mitigation Plans)				
B2. Does the Plan include information on previous occurrences of hazard events and on the probability of future hazard events for each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(2)(i))	Section 3, pages 38-187	X		
B3. Is there a description of each identified hazard's impact on the community as well as an overall summary of the community's vulnerability for each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(2)(ii))	Section 2; Section 3, pages 38-187; Section 4.2, pages 188-193; Appendix B	X		
B4. Does the Plan address NFIP insured structures within the jurisdiction that have been repetitively damaged by floods? (Requirement §201.6(c)(2)(ii))	Section 2, page 11	X		
<u>ELEMENT B: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>				
ELEMENT C. MITIGATION STRATEGY				
C1. Does the plan document each jurisdiction's existing authorities, policies, programs and resources and its ability to expand on and improve these existing policies and programs? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3))	Sections 4-5, pages 188-203; Appendix C	X		
C2. Does the Plan address each jurisdiction's participation in the NFIP and continued compliance with NFIP requirements, as appropriate? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(ii))	Section 2, page 11, Table 4-1	X		
C3. Does the Plan include goals to reduce/avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(i))	Section 4, page 203	X		
C4. Does the Plan identify and analyze a comprehensive range of specific mitigation actions and projects for each jurisdiction being considered to reduce the effects of hazards, with emphasis on new and existing buildings and infrastructure? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(ii))	Section 4, pages 207-214	X		
C5. Does the Plan contain an action plan that describes how the actions identified will be prioritized (including cost benefit review), implemented, and administered by each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(iv)); (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(iii))	Section 4, pages 203-214; Table 5-1	X		
C6. Does the Plan describe a process by which local governments will integrate the requirements of the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms, such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans, when appropriate? (Requirement §201.6(c)(4)(ii))	Section 5, page 225-226 Pg. 5	X		
<u>ELEMENT C: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>				

1. REGULATION CHECKLIST		Location in Plan (section and/or page number)	Met	Not Met
Regulation (44 CFR 201.6 Local Mitigation Plans)				
ELEMENT D. PLAN REVIEW, EVALUATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION (applicable to plan updates only)				
D1. Was the plan revised to reflect changes in development? (Requirement §201.6(d)(3))	Section 2, pages 10-11	X		
D2. Was the plan revised to reflect progress in local mitigation efforts? (Requirement §201.6(d)(3))	Section 4, pages 188-202; pages 215-216	X		
D3. Was the plan revised to reflect changes in priorities? (Requirement §201.6(d)(3))	Section 4, pages 207-214	X		
<u>ELEMENT D: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>				
ELEMENT E. PLAN ADOPTION				
E1. Does the Plan include documentation that the plan has been formally adopted by the governing body of the jurisdiction requesting approval? (Requirement §201.6(c)(5))	Plan adopted on 8/9/2021 and signed adoption on file.	X		
E2. For multi-jurisdictional plans, has each jurisdiction requesting approval of the plan documented formal plan adoption? (Requirement §201.6(c)(5))				
<u>ELEMENT E: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>				
ELEMENT F. ADDITIONAL STATE REQUIREMENTS (OPTIONAL FOR STATE REVIEWERS ONLY; NOT TO BE COMPLETED BY FEMA)				
F1.				
F2.				
<u>ELEMENT F: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>				

APPENDIX E: FEMA Final Plan Review Tool

SECTION 2: PLAN ASSESSMENT

A. Plan Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement

This section provides a discussion of the strengths of the plan document and identifies areas where these could be improved beyond minimum requirements.

