

Natural Hazard Action Item Proposal Form

Proposed Action Item:	Alignment with Plan Goals:
Develop a warning and emergency/evacuation protocol for vulnerable populations.	Strengthen Organizational and Community Capacity
Rationale for Proposed Action Item:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community organizations that serve vulnerable populations are concerned with the transportation and services available to persons with special needs. ○ Northeast Oregon is projected to maintain a fairly stable population over the next 20 years, but the average age of this region's population will increase. In 2025, 25% of Baker and Grant Counties' populations are expected to be above the age of 65. The same is true for 20% of Union County's population, and 29% of Wallowa's. ○ In 2004, 35% of the regional population was under 14 or over 65 years ○ Impacts, in terms of loss and the ability to recover varies among population groups following a disaster. Historically, 80% of a disaster burden falls on the public. Of this number, a disproportionate burden is placed upon special needs groups, particularly minorities, and the poor. ○ Low-income populations may require additional assistance following a disaster because they may not have the savings to withstand economic setbacks, and if work is interrupted, housing, food, and necessities become a greater burden. Additionally, low-income households are more reliant upon public transportation, public food assistance, public housing, and other public programs, all which can be impacted in the event of a natural disaster. ○ The high percentage of elderly individuals, particularly in Baker and Wallowa Counties, require special consideration due to their sensitivities to heat and cold, their reliance upon transportation for medications, and their comparative difficulty in making home modifications that reduce risk to hazards. ○ Young people also represent a vulnerable segment of the population. In every county in the region, at least 15% of the population is within the 0-14 year age range. Special considerations should be given to young populations and schools, where children spend much of their time, during the natural hazard mitigation process. Children are more vulnerable to heat and cold, have fewer transportation options, and require assistance to access medical facilities. ○ -Special consideration should also be given to populations who do not speak English as their primary language. These populations can be harder to reach with preparedness and mitigation information materials. They are less likely to be prepared if special attention is not given to language and culturally appropriate outreach techniques. In the Northeast region, most citizens speak English as their primary language. However, in every county in Oregon, Spanish is the second most prominent language. Table 5 shows that 1% percent of the total population over age 5 in the Northeast region speak English less than "very well." ○ According to the American Red Cross, natural hazards pose special problems for disabled residents in hazard-prone areas. "For the millions of Americans who have physical, medical, sensory or cognitive disabilities, emergencies such as fires, floods and acts of terrorism present a real challenge. The same challenge also applies to the elderly and other special needs populations." ○ According to the National Organization on Disability, in all these emergencies [natural hazards], people with disabilities are especially vulnerable. The N.O.D./Harris Surveys found that people with disabilities are less prepared and, correspondingly, more anxious than our non-disabled counterparts. A 2004 N.O.D./Harris Survey of emergency managers across the country found a continued need to include people with disabilities in preparedness plans. 	

Ideas for Implementation:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a voluntary registration for vulnerable populations (i.e., senior citizens, persons with wheelchairs or oxygen tanks, etc.) who may need emergency assistance in evacuating. 	
Coordinating Organization:	Emergency Services / Emergency Management; Baker City
Internal Partners:	External Partners:
Community Connections of Northeast Oregon	People Mover, Assisted living facilities, Elks lodge, public libraries, American Red Cross, National Organization on Disability
Timeline:	If available, estimated cost:
<u>Short Term</u> (0-2 years)	<u>Long Term</u> (2-4 or more years)
Short Term	
Form Submitted by:	RARE Participant