Element A: Planning Process

Strengths:

- It is great news to learn that two-thirds of the Town of New Salem is permanently protected due to the **39-square mile Quabbin Reservoir within its corporate boundary**, is the largest body water in Massachusetts and is the major water supply for communities in the Boston area. Kudos!
- Great plan and very good documentation. Great use of worksheets, visuals, and workshops to provide an interactive planning process with its community.
- Demonstrates a strong community commitment to maintain its mitigation goals and a planning process during the challenging times of the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a great demonstration of being resilient!
- Good representation and participation by the community.
- Good incorporation of other local and regional initiatives and planning processes. Quoting from the plan on page 5 - *All of these FRCOG initiatives consider the impact of natural hazards on the region and strategies for reducing their impact to people and property through hazard mitigation activities. The facilitation of the New Salem Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan by FRCOG ensured that information from these plans and initiatives were incorporated into the Hazard Mitigation Planning process.*

Element B: Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

Strengths:

- The risk assessment is well organized, very comprehensive, and provides very thorough descriptions of the hazards and vulnerabilities that are easy to read and understand. It places the community's risk in the context of the surrounding areas and even within the state. Well done!
- Vulnerability and risk are described from several important aspects (society/vulnerable populations, health and economic impacts, infrastructure/assets, environment).
- Excellent use of scales to show the magnitude/extent of the hazard.
- Provides clearly stated vulnerability summaries for each hazard.
- The plan does an excellent job of identifying how the probability or severity of future hazard events may change in the future due to changes in climate, population, or land use.
- This local Plan coordinates its information and processes well with the most current State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Recommend making more connections between the changes in development information in Section 2 with that in Section 3 and the vulnerability summaries in section 4. Key here is to ensure the mitigation emphasis is also on potential future development and improvements both for structures and infrastructure. This can then be used to connect the policies of the Town's comprehensive/general plan with that of the Town's Hazard Mitigation goals to see if any development changes being proposed and the changes in the Town's risk with these potential changes and the mitigation actions align between each of these plans. This is true for the other Town plans as well such as rural economic development and infrastructure plans.
- While it is important to identify the few community assets that may be at risk of being impacted by natural hazards, it is also important for the Town to have a good understanding of why these are vulnerable in the first place. And, why they may even be repeatedly exposed to such risk and are only resilient with preparedness actions rather than long term solutions. Recommend further evaluation of the root causes of the Town's vulnerabilities to each of its hazards where this is needed. Especially the ones of most concern to the community. The stronger the understanding of why a community asset can be impacted from an identified natural hazard, the stronger the solutions or actions may be. These root causes of vulnerability that are addressed for the long-term most often involve how the assets were/are designed and constructed and where these are located.
- Some of images of the Figures and maps are not legible (blurry).

Element C: Mitigation Strategy

Strengths:

- The plan provides a comprehensive, detailed description of the community's existing programs, plans, and policies that relate to mitigation. Utilized worksheets to develop this information, too.
- The plan highlights the different plans and programs into which the community can and has incorporate(-d) in the mitigation plan.
- The Strategy is comprehensive in alternatives and approaches. Good mitigation actions for both existing and new development. Leads with nature-based solutions for mitigation and resiliency.
- The plan identifies a range of potential resources for implementing the mitigation strategy, increasing opportunities for success.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Recommend addressing the Town's Comprehensive plan with its goals and policies in the Capability Assessment. This appeared to be missing.
- Recommend improvement on the goal statements. This requirement was minimally met. Two of the three are preparedness goals leaving one goal to mitigation which is written as nearly the definition of mitigation that could be applied to any town in the country. The Mitigation goals are strongest also when they can be used for or integrated into the Town's Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies as well as the other community plans. A plan can

be most effective with a range of 3-5 *mitigation* goals. Consider what is to be achieved by the actions. Using the problem statements can help to develop these goals. Establish detailed goals that are meaningful to the community and encourage the development of a robust mitigation strategy. Focus the plan's goals on alleviating long-term risks and vulnerabilities.

- Connect each of the actions to the *vulnerabilities* that the action is targeted to mitigate (sustained action for the long-term risk reduction of the asset or assets). The actions were only connected broadly to a hazard. They are not connected to what the problem is or the cause of it to help understand what and why the action is needed or what it will do to mitigate the long-term risk of that asset(s). An added column could help with this or within the action description.
- While the Town is enrolled in the NFIP, consider a mitigation strategy(-ies) for increasing flood insurance enrollment. At a minimum, describe the current situation and any obstacles or needs.
- Identify key NFIP related information such as variances, important site visits and floodplain management ordinance or model bylaw that are relative to the Town's strategy for NFIP continued compliance. Recommend addressing actions that increase the number of properties with flood insurance policies. To expand and strengthen the NFIP continued compliance requirement, check the new MEMA's Floodplain Management Model Bylaw. <https://www.mass.gov/guides/floodplain-management> Massachusetts 2020 Model Floodplain Bylaws. <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>

Element D: Plan Update, Evaluation, and Implementation (*Plan Updates Only*)

Strengths:

- These elements were well done. Narratives discussing why previous action were obsolete or longer relevant, truly highlight and evaluate and demonstrate progress made in the past five years in achieving goals and implementing actions outlined in their mitigation strategy.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- The previous comments in Element B regarding the changes in development connections apply here as well.
- Highlight the Town's achievements and successes with each plan update. Describe what worked well and any challenges that were encountered. Describe how the Town overcame them or are looking for assistance or solutions with these challenges. This can be part of the evaluation with each plan update. Describe with each plan update how the Town is meeting or making progress towards meeting its goals (both Mitigation and other plan goals).
- **Looking ahead and planning for the next HMP update:** Continue to get specific when Identifying all forms of changes in development whether its expansions or improvements to existing structures and infrastructure, changes in use, future development plans and policies, or just building permit increases and changes in population. Be sure these changes

are always connected to whether it is increasing, decreasing, or have no effect on the Town's risk.

- Discuss the effect that recently completed mitigation work has had on reducing the community's risk.
- Expand on and describe how the mitigation strategy has helped to meet community's overhaul goals.
- Expand and describe status of previously recommended mitigation actions (as well as existing mitigation capabilities).
- Identification of barriers or obstacles to successful implementation or completion of mitigation actions, along with possible solutions for overcoming risk.
- Documentation of annual reviews and committee involvement.
- Identification of a lead person to take ownership of, and champion the Plan.
- Reducing risks from natural hazards and serving as a guide for decisions makers as they commit resources to reducing the effects of natural hazards.
- An approach to evaluating future conditions (i.e. expanding mitigation and making connection to equity, socio-economic, environmental, demographic, change in built environment etc.).
- Discussion of how changing conditions and opportunities could impact community resilience in the long term; and
- The Town is encouraged to continue to focus on any impacts new or redevelopments, redevelopments and future developments will or may have in either increasing or decreasing community's vulnerabilities to all-natural hazards not just flooding.
- Describe general land use changes in neighboring jurisdictions that may affect the community's risk.
- Consider including a discussion on how mitigation activities have increased the community's resilience and support other long-term community planning goals.
- Including a discussion of lessons learned about implementing mitigation actions would strengthen the plan, as would a short narrative on some "success stories" about their implementation.

B. Resources for Implementing Your Approved Plan

Refer to the [Massachusetts Integrated State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Action Plan](#), [Resilient MA Climate Clearinghouse](#), and State's [Climate Action Page](#) to learn about hazards relevant to Massachusetts and the State's efforts and action plan.

Technical Assistance:

FEMA

- [FEMA Climate Change](#): Provides resources that address climate change.
- [FEMA Library](#): FEMA publications can be downloaded from the library website. These resources may be especially useful in public information and outreach programs. Topics include building and construction techniques, NFIP policies, and integrating historic preservation and cultural resource protection with mitigation.
- [FEMA RiskMAP](#): Technical assistance is available through RiskMAP to assist communities in identifying, selecting, and implementing activities to support mitigation planning and risk reduction. Attend RiskMAP discovery meetings that may be scheduled in the state, especially any in neighboring communities with shared watersheds boundaries.

Other Federal

- [EPA Resilience and Adaptation in New England \(RAINE\)](#): A collection of vulnerability, resilience and adaptation reports, plans, and webpages at the state, regional, and community levels. Communities can use the RAINE database to learn from nearby communities about building resiliency and adapting to climate change.
- [EPA Soak Up the Rain](#): Soak Up the Rain is a public outreach campaign focused on stormwater quality and flooding. The website contains helpful resources for public outreach and easy implementation projects for individuals and communities.
- [NOAA C-CAP Land Cover Atlas](#): This interactive mapping tool allows communities to see their land uses, how they have changed over time, and what impact those changes may be having on resilience.
- [NOAA Sea Grant](#): Sea Grant's mission is to provide integrated research, communication, education, extension and legal programs to coastal communities that lead to the responsible use of the nation's ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources through informed personal, policy and management decisions. Examples of the resources available help communities plan, adapt, and recovery are the Community Resilience Map of Projects and the National Sea Grant Resilience Toolkit
- [NOAA Sea Level Rise Viewer](#) and [Union for Concerned Scientists Inundation Mapper](#): These interactive mapping tools help coastal communities understand how their hazard risks may be changing. The "Preparing for Impacts" section of the inundation mapper addresses policy responses to protect communities.
- [NOAA U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#): This resource provides scientific tools, information, and expertise to help manage climate-related risks and improve resilience to extreme events. The "[Steps to Resilience](#)" tool may be especially helpful in mitigation planning and implementation.

State

- [Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency](#): The Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) and State Mitigation Planner(s) can provide guidance regarding grants, technical assistance, available publications, and training opportunities.
- Massachusetts Departments of [Conservation and Recreation](#) and [Environmental Protection](#) can provide technical assistance and resources to communities seeking to implement their hazard mitigation plans.

- <https://www.mass.gov/guides/floodplain-management> Massachusetts 2020 Model Floodplain Bylaws. <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>
- [MA Mapping Portal](#): Interactive mapping tool with downloadable data

Not for Profit

- [Kresge Foundation Online Library](#): Reports and documents on increasing urban resilience, among other topics.
- [Naturally Resilient Communities](#): A collaboration of organizations put together this guide to nature-based solutions and case studies so that communities can learn which nature-based solutions can work for them.
- [Rockefeller Foundation Resilient Cities](#): Helping cities, organizations, and communities better prepare for, respond to, and transform from disruption.

Funding Sources:

- [Massachusetts Coastal Resilience Grant Program](#): Funding for coastal communities to address coastal flooding, erosion, and sea level rise.
- [Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness](#) program: Provides support for communities to plan for climate change and resilience and implement priority projects.
- [Massachusetts Water Quality Grants](#): Clean water grants that can be used for river restoration or other kinds of hazard mitigation implementation projects.
- [Grants.gov](#): Lists of grant opportunities from federal agencies (HUD, DOT/FHWA, EPA, etc.) to support rural development, sustainable communities and smart growth, climate change and adaptation, historic preservation, risk analyses, wildfire mitigation, conservation, Federal Highways pilot projects, etc.
- [FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance](#) (HMA): FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance provides funding for projects under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA). States, federally recognized tribes, local governments, and some not for profit organizations are eligible applicants.
- [GrantWatch](#): The website posts current foundation, local, state, and federal grants on one website, making it easy to consider a variety of sources for grants, guidance, and partnerships. Grants listed include The Partnership for Resilient Communities, the Institute for Sustainable Communities, the Rockefeller Foundation Resilience, The Nature Conservancy, The Kresge Climate-Resilient Initiative, the Threshold Foundation's Thriving Resilient Communities funding, the RAND Corporation, and ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability.
- USDA [Natural Resource Conservation Service](#) (NRCS) and [Rural Development Grants](#): NRCS provides conservation technical assistance, financial assistance, and conservation innovation grants. USDA Rural Development operates over fifty financial assistance programs for a variety of rural applications.